

College Admissions-Countdown Calendar

This practical month-by-month calendar is designed to help you stay on top of the process of applying to college. For most students, the process begins in September of the junior year of high school and ends in June of your senior year. You may want to begin considering financial aid options, reviewing your academic schedule, and attending college fairs before your junior year.

Junior Year:

September

- Check with your counselor to make sure your course credits will meet college requirements.
- Be sure you are involved in one or two extracurricular activities.
- Begin building your personal list of colleges with our **School Search**.

October

- Register for and take the PSAT.

November

- Strive to get the best grades you can. A serious effort will provide you with the most options during the application process.

December

- Get involved in community service activity.
- Begin to read newspapers and a weekly news magazine.
- Buy SAT Success, ACT Assessment Success, or TOEFL CBT Success and begin to study for the tests.

January

- With your school counselor, decide when to take the ACT Assessment, SAT I and SAT II Subject Tests (and which Subject tests to take.) If English is not your primary language and you are planning on attending a college in North America, decide when to take the TOEFL test.
- Keep your grades up!

February

- Plan a challenging schedule of classes for your senior year.
- Think about which teachers you will ask to write recommendations.
- Check www.nacacnet.org for schedules and locations of college fairs.

March

- Register for the tests you will take this spring (ACT Assessment, SAT I, SAT II, and the TOEFL test)
- Meet with your school counselor to discuss college choices.
- Review your transcript and test scores with your counselor to determine how competitive your range of choices should be.
- Develop a preliminary list of 15 to 20 colleges and universities and search for information on them.
- Start scheduling campus visits. When school is in session (but never during final exams) is the best time. Summers are OK, but will not show you what the college is really like. If possible, save your top college choices for the fall. Be aware, however that fall is the busiest visit season, and you will need advance planning. Don't forget to write thank-you letter to your interviewers.

April

- Take any standardized tests for which you have registered.
- Create a list of your potential college choices and begin to record personal and academic information that can later be transferred to your college application.

May

- Plan college visits and make appointments.
- Structure your summer plans to include advanced academic work, travel, volunteer work, or a job.
- Confirm your academic schedule for the fall.

Summer

- Begin working on your application essays.
- Write to any colleges on your list that do not accept the Common Application to request application forms.

Senior Year

September

- Register for the ACT Assessment, SAT I, SAT II, and TOEFL test, as necessary. Check with your school counselor for the fall visiting schedule of college reps.
- Ask appropriate teachers if they would write recommendations for you (don't forget to write thank-you letters when they accept.)
- Meet with your counselor to compile your final list of colleges.

October

- Mail or send early applications electronically after carefully checking them to be sure they are neat and completely filled out.
- Photocopy or print extra copies of your applications to use as a backup.
- Take the tests for which you have registered.
- Don't be late! Keep track of all deadlines for transcripts, recommendations, etc.

November

- Be sure that you have requested that your ACT Assessment and SAT scores be sent to your colleges of choice.
- Complete and submit all applications.
- Print or photocopy an extra copy of your records.

December

- Take any necessary ACT Assessment, SAT I, SATII, or TOEFL tests,
- Meet with your counselor to verify that all is in order and that transcripts are out to colleges.

January

- Prepare the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), available at www.fafsa.ed.gov or through your school counseling office. An estimated income tax statement (which can be corrected later) can be used. The sooner you apply for financial aid, the better your chances.

February

- Send in your FAFSA via the Web or U.S. mail. Be sure your midyear report has gone out to the colleges to which you've applied.
- Let your colleges know of any new honors or accomplishments that were not in your original application.

March

- Register for any Advanced Placement (AP) tests you might take.
- Be sure you have received a FAFSA acknowledgement.

April

- Review the acceptances and financial aid offers you receive. Go back to visit one or two of your top-choice colleges.
- Notify your college of choice that you have accepted its offer (and send in a deposit by May 1).
- Notify the colleges you have chosen not to attend of your decision.

May

- Take AP tests.

June

- Graduate! Congratulations and best of luck.