

COLLEGE APPLICATION TYPES: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



How are you applying to the schools on your college list — early decision, early action, early decision II, rolling admission or regular admission? Before making your selection, be sure you understand the differences, benefits and drawbacks of each option.

| | EARLY DECISION | EARLY ACTION | EARLY DECISION II | ROLLING ADMISSION | REGULAR ADMISSION |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| WHEN ARE APPLICATIONS DUE? | Early to mid-November | Early to mid-November | Mid-December to Mid-January | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by school Applications can be accepted as early as July and as late as April | Mid-December to Mid-January |
| WHEN DO YOU LEARN ADMISSION STATUS? | Mid-December | January or February | Mid-February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by school Typically two to six weeks after receipt of application | March or April |
| IS ADMISSION BINDING? | Yes | No | Yes | No | No |
| CAN YOU APPLY TO MORE THAN ONE SCHOOL USING THIS METHOD? | No | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by school If early action is "restrictive," you can only apply to one school. | No | Yes | Yes |
| ARE ACCEPTANCE RATES HIGHER WITH THIS METHOD? | Yes | Yes | Yes | The earlier the application is received, the higher the acceptance rate. | No |
| WHEN DO YOU NEED TO ACCEPT ADMITTANCE? | Immediately | Typically May 1 | Immediately | Typically May 1 | Typically May 1 |
| CAN YOU COMPARE FINANCIAL AID PACKAGES? | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| BENEFITS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to finish application season early Learn admittance decision early Increased admittance odds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn admittance decision early Increased admittance odds Ability to compare financial aid packages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn admittance decision early Increased admittance odds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to finish application season early Potential to learn admittance decision early Potential to increase admittance odds Ability to compare financial aid packages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More time to complete applications Ability to compare financial aid packages |
| DRAWBACKS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to research, apply and decide on top choice school early Must commit to school early No flexibility with financial aid package | Need to research, apply and decide on top choice school early | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must commit to school early No flexibility with financial aid package | To gain greatest advantage, need to research and apply early | Long wait for admission decision |