

Preparing for College: Senior Checklist

August/September

- Register for the SAT and/or ACT if you didn't take it as a junior, or if you aren't satisfied with your score and want to take it again. (remember that your counselor can help you with fee waivers)
- Take a look at some college applications and consider all of the different pieces of information you will need to compile.
- The SAT test date most popular with high school seniors is this month.
- Visit with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements. If you're ahead of schedule, consider taking courses at a local university or community college to get a jumpstart on college credit.
- Take every opportunity to get to know colleges: meeting with college representatives who visit your high schools during the fall, attending local college fairs, visiting campuses (if possible). Ask your counselor if they know of special campus visitation programs.
- Narrow down your list of colleges and begin to consider "safe," "reach," and "realistic" schools. Make sure you have the application and financial aid information for each school. Find out if you qualify for any scholarships at these schools.



Create a checklist and calendar to chart:

- Standardized test dates, registration deadlines, and fees
- College application due dates
- Financial aid application forms and deadlines
- Other materials you'll need for college applications (recommendations, transcripts, essays, etc.)
- Your high school's application processing deadlines

Some schools require the CSS/Financial Aid Profile. Ask the colleges to which you are applying for their deadlines. You can register as early as September. See your guidance counselor about fee waivers.

October

- Some colleges will have deadlines as early as this month. These would include rolling admission, priority, early decision, and early action deadlines.
- If you cannot afford the application fees that many colleges charge, ask your counselor to help you request a fee waiver.
- Finalize your college essay. Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
- Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers. Follow the process required by your high school or provide a stamped, addressed envelope, the appropriate college forms, and an outline of your academic record and extracurricular activities to each person writing you a recommendation.
- Research possibilities of scholarships. Ask your counselor, your colleges, and your religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. You should *never* pay for scholarship information.

November

- Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications due this month. Have a parent, teacher, counselor, or other adult review the application before it is submitted.
- Every college will require a copy of your transcript from your high school. Follow your school's procedure for sending transcripts.
- Make sure testing companies have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are
- applying.
- The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) will be available this month, but cannot be completed before January 1. This is the form you will complete to find out what financial aid you are eligible to receive from the government. Ask your guidance office for a copy or visit www.fafsa.ed.gov. This form should be filed online if at all possible.

December

- Begin to organize regular decision applications and financial aid forms, which will be due in January and/or February.
- Register for the January SAT (If needed). It is the last one colleges will be able to consider for a senior.

January

- Many popular and selective colleges will have application deadlines as early as January 1. Others have deadlines later in January and February. Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
- If necessary, register for the February ACT (some colleges will be able to consider it).
- Ask your guidance office in January to send first semester transcripts to schools where you applied. At the end of the school year, they will need to send final transcripts to the college you will attend.
- It is time to file the FAFSA (no later than Feb 1). The sooner you complete it, the sooner you will have an idea of your financial aid options. Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR)—it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed.

Feb/March/April

- While most of your applications will be complete and you are waiting to receive admission decisions, don't slack in the classroom. The college that you do attend will want to see your second semester transcript. No Senioritis!
- Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive. Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.

May

- May 1 is the date when the college you plan to attend requires a commitment and deposit. When you've made your college decision, notify your counselor and the colleges. Send in your deposit by the postmark date of May 1. If you've been offered financial aid, accept the offer and follow the instructions given. Also notify schools you will not attend of your decision.
- Make sure that you have requested that your final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.
- If you are "wait listed" by a college you really want to attend, visit, call and write the admission office to make your interest clear. Ask how you can strengthen your application.

Back to: Guidance for Seniors

SAT 2020 - 2021 Test Dates

To register: Log on to your CollegeBoard account and select the desired date and follow the directions

www.collegeboard.org

Test Date	Registration Deadline
October 2, 2021	September 3, 2021
November 6, 2021*	October 8, 2021
December 4, 2021	November 4, 2021
March 12, 2021	February 11, 2021

** Please Note: the November 6th test date will be offered at EVHS this year **



NAVIGATE YOUR FUTURE

2021/2022 TEST DATES



*No test centers are scheduled in New York for the July test date.

WHEN IT COMES TO TEST PREP, WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

ACT offers test prep programs for every learning style with live video lessons, interactive practice questions, full-length practice tests, and on-demand tutorials.

Explore your test prep options, including a free practice test, at act.org/prep.

Register online
at act.org/bts



WHY TAKE THE ACT TEST?

1

EXPAND YOUR OPTIONS

Taking the ACT test can help you on your way to your dream school. Plus, the ACT offers you the opportunity to be identified and recruited by colleges.

2

PAY FOR COLLEGE

Students with an ACT score qualify for more scholarships because many colleges require scores for merit-based awards. Without one, you could miss out on thousands of dollars.

3

PLAN YOUR FUTURE

ACT scores do more than get you into college. Your results include a college and career planning section that directs you toward the best path to success.

4

STAND OUT

ACT scores can help you stand out in a crowded field of applicants with similar high school grades.

