

College Planning Checklist

Freshman Year

- Meet with your guidance counselor to plan college prep courses for high school.
- Learn about college acceptance.
- Set academic goals.
- Become involved in extracurricular activities; seek leadership roles whenever you can.
- Discuss how to pay for your college with your parents.
- Start gathering information on career fields that interest you.

Sophomore Year

- Register for PSAT/NMSQT and/or PLAN.
- Make a list of features you want in college.
- Start searching the Internet for schools that interest you.
- Examine college information resources in guidance and media center.
- Start making a list of schools to examine more carefully.
- Contact admissions offices and ask for brochures and information.
- Take PLAN to prepare for ACT (Oct-Dec).
- Take PSAT/NMSQT to prepare for SAT (Oct).

May and June

- Meet with guidance counselor; pre-register for challenging college prep courses.

June, July and August

- Study for PSAT/NMSQT
- Consider a summer job or volunteer experience in your field of interest.
- For aptitude testing, see your guidance counselor to set up an appointment to take the ASVAB. The most widely used multiple aptitude battery of tests in the world, it assesses academic ability and predicts success in a variety of military and civilian occupations.

Junior Year

September

- Register to take the PSAT/NMSQT and/or PLAN
- Check dates and locations of local college fairs.

October

- Attend college fairs.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT to be considered for the National Merit Scholarship.

November

- Refine your list of schools; eliminate the ones that do not meet your criteria.
- Request catalogs for schools remaining on your list.
- Compare and contrast admission policies, academic programs and placement opportunities for each school.

December

- Examine PSAT/NMSQT results to determine areas that need improvement.
- Discuss PSAT/NMSQT scores with your guidance counselor and your parents.
- Consider taking SAT prep courses to improve your scores.
- Explore career fields of interest and research what type of training is required. Try to talk to people in your fields of interest.
- Ask your counselor what schools offer the best programs for your areas of interest.

January and February

- Continue narrowing the number of schools in your file.
- Talk to your counselor and gather information on the application process.

March

- Start preparing for Advanced Placement (AP) exams.
- Register to take the SAT or ACT. (Taking them early will allow you time to retake them if you are not satisfied with your scores.)
- Explore early decision options with your counselor.

April

- Take the SAT and/or ACT or register for May tests.

May

- Final opportunity to take required tests for those applying early decision.

June

- Make arrangements for campus tours.
- Review test results and determine if you should take them again in the fall.

July

- Start visiting colleges or universities that interest you.
- Consider a summer job or volunteer experience in your area of interest.
- Study for the SAT or ACT. Consider taking a test preparation course, online tutorial, or self-help books.
- Finalize your list of 6-10 favorite colleges or universities.

August

- Determine how you will meet costs at selected schools, i.e. through parent, on your own, school, or other resources.
- Note all admission deadlines.
- Continue to visit schools that interest you. Arrange for interviews while on campus or with assigned alumnus at home.
- Start filling out admission applications.
- Develop a resume.
- Obtain a Social Security Number if you don't have one.

Senior Year

September

- Register to take or retake SAT and/or ACT.
- Request that official test scores be sent to schools where you are applying.
- Meet the college representatives.
- Check dates and locations of college fairs and parents nights in your area.
- Send thank you notes to each college representative who spends time with you.
- Decide which teachers and other people you would like to write letters of recommendation.

- Fill out Senior Information Profile for those writing recommendations.

October and November

- Take or retake SAT and/or ACT.
- Make a final list of your six top college choices.
- Attend college fairs.
- Finalize application packets.
- Send early decision and early action applications.
- Request high school forward official copies of transcript and counselor recommendation to schools where you applied.
- Promptly respond to any request from admissions officers.

December

- Submit admission applications.

January

- Request transcripts of first semester grades be sent to select colleges/universities.
- Apply for outside scholarships.

February

- Register and start studying for advanced placement tests.
- Look for Student Aid Report (SAR) in the mail and submit to financial aid office.
- Contact ARNG recruiter for ROTC scholarship information.

April

- Expect to receive letters of acceptance or non-acceptance.
- Review all acceptance packages carefully.
- Make final visits to schools that have sent acceptance letters to make final decision.
- Select the school you plan to attend and send a deposit by specified deadline.
- Notify schools of you decision.
- Send thank you notes to those who wrote recommendations.
- Register for/take advanced placement tests.

May and June

- Take any remaining Advanced Placement (AP) tests.

- Request that your final transcript be sent to the college you have selected.

July and August

- Finalize your college budget.
- Note deadlines for tuition and room and board payments.
- Apply for student loans if necessary.
- Attend freshman orientation.