

Your COLLEGE-BOUND GUIDE

FRESHMAN YEAR

- Introduce yourself to your school counselor.
- Work with your counselor on your course plan to ensure your future college applications are competitive.
- Explore Advanced Placement (AP) courses.
- Try new extracurricular and volunteer activities.
- Sign up for AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, and/or Honors courses.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- Touch base with your school counselor.
- Prepare and register for the PSAT.
- Start exploring college websites and keep a list of your favorite schools.
- Focus on the extracurricular/volunteer activities that interest you most.

Summer *after* Sophomore Year

- Continue your extracurricular/volunteer activities and/or obtain a job.
- Identify the colleges that you would like to visit in the fall.
- Study for the SAT/ACT. Consider taking a prep course.

JUNIOR YEAR

- Determine where you stand academically. If areas need improvement, make it your goal to work even harder these next two years so your college applications really stand out.
- Research to see if your potential schools have a test-optional policy.
- If any of your schools require test scores, prepare and register for the SAT/ACT. Check test dates and locations at collegeboard.org and act.org.
- Begin to narrow down your college list. Characteristics you should consider may include:
 - Majors
 - Cost
 - Size
 - Housing
 - Location
 - Sports
 - Social life, clubs, student organizations
- Register for campus tours, open house events, or virtual events.
- Identify individuals who you'd like to provide recommendations for your college applications.

Summer *after* Junior Year

- Continue your extracurricular/volunteer activities and/or obtain a job.
- Prepare a list of colleges you plan to apply to and note application requirements and due dates.
- Compile a list of your activities, leadership roles, and club memberships to reference when beginning to complete college applications.
- Begin working on a generic essay to be used for a potential college application.

START OF SENIOR YEAR

- Finalize your list of colleges based on campus visits made during junior year.
- Begin submitting applications, while staying mindful of application deadlines. Typical required items include:
 - Official high-school transcript
 - Basic personal information
 - Personal essay
 - High-school activities and achievements
 - Letter(s) of recommendation
 - Application fee
- FAFSA opens in the fall. File yours to apply for financial aid. Apply early for maximum award consideration.
- Maintain your grades, as all colleges require a final transcript before enrolling.
- Consider your different options for applying:
 - **Early Decision:** Apply in fall and receive a decision normally in December. Your admission is binding (you must commit to that college or university).
 - **Early Action:** Apply in fall and receive a decision normally in December. Your admission is nonbinding (you're not required to commit).
 - **Regular Admission:** Apply on a rolling basis or by a deadline (normally in February or March). Your admission is nonbinding.

Spring *of* Senior Year

- Evaluate and compare each university/college. Items to consider:
 - Financial aid received
 - Additional merit scholarships awarded
 - Internship opportunities
 - Research opportunities
 - Outcomes of recent graduates
 - Academic and housing facilities
 - Distance from home
- Revisit your top choice schools during events like accepted student days or individual campus visits.

While on campus, seek out opportunities to:

 - Connect with current students
 - Speak with admissions and financial aid counselors
 - Meet current faculty members in your academic interest
 - Explore the area around the campus
- Make a decision on where you would like to attend college and confirm your enrollment by submitting your deposit.



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The Office of Admissions
at **Longwood University** is available
to assist you at any point while you
prepare for your college search process.

admissions@longwood.edu
434.395.2060
(Text) 434.207.6514

Questions *to* Consider During Your Campus Visits

What should I study?

Some students already know what they want to study, but you may not—and that's OK! Compile your likes, interests, and favorite topics. When on your campus visits, ask if they have programs that match what's on your list. To ensure you're going to get a well-rounded education, also find out about internship, research, and other hands-on learning opportunities.

What college town (or city) is right for me?

Small towns, big cities—or somewhere in between—colleges' locations come in all shapes and sizes. Smaller towns tend to be safer and more welcoming, and offer locally owned restaurants, coffee shops, and outdoor activities. But larger metropolitan areas have their advantages, too. That might include public transportation, big-city culture, and nearby internship opportunities. When visiting schools, explore off campus to see if this is a place you're comfortable calling home.

How can I get involved on campus?

Most schools are designed to keep students busy and engaged when not in class. Check out clubs and organizations, and see if they have anything that piques your interest or matches your career goals. Also ask about NCAA athletics, campus events, and fraternities/sororities. All are great ways to connect with other students.

How do I decipher all those numbers?

When visiting any school, you're likely going to hear lots of stats and rankings. They can be a little confusing, so ask for clarification. For instance, a high graduation rate might mean the school offers the support students need to complete their degrees on time. Meanwhile, a low student-to-faculty ratio indicates you'll likely have more personal interaction with faculty. Other numbers you might hear include outcome data, best value ranking, and average financial aid award.

Don't leave your visits confused. Make sure you ask what those numbers mean for your education.

Can I make college affordable?

Cost and financial aid will likely be huge determining factors in where you end up going to college. That's why it's important to know the tuition and fees at each school on your list. Also, check out the "Best Value" rankings to see where your colleges rank (or don't). Plus, make sure you complete your **Free Application for Federal Student Aid** during your senior year. This will ensure your family is considered for scholarships, grants, and other financial aid.

Schedule your visit to experience Longwood for yourself.

Register today at [GO.LONGWOOD.EDU/VISIT](https://go.longwood.edu/visit)

Paying for College

From tuition and fees to financial aid, there's a lot to consider when applying to colleges and universities. That's why it's never too early to start thinking about how to best finance your future—and that includes money you'll never have to pay back: scholarships.

KEY FINANCIAL AID TERMS

Grants: Do not have to be repaid.

Scholarships: Often based on academic merit, they also don't have to be repaid.

Loans: Must be repaid with interest.

Work-Study: Earn money working on campus while attending college.

Merit Scholarships

You've worked hard in high school and have the grades to show for it. You should get rewarded for your accomplishments. That's where merit scholarships come in. Based on your grades and extracurricular activities, they are the best financial aid you can receive, because they don't have to be paid back!

When you apply to Longwood, you'll automatically be considered for a range of merit scholarships to help make college affordable for your family.

Learn more at [GO.LONGWOOD.EDU/SCHOLARSHIPS](https://go.longwood.edu/scholarships)

OTHER SCHOLARSHIP SOURCES

The College Board: The organization behind the SAT allows you to search for more than \$6 billion in financial aid opportunities.

Fastweb!: Receive a list of scholarships that match your profile. Check back daily for updated opportunities.

GoodCall: Data-driven site that gives you a customized list of scholarship opportunities.

Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation: More than \$3.5 million in scholarships is awarded by the soda giant annually.

Ayn Rand Essay Contest Scholarships: Write an essay for a chance to win scholarship money.

Gates Millennium Scholars Program: 20,000 scholarships are awarded annually to outstanding students of color.

Rhodes Scholarship: Be among the best of the best to receive this prestigious scholarship from Oxford University in England.

Scholarships A to Z: Comprehensive source for scholarships listed by application due date.

Unigo: Get connected to 3.6 million scholarship/grant opportunities through this site.

United Negro College Fund: Awards more than \$100 million in scholarships each year.



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DON'T FORGET
to **complete your FAFSA**

to be considered for
need-based scholarships,
grants, loans, and work-study!

studentaid.gov/fafsa