5

SECURE A SUPERScore

When you take the ACT more than once, you can average your best section scores for an ACT Superscore.



FEE WAIVERS

Ask your counselor if you qualify for a fee waiver to take the ACT test for free. Fee waivers cover the basic registration and late fees for up to 4 national tests and provide free access to The Official ACT® Self-Paced Course, Powered by Kaplan®.

Register online at act.org/bts



PARTS OF A COLLEGE APPLICATION

Pat Walters, MEd, CEP, Retired Counselor, Texas

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- This list includes everything that could be required, but you might not be asked to submit everything on this list to every college. **For example, there are many colleges that do not require students to write essays. There also are many colleges that do not require standardized test scores.**
- **You, the student, are responsible for following your school's policy for submitting applications and requesting transcripts and letters of recommendations. KNOW WHAT YOU ARE EXPECTED TO DO!**

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN A COLLEGE APPLICATION?

- A. **Official Transcript:** This is normally sent directly from your high school to the college or it is sent electronically through a third party vendor. Your transcript is the record of all the courses you have taken for high school credit, your grades, and credits earned. Other information that might be included: GPA, class rank, standardized test scores, courses in progress. If it is possible to do so at your school, request an unofficial copy of your transcript and make sure that it is accurate.
- B. **Standardized Test Scores:** If required by your college, you will request from College Board (www.collegeboard.com) and/or ACT (www.actstudent.org) that your official test scores (SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests) be sent directly to the college admission office. Even though you might be asked for your scores in the application and even though they might appear on your transcript, **MOST COLLEGES REQUIRE THAT THEY COME DIRECTLY FROM THE TESTING SERVICE TO THE COLLEGE.**
- C. **The Application Form: The student is responsible for requesting an application form, completing it, and submitting it by the college deadline (by mail or online).** You might be asked for the following information in the paper or online application:
 - Personal and Educational Data (i.e., name, address, phone number, email, citizenship and residency information, high schools you have attended, college credits you have earned, parental information, senior year schedule, standardized test scores)
 - Honors and Awards
 - Extracurricular, Personal and Volunteer Activities
 - Employment, Internships, and Summer Activities (Some colleges allow you to submit a résumé in addition to the activity section of their application.)



- Essays, both short answer and a longer personal essay
 - Disciplinary information
 - Application Fee
 - Signature
 - *For certain majors, students might be required to audition or asked to submit a portfolio of artistic work.*
- D. **Secondary School Report Form or Counselor Recommendation Form:** This is not required by all colleges. If it is required, the high school is responsible for submitting this form to the college. However, you will need to request that it be sent. It is important to know and follow the school's procedures.
- TIP:** The person at your school (usually your counselor) who is completing this form asks for information from students and parents ahead of time. If possible, meet with this person before he or she writes a letter of recommendation.
- E. **Mid-Year Report Form:** This form is not required by all colleges. If it is required, it will be submitted by your high school. However, you must request that it be sent. The purpose of the form is for the college to see your grades from the first semester of your senior year.
- F. **Teacher/Instructor Recommendation Form:** This form is not required by all colleges. If it is, follow your school's policy for requesting and sending recommendations.

If in doubt, consult your counselor or call the college admission office to confirm application requirements.

2021-22 Common Application Essay Prompts

An essay prompt can't erase the loss and anxiety of the last 12 months, but it can validate the importance of gratitude and kindness. We hope students see the new prompt for what it is intended to be: an invitation to bring some joy into their application experience.

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

STUDENT LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION QUESTIONNAIRE

If you need a letter of recommendation for your college application or scholarship program please complete this form and return it back to me as soon as possible. The information you share with me in this document will help me illustrate your most outstanding characteristics and attributes.

Full Name:

List the colleges you are applying to:

List three adjectives to describe yourself:

List the occupations you are considering & explain what it is about the occupation that interests you & why you might be successful in that career:

What do you hope to achieve by going to college?

What things do you like to do when you aren't doing your school work?

What is one thing you are most proud of about yourself and why?

What event or activity (positive or negative) has had the most impact on your life? How has it shaped you as a person?

Explain an opportunity you had to act as a leader? What did you learn from this experience?

Write a personal statement that helps me understand what is important to you, how you spend your time & understand personal circumstances that have positively or negatively impacted your grades.

Is there anything else that a college may want to know about you that I should include in your letter?

If you have an activity resume, please attach.

If not, please list the sports, clubs, paid work, volunteer/community service, activities out of school, and honors/leadership positions you have been involved in each year during high school.

Freshman:

Sophomore:

Junior:

Senior:

Campus Visit Checklist

Visiting a college campus helps you get a sense of what a college — and life at that college — is like. This can help you decide whether the college is right for you.

GATHER INFORMATION

Find out what you need to do to apply, and see if the college's class and major offerings are what you want:

- ☐ Take part in a group information session at the admission office.
- ☐ Interview with an admission officer.
- ☐ Pick up financial aid forms.
- ☐ Sit in on a class that interests you. If classes aren't in session, just see what the classrooms are like.
- ☐ Meet a professor who teaches a subject that interests you.
- ☐ Talk to students about what they think of their classes and professors.
- ☐ Get the names and business cards of the people you meet so you can contact them later if you have questions.

