

Junior Year Checklist

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College Application Planning



Start preparing now and get a head start on your college applications



College List

Spring / Summer

- Having a balanced college list is one of the most important steps in the entire application process.
- Categorize colleges into 3 groups: safety, match, and reach schools.
- Take a numbers approach when categorizing. Examine the GPA and standardized test scores from past students.

Schedule College Visits

Spring / Summer

- It is time to start narrowing down your college selection and scheduling visits for your top choices.
- Have a game plan for the summer.

College Tours

Spring / Summer

- Be prepared before you go. Plan to:
 - Speak with an admissions representative
 - Bring a list of questions - show you have done your homework
- Walk the campus, ask questions, and see if you can envision yourself spending the next four years here.

Register for SAT/ACT

Spring

- Review your PSAT and ACT PLAN results and register to take 1 SAT and 1 ACT in the early spring.
- Set up a study plan and stick to it.

SAT/ACT - Pick a test

Spring / Summer

- After receiving your SAT/ACT results, decide which test highlights your strengths and register for the next exam.
- Not happy with your first score? One-on-one test prep can help to bring up that score.
- The fall is a hectic time with a full course load plus applications, wrap up standardized testing before senior year starts.

SAT Subject Tests

Spring

- Do any of the colleges on your list requires them?
- Are they "considered", "recommended" or "strongly recommended"?
- Start planning which ones you are going to take and register for the exam. Don't just select tests at random, they should match with your application strategy plan.

Letters of Recommendation (LOR)

Spring

- Start preparing the material you will give each teacher to help them write the best LOR possible.
- Choose two/three teachers and ask them for LOR, ask them before junior year ends so they can work on them over the summer.

Gap Analysis

Spring / Summer

- Are your activities and experiences strong enough? Are your test scores within the range of accepted students?
- If not, additional work should be done over the spring and summer to increase your student profile.

Application Prep

Spring / Summer

- Document the requirements and critical deadlines for each college you are applying. Get organized; the application process has many moving pieces.

Start on your college application

Summer

- Get started on the college applications. Setting goals and accomplishing tasks over the summer will alleviate some of the stress senior year.
- Great progress can be made during the summer with a proper plan in place.

Personal Statements

Summer

- A narrative form of writing is required. One of our favorite openings is an anecdote.
- Complete final draft before senior year begins.

Resume & LinkedIn

Summer

- Create a student resume that highlights your leadership and accomplishments. A student resume is different than your parent's resume.
- Use LinkedIn as your online portfolio. Make it interactive. This will help humanize you to the admissions staff.
- Complete final drafts before senior year begins.

College Sports

Summer (August)

- A narrative form of writing is required. One of our favorite openings is an anecdote. Register for the NCAA Clearinghouse if you plan to compete in Division I or II college sports.

SENIOR YEAR

Understand the ways to apply to college early

Fall Oct-Nov

- Decide if you want to go for binding early decision or restrictive early action.
- Examine admit rates and know how applying early will affect your odds.
- Complete and turn in applications for colleges with Early Admission: Early Action (EA), Restrictive Early Action (REA), or Early Decision (ED).

Regular Admission

Fall Nov-Jan

- Didn't get accepted early? Got deferred? Now is the time to follow the game plan for regular admission colleges and Early Decision II (ED II) colleges.
- Complete and turn in applications for schools with Regular Admission or ED II.

FAFSA

Fall Oct-Jan

- Complete the FAFSA and all financial aid applications - FAFSA goes live Oct 1.
- Check if your college also requires the CSS Profile.

Check your application status

Fall / Winter

- Log into your portal for each college you applied and check your application status weekly.