



HAVEN'T STARTED YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS YET? HERE'S WHAT TO DO.

TALK TO YOUR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR

- Be proactive. As soon as possible, schedule a meeting with your counselor.
- Come prepared with any college application materials you have ready to review together.

FILL OUT THE FAFSA®

Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) even if you don't think you'll qualify for aid. Some school aid, state aid, and scholarships are based on a completed FAFSA.

FINALIZE YOUR COLLEGE LIST

Include 6–10 schools that break down as follows:

- 1–2 reach schools
- 3–5 target schools
- 2–3 safety schools

GET ORGANIZED

- Use a free tool, like the College Planning Calendar at collegecovered.com/planning-calendar, to guide your process.
- Create a spreadsheet that outlines all deadlines and tracks your progress.
- Share your timeline with helpful adults like your parents or counselor.

SIGN UP FOR STANDARDIZED TESTS

- Enroll for the SAT® or ACT® if you plan to submit test scores with your applications.
- Check enrollment deadlines, which are typically 1 month before the actual test date.

ORDER TRANSCRIPTS

- Request transcripts now to allow time for processing.
- Double-check your high school's deadlines for transcript requests to make sure they will arrive at colleges in time.

REQUEST RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

Ask teachers and other mentors who know you well for letters of recommendation. Most applications require 1 to 2.

WRITE THOSE ESSAYS

Consider writing 1 essay that can be repurposed for several college and scholarship applications to save time.

FILL OUT YOUR APPLICATIONS

Start with the applications that have the earliest due dates.

DON'T PANIC

You've got this!