EXPLORE THE CAMPUS

Get a feel for student life, and see if this college is a place where you will do well:

- ☐ Take a campus tour.
- ☐ Visit the dining hall, fitness center, library, career center, bookstore, and other campus facilities.
- ☐ Talk to current students about the college and life on campus.
- ☐ Check out the freshman dorms, and stay overnight with a student, if possible.
- ☐ Talk to the coaches of sports that you may want to play.
- ☐ Walk or drive around the community surrounding the campus.

CHECK OUT CAMPUS MEDIA

Tune in to learn what's happening on campus and what's on students' minds:

- ☐ Listen to the college radio station.
- ☐ Read the student newspaper.
- ☐ Scan bulletin boards to see what daily student life is like.
- ☐ Go to the career center and learn what services it offers.
- ☐ Browse the school's website and any campus blogs.
- ☐ Read other student publications, such as department newsletters, alternative newspapers, and literary reviews.

GET THE MOST OUT OF A CAMPUS VISIT IN **6 STEPS**

1 DECIDE WHERE AND HOW

See if your school arranges group trips to colleges or if you could get a group of friends together and visit the campus. A family trip is another option and allows you to involve your family in the process.

2 PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

Before you set out, get a map of the college campus and pick out places of interest. Call the college's admission office to schedule a guided tour of the campus.

3 TAKE YOUR OWN TOUR

Just wandering around the campus on your own or with friends can be the best way to get a feel for what a college is like.

4 EXPLORE THE FACILITIES

Find the spots on campus where students gather or ask a student where the best place to eat is to get a feel for the character of the college. Visit the library and check out the gym or theater. Ask an admission officer if you can tour a dorm and a classroom.

5 MAKE CONNECTIONS

Talk to current students. Ask the students at the next table or sitting nearby what they like best about the college.

6 TAKE NOTES

During your visit, write down some notes about your experience. What did you see that excited you? Are there aspects of the college that you don't like? If so, what are they?

Questions to Ask During Your Visit:

ASK TOUR GUIDES/STUDENTS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- What's it like to go from high school to college?
- What do you do in your free time? On the weekends?
- What do you love about this college?
- What do you wish you could change about this college?
- Why did you choose this college?
- What is it like to live here?
- What does the college do to promote student involvement in campus groups, extracurricular activities, or volunteerism?

ASK PROFESSORS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- Can a student be mentored by professors, graduate students, or upperclassmen?
- How are professors rated by the college? Does the college think mentoring and meetings for project guidance are important?
- How does the college help students have access to professors outside class? Do professors join students for lunch, help with community service groups, or guide student organizations?
- How many students do research or other kinds of projects for a semester or more?

ASK THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

- How much has your total college cost for each student risen in the past year?
- How much do your students usually end up owing when they graduate?
- What is the average income of graduates who had the same major that interests me?
- Will my costs go up when your tuition goes up, or can we use the same tuition rate I started with so I'll know the costs for four years?
- How many students usually graduate in the major that interests me? How long do these students usually take to get their degree? In what ways does the college help students graduate in four years?

where to go ...

CAMPUS VISIT CHECKLIST

... what to ask

CAMPUS QUAD

- ☐ How friendly and welcoming is the campus?
- ☐ How easy is it to get around campus?
- ☐ How easy is it to get from campus to the nearest town or city?
- ☐ What is the relationship between the school and neighboring community like?
- ☐ Where do students do their shopping (groceries, dorm essentials, clothing, etc.)?

DORMS

- ☐ What is the campus crime rate like?
- ☐ Is there any sort of late-night shuttle service?
- ☐ How many dorms are there, and how do they differ?
- ☐ What is the dorm's security protocol like?
- ☐ What are the off-campus living options, and what do they typically cost?

LIBRARY

- ☐ What's the academic vibe like on campus?
- ☐ What are midterms and finals like?
- ☐ How many computer labs are available to students, and is there IT assistance?
- ☐ How many quiet spaces are there for studying?
- ☐ Does the school have access to any additional library collections (local or other school libraries)?

STUDENT UNION

- ☐ What's the social vibe like on campus?
- ☐ What's the campus like on weekends?
- ☐ How involved are students in extracurriculars?
- ☐ Which activities are most popular?
- ☐ Are any art or music practice spaces available to non-majors?
- ☐ What's Greek life like, and how do students feel about it?
- ☐ What do students do for fun on campus and off?

GYM

- ☐ How popular is the gym, and how late is it open?
- ☐ Do non-varsity players have access to all athletic facilities?
- ☐ How active is the student body in terms of sports?
- ☐ How engaged are student fans in campus sporting events?

DINING HALL

- ☐ How's the food? (Pro tip: eat it!)
- ☐ Are meal plans required?
- ☐ What other dining options are there on and around campus?
- ☐ Do they cater to food allergies or other special dietary needs?

