

College Checklist

✓	To do:	When?
	Keep your grades up!	Starting now!
	Build a list of institutions you are interested in (likely, target, reach)	As soon as possible!
	Make a calendar with important dates and deadlines for applications	As soon as possible!
	Brainstorm ideas for your college essay (if needed!)	As soon as possible!
	Make a resume with your involvement in jobs, clubs, community service, and other extracurriculars. Include the awards and honors you have received, your GPA, etc.	As soon as possible!
	Make a list of your accomplishments/involvement to give to teachers who will write your letters of recommendation.	As soon as possible!
	See if you have a CFNC.org Account, and if not make one!	As soon as possible!
	Make a CommonApp account, if needed!	As soon as possible!
	Complete the Residency Determination Service (RDS)	As soon as possible!
	Make your FSA ID. The person(s) who claim you as a dependent on their taxes will also need their own FSA ID in order for your FAFSA to be submitted.	As soon as possible, at least a week before you plan to start the FAFSA!
	Fill out the College Scholarship Service (CSS) profile (if desired!)	Opens October 1st
	Take and Retake the ACT and/or SAT (if needed!)	By October
	Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)	Opens in December, the earlier the better!
	Ask for teacher recommendations	At least one month before your application is due
	Apply for as many scholarships as you can.. It's free money!	Continuous
	Arrange visits to schools you applied to	January-March

	Decide which school is the best fit for you! • Consider amount of financial aid offered • Majors/Minors offered • School culture (will you thrive there?)	By May 1st
	Check your email! Follow instructions and be on the lookout for deadlines for enrollment, class registration, housing applications, placement testing, etc.	After May 1st

Important Terms/Websites

Term	Notes	Website
FAFSA - Free Application for Federal STudent Aid	Complete to apply for federal financial aid	studentaid.gov
RDS - Residency Determination Service	Determines whether you qualify for in-state or out-of-state tuition	ncresidency.org
CommonApp	Website to submit information and apply to multiple institutions while only filling out one application!	commonapp.org
CFNC - College Foundation of North Carolina	Send your transcript to NC schools for free, browse NC scholarships, and additional resources. You can find applications for any NC college or university here!	cfnc.org
CSS Profile - College Scholarship Service Profile	Complete to apply for institutional financial aid. For many selective schools, this is required (not free)	cssprofile.org
NC Countdown to College (Free College Application Week)	The week where it is free to apply to most NC colleges and Universities	nccountdowntocollege.org
Term	Notes	
Early Action (EA)	Apply early (by November) -get decision back earlier and have better chances at administration and scholarships	
Early Decision (ED)	Apply early (by November)-get decision back early and have better chances at admission and scholarships. **Binding decision to attend the school if you're accepted. Financial consequences if you do not attend that school	

Regular Decision (RD)	The RD deadlines is typically between January 1st and February 1st for highly competitive schools and around March for other schools
Superscoreing	Many colleges consider your highest scores across all the dates you took the ACT/SAT - forming the highest possible total score across all your ACT/SATs. This means students should <u>retake</u> the SAT or ACT if they can
Fee Waiver	Take the SAT or ACT & apply to colleges for free. If your family qualifies for free/reduced lunch, you qualify for fee waivers. Ask your counselor to check if you qualify and/or get fee waivers.
SAT Subject Tests	SAT version of AP exams. More selective schools might require that you take these. It's best to take the subject test after you take the class (for example, taking AP Biology then the Biology SAT Subject Test)