

College Application Checklist

Use this checklist to manage tasks, required materials, and deadlines.

1 RESEARCH & PLANNING

- ☐ Make a list of potential colleges based on academic, financial, and personal fit.
- ☐ Research Early Action, Early Decision, Regular Decision, and priority scholarship deadlines.
- ☐ Verify each college's admission requirements and test-score policy.
- ☐ Attend college fairs, tours, virtual information sessions, or campus visits.
- ☐ Create a calendar or tracker for admission and financial aid deadlines.

2 STANDARDIZED TESTS (IF APPLICABLE)

- ☐ Check whether each college requires, recommends, or accepts SAT/ACT scores.
- ☐ Register and prepare for tests if they are part of your application plan.
- ☐ Arrange official score reports when requested; allow time for delivery.

3 APPLICATION MATERIALS

- ☐ Create an account on the application platform each college accepts.
- ☐ Complete personal, academic, and college-specific application questions.
- ☐ Draft, revise, and proofread your personal statement and supplemental essays.
- ☐ Prepare your activities list, employment, volunteering, and accomplishments.
- ☐ Request official transcripts and required school reports; confirm the process with your counselor.
- ☐ Check application fees and request fee waivers if eligible.

4 LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- ☐ Ask teachers, counselors, or other recommenders well before deadlines.
- ☐ Provide a résumé, your goals, specific college deadlines, and any needed forms.
- ☐ Check application portals to confirm receipt; follow up politely if materials are missing.

PRO TIP

A college may have different deadlines for admission, scholarships, and aid. Always verify current dates on the college website.

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Follow-through matters just as much as submitting your application.

5 FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

- ☐ Complete the FAFSA for your intended enrollment year at StudentAid.gov.
- ☐ Complete the CSS Profile or other institutional forms if your colleges require them.
- ☐ Check federal, state, and college-specific priority aid deadlines.
- ☐ Search and apply for scholarships; review renewal conditions carefully.
- ☐ Compare financial aid offers based on total cost, grants, loans, and work-study.

6 SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

- ☐ Review names, academic information, college-specific questions, and essay versions.
- ☐ Check required materials, recommendation requests, and payment or fee waivers.
- ☐ Submit every application before its college-specific deadline.
- ☐ Save submission confirmations and copies of your applications.

7 AFTER SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

- ☐ Watch for confirmation emails and applicant portal access instructions.
- ☐ Check each portal for missing materials or other requests.
- ☐ Arrange mid-year grades or additional reports if requested.
- ☐ Prepare for an interview if offered or required.
- ☐ Thank teachers, counselors, and others who supported your applications.
- ☐ Review admission decisions, aid offers, and enrollment steps.
- ☐ Confirm your chosen college's reply and deposit deadlines; May 1 is common, not universal.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

FAFSA opening dates and financial aid priority deadlines vary by cycle and institution.
A submitted application may still be missing separately delivered documents.