ACADEMIC CENTER

- ☐ Do teaching assistants ever teach classes?
- ☐ How accessible are professors typically?
- ☐ What student-faculty research opportunities exist for undergraduates?
- ☐ What kinds of mentoring and advising relationships do students and faculty have?
- ☐ What tutoring services are available to students?
- ☐ How do class sizes compare between freshman/introductory courses and upper-level classes?

CAREER CENTER

- ☐ Where have students interned?
- ☐ How long does it typically take recent grads to find a full-time job in their career field?
- ☐ Are there any formal internship arrangements with companies in the area?
- ☐ What kind of career advisement is offered?
- ☐ Do students have access to these services after they graduate?
- ☐ What networking or career fairs are held each year?
- ☐ How involved are alumni?
- ☐ What kinds of on-campus or local part-time jobs are available?

WELLNESS CENTER

- ☐ What services does the health center offer?
- ☐ How do students typically pay for wellness center services and treatment?
- ☐ What kinds of counseling and/or mental health services are available on campus?
- ☐ Are any stress-relief initiatives offered during midterms and finals?

College Visit Checklist

To help you find the right college, fill out one of these forms each time you visit a school.

College Name

City

State

Size

Tuition

Room/Board

Financial Aid Options

Admissions Contact

Name

Email

Phone

To-Do Checklist

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to professors | <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit the library | <input type="checkbox"/> Visit student housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tour campus | <input type="checkbox"/> Read bulletin boards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sit in on a class | <input type="checkbox"/> Check out recreational facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eat at a cafeteria | <input type="checkbox"/> Check out student activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to an admissions counselor | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour the city around campus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read the college newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Eat at an off-campus student hang-out |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check out computer labs | <input type="checkbox"/> Picture yourself living here |

Rate It

On a scale of 1-5, 5 being the best, rate the following:

People

Social Life

Classrooms

Residence Halls

Town

Campus

Food

Ask a Student

What is the best part about this college?

What is the worst part?

What is a typical day like?

What do the students do on the weekends?

How are classes structured?

Why did you choose this college?

The Best Part About My Visit

The Worst Part About My Visit

COLLEGE

Comparison Worksheet

College Name College Name College Name College Name

Location ❖ distance from home ❖ rural/urban				
Size ❖ campus size ❖ student body size				
Admissions ❖ average test scores, GPA, and rank ❖ required high school courses ❖ % accepted ❖ % freshmen returning in good standing				
Academics ❖ major ❖ special programs ❖ average freshman class size				
Expenses ❖ application fee ❖ tuition, room and board				
Financial Aid ❖ % receiving aid ❖ scholarships				
Housing/Board ❖ guaranteed housing ❖ types of rooms ❖ meal plan options				
Activities ❖ sports ❖ organizations ❖ Greek life				
Campus Visit ❖ general impressions ❖ general feelings ❖ impressions from others				
Overall ❖ Pros ❖ Cons ❖ Personal Rating				

My Final Choice: _____

Resources for Financial Aid Information

Free Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA)

All colleges and universities require their students to fill out the FAFSA to be considered for financial aid. You can complete an application at your own pace on the Internet and can easily check the status of it later. Follow these instructions to get started:

- » Before completing the FAFSA online, you must obtain a FSA ID at <http://fsaid.ed.gov>.
- » With your FSA ID, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA website also has useful information about other financial aid programs offered by the government.
- » Financial aid is distributed on a first come, first served basis. Fill out the application as soon as possible in January as you do your taxes. The Federal Deadline for submitting your FAFSA is June 30. You can change the information later if necessary.
- » To receive a paper FAFSA form, call 1 (800) 4-FED-AID. You can also request other federal publications, such as "Funding Education Beyond High School" and receive help with many questions and concerns. Before having a form sent to you, check your local high school, college, or public library for a FAFSA form.

Free Scholarship Searches and Internet Resources

While numerous companies offer scholarship search services for a fee, you can find all of the same information yourself with a little bit of work. The internet is a great place to start because it is free and up-to-date. Some good places to start searching are:

Scholarship Experts: www.scholarshipexperts.com
Princeton Review: www.princetonreview.com
Scholarships.com: www.scholarships.com

College Answer: www.collegeanswer.com
Fastweb: www.fastweb.com
Mach25: www.collegenet.com/mach25

Some other useful sites are:

- » www.finaid.org: You can estimate your EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) now to plan ahead financially. Includes links to the scholarship searches listed above, links to colleges' financial aid pages, student loan information and much more.
- » www.nasfaa.org: The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators web site gives general information on aid. Look under the tab "Parents & Students". The site also includes links to other information pages, including NCAA regulations.
- » www.studentaid.ed.gov: The U.S. Department of Education site supplies information on Federal Student Aid programs, including maximum awards and eligibility.
- » www.collegeboard.org: The College Board provides good general information, online registration and test dates for the SAT.
- » www.actstudent.org: This site has information on the ACT exam, including dates, practice tests and financial aid.
- » www.salliemae.com: Sallie Mae presents good general information, a general, step-by-step financial aid application process explanation and good information on student loans.
- » www.collegeincolorado.org: Here you will find information on student services for the colleges and universities in Colorado, test preparation, career options, higher education opportunities, college planning tools and more.
- » www.college-assist.com: College Assist offers invaluable guidance about financing an education in Colorado.
- » <http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>: Designed with the input of students and educators, this site's step-by-step approach will make the college planning process easier to navigate.

