

plan for college

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Action Plan: High School Seniors

College Admissions & Preparation for Seniors

July & August

- Take the SAT: Reasoning Test™ and SAT: Subject Tests™ well before college deadlines. Colleges receive scores about three weeks after the test, but it can take longer. [SAT® Online Registration](#) [SAT Preparation Center](#)
- Use College Search to explore all your options and to see how you match up to students at the colleges in which you're interested. [College Search](#)
- Request applications, brochures, and financial aid information from your colleges. Try to narrow your college list to five to eight colleges. [Narrow Your College List](#)

- Try to visit as many colleges on your list as possible this summer or fall. Get a feel for the campus. Take a tour, sit in on a class, and try to stay overnight in a dorm. [Campus Visit Checklist](#)
- If you plan to compete in Division I or Division II college sports and want to be eligible to be recruited by colleges, you must register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. Note: Students who will first be entering college on or after August 1, 2005 must meet the new 14 core-course rule.

September

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	October SAT: Registration Deadline
	October SAT: Late Registration Deadline

- Mark your calendar with important dates and deadlines for the year. Be sure to stay on top of application and financial aid deadlines. [College Application Calendar](#) [Financial Aid Calendar](#)

- Talk to your counselor about college plans, financial aid options, and your transcript. [Questions for Your Counselor](#)
- Get started on your applications right away if you plan to apply through an Early Decision or Early Action program. [Early Decision and Early Action](#)

October

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	November SAT: Registration Deadline
	SAT Administration
	November SAT: Late Registration Deadline
	December SAT: Registration Deadline

- Get a head start on your application essays. [College Essay Writing Tips](#)
- Ask your counselor about local scholarships and search for other scholarships that match your skills and interests. [Scholarship Search](#)

- Some colleges and scholarship programs require the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® application. [PROFILE Online](#)
- Use the College Board's Apply service to apply online to hundreds of colleges and universities. [Apply to Colleges Online](#)
- Male students who will be 18 at the time they complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must register with Selective Service.

November

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	SAT Administration
	December SAT: Late Registration Deadline

- Gear up for mid-year finals. Remember, colleges will be looking at your senior year grades.

- Be sure to send your SAT scores online to the colleges on your list. [Send Your SAT Scores](#)
- Continue working on your application essays. You can use the same three-step process you use to write essays for class -- 1. prewrite, 2. draft, and 3. edit. [Three Steps to a Great College Essay](#)
- Talk to your parents about college financing strategies. Determine your family's share of college costs with the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) Calculator. [EFC Calculator](#)

- Use Scholarship Search to find award programs whose deadlines have not yet passed. [Scholarship Search](#)
- A college interview is a great opportunity to get an inside look at a college that interests you. Be sure to come prepared with some thoughtful questions. [College Interviews](#)

December

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	SAT Administration
	January SAT: Registration Deadline
	January SAT: Late Registration Deadline

- Whether you're applying to two schools or ten, keeping track of your college applications can help you avoid costly mistakes. [College Application Checklist](#)
- Pick up FAFSA forms from your counselor or complete your FAFSA online -- be sure your family saves pay stubs to estimate their income.

January

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	SAT Administration

- Most regular decision applications are due in January or February. Be sure all the necessary materials have been sent and received.
- Submit the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1. Do your best to apply by priority financial aid deadlines (which tend to fall in February). [How to Complete the FAFSA](#) [FAFSA online](#)

- You and your parents should prepare tax returns as early as possible -- income and asset figures from your tax returns are needed to complete the FAFSA.
- Do any of your colleges require the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE? You can now complete and submit this application online. [PROFILE Online](#)
- Colleges like to see strong second semester grades, so avoid senioritis. [What to Do About Senioritis](#)

February

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	March New SAT: Registration Deadline
	March New SAT: Late Registration Deadline

- There's still time to apply to thousands of colleges and universities. Use College Search to find schools whose application deadlines have not yet passed. [College Search](#)
- Most priority financial aid deadlines fall in February. Applications sent before priority financial aid deadlines will receive the most consideration.

- Complete the necessary aid forms, including FAFSA and CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE, and keep copies of everything that you send.
- About four weeks after mailing in your FAFSA you'll receive your SAR (Student Aid Report). Review it for accuracy.
- Attend a Financial Aid Night with your parents at a school in your area.
- Continue to use Scholarship Search and ask your counselor about local scholarships. [Scholarship Search](#)

March

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	Administration of the SAT
	May SAT: Registration Deadline

- Visit the campuses of the schools on your list. Spending time on a campus allows you to determine if a school is a good match. [Campus Visit Checklist](#)

- Apply for scholarships -- there's still time. Use Scholarship Search to find awards whose application deadlines have not yet passed. [Scholarship Search](#)
- Study for May AP Exams. You'll find AP preparation materials, such as previously administered free-response questions, study skills and test-taking tips, and APCDs at collegeboard.com. [AP Preparation](#)
- Look for a great summer opportunity -- job, internship, or volunteer position. [Find the Perfect Summer Job](#)

April

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	May SAT: Late Registration Deadline
	June SAT: Registration Deadline

- Most admission decisions and financial aid award letters arrive this month. Read each carefully, and note all reply deadlines. [College Decision-Making Guide](#)
- Review financial aid packages with your parents and counselor. Use the Compare Your Aid Awards tool to do a side-by-side comparison. [Compare Your Aid Awards](#) [Selecting a Financial Aid Package](#)

- Send the enrollment form and deposit check to the college of your choice. Notify the other colleges to which you were accepted of your decision. [Next Steps](#)
- If you're waitlisted by a college, contact the admission director to reiterate your interest in the school. [What to Do If You're Waitlisted](#)
- If you're not admitted to any of the colleges to which you applied, see your counselor immediately. Use College Search to find colleges whose application deadlines haven't passed. [Rejected: Now What?](#) [College Search](#)
- Study for May AP Exams. [AP Preparation](#)

May

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	SAT Administration
	June SAT: Late Registration Deadline

- AP Exams are administered the first two weeks in May. Have your scores sent to your final-choice college.

- If student loans are part of your financial aid package, the college will send instructions about the loan application process. [Loan Repayment and Debt](#) [College Board Education Loan Program](#)
- Send thank-you notes to teachers and other mentors who wrote you recommendations.

June

Test Dates & Deadlines	
	SAT Administration

- Have your final transcript sent to your college.

- Finalize your summer plans.
- Send thank-you notes to scholarship programs that have given you aid.

July & August

- Notify the financial aid office of your college about any scholarships you've been offered.

- [Start packing.](#)