Books

There are over 500 books printed about college scholarships. Here are some to get you started:

- » Colorado Council on High School/College Relations, Colorado Collegiate Handbook – best for in-state information. Cost is about \$15. To order, see your counselor or visit www.coloradocouncil.org.
- » The College Board Scholarship Handbook
- » Peterson's College Money Handbook



DO YOU NEED MONEY FOR COLLEGE OR CAREER SCHOOL?

Apply for Federal Student Aid

What is federal student aid?

It's money from the federal government that helps you pay for college, career school, or graduate school expenses. Aid is available through grants, work-study, and loans. Every student who meets certain eligibility requirements can get some type of federal student aid, regardless of age or family income. Before you apply, get an estimate of how much aid you could get at [StudentAid.gov/fafsa/estimate](https://studentaid.gov/fafsa/estimate).

How do I apply for aid?

You need to complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) form at fafsa.gov. Students and parents will need an FSA ID to sign the form online. You'll also use your FSA ID to access information about your financial aid on U.S. Department of Education websites. You can create an FSA ID in advance or while you fill out the FAFSA form. To find out more about the FSA ID, visit [StudentAid.gov/fsaid](https://studentaid.gov/fsaid).

When should I apply?

Each October, the FAFSA form is available for the next school year. You'll need to reapply for aid every year you are in school. Here's a summary of key dates for submitting the FAFSA form depending on when you plan to go to school:

IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND COLLEGE FROM

JULY 1, 2018–JUNE 30, 2019

— OR —

JULY 1, 2019–JUNE 30, 2020

YOU WILL SUBMIT THIS FAFSA FORM

2018–19 FAFSA FORM

— OR —

2019–20 FAFSA FORM

YOU CAN SUBMIT THE FAFSA FORM FROM

OCT. 1, 2017–JUNE 30, 2019

— OR —

OCT. 1, 2018–JUNE 30, 2020

Who gets federal student aid?

Some of the most basic eligibility requirements for students are that you must

- demonstrate financial need (for most programs);
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen;
- have a valid Social Security number;
- be registered with Selective Service if you're a male between the ages of 18 and 25;
- be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible degree or certificate program;
- be enrolled at least half-time (for most programs); and
- maintain satisfactory academic progress in college, career school, or graduate school; show you're qualified to obtain a college or career school education by
 - » having a high school diploma or a state recognized equivalent (for example the General Educational Development [GED] certificate); or
 - » completing a high school education in a home-school setting approved under state law; or
 - » enrolling in an eligible career pathways program.

?

Are you considered a dependent or independent student when it comes to the FAFSA® form? Find out at [StudentAid.gov/dependency](https://studentaid.gov/dependency).

THE FAFSA IS FREE!

Completing and submitting the FAFSA form is free and quick, and it gives you access to the largest sources of financial aid to pay for college or career school—federal, state, and school resources.

TYPES OF AID

Amounts shown are awarded annually and are subject to change

Federal Grants: Money that doesn't have to be paid back

FEDERAL PELL GRANT

Up to \$6,095 for the 2018–19 award year

For undergraduates with financial need who have not earned a bachelor's or professional degree. For details and updates, visit StudentAid.gov/pell-grant.

FEDERAL SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANT (FSEOG)

Up to \$4,000

- For undergraduates with exceptional financial need.
- Federal Pell Grant recipients take priority.
- Funds depend on availability at school.
- For details and updates, visit StudentAid.gov/fseog.

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN SERVICE GRANT

Up to \$6,095 for the 2018–19 award year

For undergraduate students who are not Pell-eligible, and the parent or guardian must have died as a result of military service in Iraq or Afghanistan after the events of 9/11. For details and updates, visit StudentAid.gov/iraq-afghanistan.

TEACH GRANT

Up to \$4,000

For undergraduate, postbaccalaureate, and graduate students who are completing or plan to complete course work needed to begin a career in teaching. To receive a TEACH Grant, a student must agree to teach for four years in a high-need field at an elementary school, secondary school, or educational service agency that serves low-income families. If a student doesn't complete the teaching service requirement, all TEACH Grants the student received will be converted to a Direct Unsubsidized Loan that must be repaid, with interest. For details and updates, visit StudentAid.gov/teach.

Federal Work-Study: Money is earned through a job and doesn't have to be repaid

Your total work-study award depends on

- when you apply,
- your level of financial need, and
- your school's funding level.



For Federal Work-Study details and updates, visit StudentAid.gov/workstudy.

Federal Student Loans: These are loans, and must be repaid with interest

	Direct Subsidized Loan	Direct Unsubsidized Loan	Direct PLUS Loan
Who is it for?	For undergraduate students who have financial need. A student must be enrolled at least half-time.	For undergraduate and graduate or professional students. A student must be enrolled at least half-time. Financial need is not required.	For parents of dependent undergraduate students and for graduate or professional students. A student must be enrolled at least half-time. Financial need is not required.
What is the annual award amount?	Up to \$5,500, depending on grade level and dependency status.	Up to \$20,500 (less any subsidized amounts received for the same period), depending on grade level and dependency status.	Maximum amount is the cost of attendance minus any other financial aid received.
What is the interest rate?	Interest rates for new Direct Subsidized Loans can change every year. Loans made to undergraduate students during the 2018–19 award year have the rate fixed at 5.05% for the life of the loan.	For undergraduate students: Interest rates for new Direct Unsubsidized Loans can change every year. Loans made to undergraduate students during the 2018–19 award year have the rate fixed at 5.05% for the life of the loan. For graduate or professional students: Interest rates for new Direct Unsubsidized Loans can change every year. Loans made to graduate or professional students during the 2018–19 award year have the rate fixed at 6.6% for the life of the loan.	Interest rates for new Direct PLUS Loans can change every year. Loans made during the 2018–19 award year have the rate fixed at 7.6% for the life of the loan.
Where do I go for more details and updates on loans?	StudentAid.gov/sub-unsub	StudentAid.gov/sub-unsub	StudentAid.gov/plus

For more information on interest rates, visit StudentAid.gov/interest. For more details about the different types of federal student aid available, visit StudentAid.gov/types.

READY TO FILL OUT THE FAFSA® FORM? GO TO FAFSA.GOV!

I completed the FAFSA® form. Now what?

After you submit your FAFSA form, you'll receive a *Student Aid Report* (SAR) that summarizes the data you submitted. If you provided a valid email address in your application, you'll receive an email with instructions on how to access an online copy of your SAR within three days (if you apply at fafsa.gov) or three weeks (if you mail in a paper FAFSA form).

When you receive your SAR, review it to make sure you didn't make any mistakes on your FAFSA form.

- If you don't need to make any changes to the information listed on your SAR, just keep it for your records.
- To find out how to correct mistakes, or to update your tax data or other information in your FAFSA form, visit StudentAid.gov/fafsa/next-steps/accept-aid or contact the school to which you are applying.

The information in your SAR will be provided to the schools you listed on your FAFSA form. You will receive an aid offer from the schools at which you were accepted for admission.

What's an aid offer and how much aid will I get?

If you applied for admission to a college or career school you listed on your FAFSA form, that school will get your FAFSA information. The school will calculate your aid and send you an aid offer (often electronically).

Most schools will wait to send you an aid offer only after they accept you for admission. The aid offer will tell you how much aid you're eligible to receive at that school and will include the types and amounts of financial aid you may receive from federal, state, private, and school sources. This combination of help from different sources is your financial aid package. How much aid you receive depends on some factors, including

- cost of attendance (for each school);
- *Expected Family Contribution* (EFC)—the EFC does not represent a dollar amount but, instead, it's a number used to calculate how much financial aid you're eligible to receive based on your FAFSA information;
- year in school; and
- enrollment status (e.g., full-time, half-time, etc.).

You can compare school aid offers and see which school is most affordable once financial aid is taken into account. Contact the school's financial aid office if you have any questions about the aid being offered to you. For more information on how aid is calculated, visit StudentAid.gov/how-calculated.

HOW WILL I RECEIVE MY AID?

Your college or career school—not the U.S. Department of Education—will distribute your aid. In most cases, your federal student aid will be applied directly to your school account. The financial aid staff at your school will explain exactly how and when your aid will be disbursed (paid out).



DO I HAVE TO REPAY MY LOANS?

Yes. Student loans, unlike grants and work-study, are borrowed money that must be repaid, with interest, just like car loans and home mortgages. You cannot have these loans canceled because you didn't like the education you received, didn't get a job in your field of study, or are having financial difficulty. So think about the amount you'll have to repay before you take out a loan and only borrow the amount you need. Learn more about loan repayment at StudentAid.gov/repay.

DON'T LET YOUR INTEREST CAPITALIZE!

If you have unsubsidized or PLUS loans, then interest accumulates on these loans before you begin repayment (e.g., while you are in school). Consider paying interest on your federal student loans while you're in school, and during grace, deferment, and forbearance periods to avoid capitalization (the addition of unpaid interest to the principal balance of your loan). Capitalization increases your loan balance, and interest will then accrue on that higher principal amount.

What else do I need to remember when **APPLYING FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID?**

- ✓ Only borrow what you need and what you can afford to pay back.
- ✓ Your FAFSA information has to be correct to ensure that you receive your aid promptly and in the right amount. Always respond to (or act upon) any correspondence your school sends you—and meet all deadlines.
- ✓ Contact the school if you're interested in institutional or state grants.

FREE HELP IS AVAILABLE

Free help is available any time during the application process. Online help is available while you complete your application at fafsa.gov. You can also get free information and help from your school counselor, the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend, or the U.S. Department of Education at StudentAid.gov or 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243). You should never have to pay for help!

Stay Connected



/FederalStudentAid



/FAFSA



/FederalStudentAid

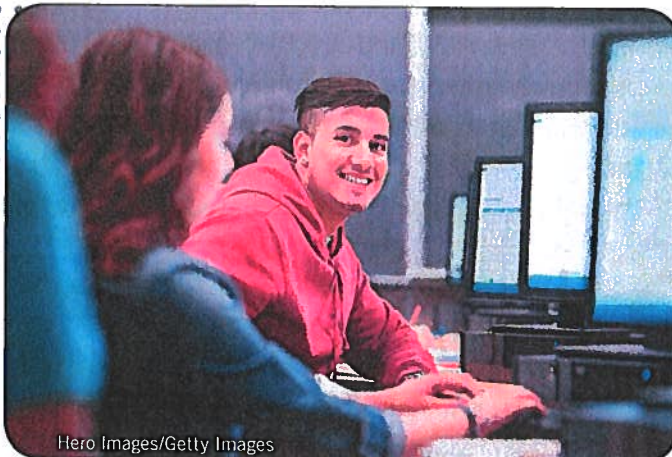
Access your federal student loan information at
StudentAid.gov/login.

CONTACT US

1-800-4-FED-AID

(1-800-433-3243); TTY for the hard
of hearing: 1-800-730-8913

U.S. Department of Education
Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)
Box 84
Washington, DC 20044-0084



Hero Images/Getty Images

ONE OPPORTUNITY. LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES.

If you want to play sports at an NCAA Division I or II school, start by registering for a Certification Account with the NCAA Eligibility Center at **eligibilitycenter.org**. If you want to play Division III sports or you aren't sure where you want to compete, start by creating a Profile Page at **eligibilitycenter.org**.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

To play sports at a Division I or II school, you must graduate from high school, complete 16 NCAA-approved core courses, earn a minimum GPA and earn an ACT or SAT score that matches your core-course GPA.

CORE COURSES

Visit **eligibilitycenter.org/courselist** for a full list of your high school's approved core courses. Complete 16 core courses in the following areas:

DIVISION I

Complete 10 NCAA core courses, including seven in English, math or natural/physical science, before your seventh semester.

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	NATURAL/ PHYSICAL SCIENCE (Including one year of lab, if offered)	ADDITIONAL (English, math or natural/physical science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	ADDITIONAL COURSES (Any area listed to the left, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy)
4 years	3 years	2 years	1 year	2 years	4 years

DIVISION II

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	NATURAL/ PHYSICAL SCIENCE (Including one year of lab, if offered)	ADDITIONAL (English, math or natural/physical science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	ADDITIONAL COURSES (Any area listed to the left, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy)
3 years	2 years	2 years	3 years	2 years	4 years

GRADE-POINT AVERAGE

The NCAA Eligibility Center calculates your grade-point average (GPA) based on the grades you earn in NCAA-approved core courses.

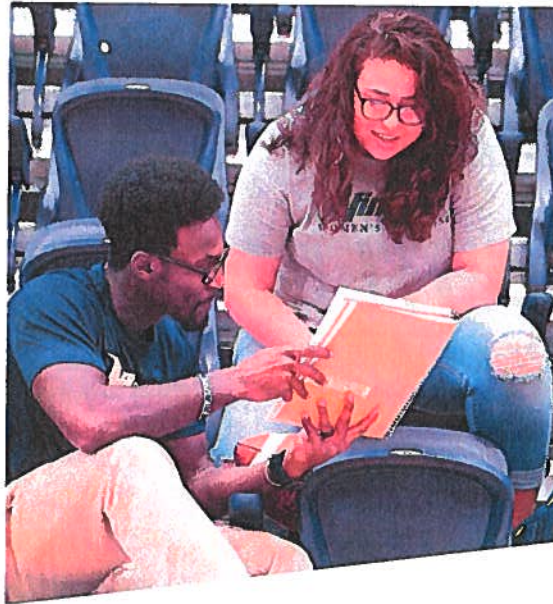
- DI requires a minimum 2.3 GPA.
- DII requires a minimum 2.2 GPA.

SLIDING SCALE

Divisions I and II use sliding scales to match test scores and GPAs to determine eligibility. The sliding scale balances your test score with your GPA. If you have a low test score, you need a higher GPA to be eligible. Find more information about sliding scales at ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/test-scores.

TEST SCORES

Take the ACT or SAT as many times as you want before you enroll full time in college, but remember to list the NCAA Eligibility Center (code **9999**) as a score recipient whenever you register to take a test. If you take a test more than once, send us all your scores and we will use the best scores from each test section to create your sum score. We accept official scores only from the ACT or SAT, and won't use scores shown on your high school transcript.



HIGH SCHOOL TIMELINE

GRADE 9

Plan

- Start planning now! Take the right courses and earn the best grades you can.
- Ask your counselor for a list of your high school's NCAA core courses to make sure you take the right classes. Or, find your high school's list of NCAA core courses at eligibilitycenter.org/courselist.

GRADE 10

Register

- Register for a Certification Account or Profile Page with the NCAA Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org.
- If you fall behind on courses, don't take shortcuts to catch up. Ask your counselor for help with finding approved courses or programs you can take.

GRADE 11

Study

- Check with your counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate on time.
- Take the ACT or SAT, and make sure we get your scores by using code 9999.
- At the end of the year, ask your counselor to upload your official transcript.

GRADE 12

Graduate

- Take the ACT or SAT again, if necessary, and make sure we get your scores by using code 9999.
- Request your final amateurism certification after April 1.
- After you graduate, ask your counselor to upload your final official transcript with proof of graduation.

Core Courses

This simple formula will help you meet Divisions I and II core-course requirements.

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

- + 4 English courses (one per year)
- + 4 math courses (one per year)
- + 4 science courses (one per year)
- + 4 social science courses (one per year)
- = 16 NCAA CORE COURSES

For more information:

ncaa.org/playcollegesports
eligibilitycenter.org

Search Frequently Asked Questions

ncaa.org/studentfaq

Follow us:

@NCAAEC

@playcollegesports

Steps for the United States Military Academies Application Process

Mission Statement

The mission of the U.S. service academies is to provide instruction and experience to all cadets so that they graduate with the knowledge and character essential to leadership and the motivation to become career officers in the U.S. military.

Eligibility

To be eligible to enter an Academy, you must be:

- A citizen of the United States
- Of good moral character
- Unmarried with no dependents
- At least 17, but less than 23 years of age by July 1 of the year you would enter.

Selections

It takes a well-rounded program of leadership, academic, and athletic preparation to be one of the few who can meet the Service Academies high admission standards and the fierce competitions for appointment. Carefully consider the characteristics of dedication, desire to serve others, ability to accept discipline, sense of duty, and morality, and the enjoyment of challenge in deciding if you want to pursue an Academy education.

Academic Preparation

It is recommended that young persons who aspire to go to one of the service academies take a college preparatory curriculum in high school that stresses English and Math. Also, they should plan on taking the ACT and SAT test as early as possible and more than once.

Physical Preparation

During the admissions process prospective cadets will be given the Candidate Fitness Assessment. All three academies have the same physical fitness events: the basketball throw; pull-ups (men & women) or flexed-arm hang (women); shuttle run; modified sit-ups; push-ups; and the one-mile run. The purpose of these tests is to evaluate a candidate's upper body strength and endurance. Please check with each academy on their specific requirements for the Candidate Fitness Assessment.

General Information

The minimum SAT scores for the academies are 500 verbal and 500 math. The average SAT scores at the academies are 540-620 verbal and 630-710 math. The minimum ACT scores for the academies are 21 English, 19 Social Studies, 24 Mathematics, and 24 Natural Science. The average ACT scores are 23-27 English; 24-29 Social Studies; 27-32 Mathematics; 28-32 Natural Science (minimum and average scores are slightly higher for the Naval Academy). Virtually all cadets are from the top 25% of their high school class.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice-president-biden/academy-nominations/steps>

10 TIPS TO GIVE YOU AN EDGE IN GETTING INTO ONE OF THESE ELITE INSTITUTIONS:

1. Get the grades. Ninety percent of cadets were in the top 20% of their class. But, the academies want well-rounded people. Good grades are a starting point, not the finish line.

2. Practice testing. The ACT and SAT are critical. Scores listed under "general information" on the General Application sheet.

3. Be an athlete. Not everyone is an intercollegiate athlete, but most cadets play intramural sports, face fitness tests and undergo strenuous physical training.

4. Be a leader. The academies are looking for leaders. Participation in clubs and extracurricular activities is not enough. Become a club officer or class officer. Work hard to earn school, athletic and community awards. Awards separate you from the pack.

5. Be involved in the community. Leaders care. Show you care by routinely volunteering or working in community programs.

6. Ace the interview. Your interview with the academy liaison officer is a big deal. You will be asked about citizenship, reasons for attending and even about current events. Read the newspaper before your interview. Practice with your family. Answer in clear, thoughtful sentences.

7. Know your Congressman. You need an official nomination to get into the academies (except the Coast Guard Academy). These come from Senators, Congressmen, the Vice President and the President. Apply to all the sources, but get to personally know the ones you can. Volunteer in their office. Write them letters. Make appointments to see them.

8. Go for more than one. Congressman and Senators have a limited number of nominations for each academy. By considering all four academies you increase your chances of getting in.

9. Attend summer programs. Each academy offers programs for exceptional students during the summer before their senior year. These programs provide an up close look at the academies and what cadet life is like. Your counselor can help you apply.

10. Start now! While the academies don't start official applications until your junior year in high school, you should start early. Write and get the pre-candidate questionnaires and candidate kits. Talk to your high school counselor. Talk to your Congressman. Meet the academy liaison officer for your area. Let everyone know you have a dream and a plan to make it real.

<http://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/us-military-academies-overview.html>