

TWELFTH GRADE COLLEGE TIMELINE/CHECKLIST

SUMMER TO DO:

- Create a list of top choice schools that best fits your needs
- Tour Probable, Target, and Reach Schools of your interest
- Become familiar with Admissions Counselors at schools of your choice
- Prep for ACT/SAT at least 2-3 times a week
- Practice writing authentic expressions of interest in schools of your choice
- Organize college file
- Send emails to individuals that you are considering for recommendation letters
- Shadow someone in your field of interest
- Have in mind whether or not you plan to apply regular decision, early action, early decision, or rolling admission

SEPTEMBER:

- Meet with your guidance counselor to make sure you are on track for graduating.** Go over upcoming deadlines and talk to your counselor about what you can do to make the most of your senior to increase your chances of being admitted to the college or colleges of your choice. Ask about the possibility to take dual credit, AP or honors course.
- Meet with your College and Career Counselor** to review your college planning file to make sure you have everything you need. You can also strategize with them to make sure you are on target for submitting your applications or registering for exams.
- Continue your involvement in extracurricular activities.** If you were not able to get involved in previous years, now is the time to sign up for a student organization activity or club that interests you.
- Register for the Fall SAT/ACT tests if you plan to take or retake them.** Make sure you meet the requirements (including any transcript requirements) for all the colleges to which you want to apply. Check your transcripts to make sure you have all the credits you need to get into the colleges that interest you.
- Review your college planning file.** Make sure you have copies of your grade reports from each year. Confirm that you have reached out to all of your recommendation writers and, if applicable, have provided them with stamped, college-addressed envelopes. Double-check the application deadlines. Find out from the colleges if they need official copies of your transcripts (these are sent directly from your school).
- Attend College Fair:** This will give you a chance to meet with representatives from local and national colleges and universities.
- Are you planning to apply early decision?** Most early decision and early action applications are due between October 1 and November 1. Confirm that you want to apply early decision. This decision is binding (with few exceptions) and, upon acceptance, will require you to withdraw all other applications.

- ❑ **Organize your financial aid information.** Develop a plan that includes a list of the aid sources, requirements for each application, and a timetable for meeting the filing deadlines. Getting organized will make the process of applying a lot easier because you'll know where to find important information. Some colleges require the CSS/PROFILE, a supplemental financial aid form, in addition to the FAFSA. Find out if your schools will need this.
- ❑ **Stay Motivated!** Keep studying! It's easy to fall into the "senioritis" trap your last year of high school. Losing focus during your last year can cause a drop in motivation, grades and impact your ability to enroll in your first choice college.

OCTOBER:

- ❑ **Complete and submit your college financial aid application and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).** Go to the FAFSA on the Web form at: www.fafsa.ed.gov. In order to be considered for financial aid, you will need to submit a FAFSA, even if you have not yet been notified of your acceptance to the college(s) to which you applied. Tax or income information for you and your parents from **two years prior** will be required for the financial aid forms.
- ❑ **Plan to attend financial aid workshops and seminars,** for both you and your parents. Ask your guidance counselor or your College and Career Counselor about upcoming events. It is often helpful to attend these events to break down this information in ways that are easy to understand and follow.
- ❑ **Review your list of colleges.** Reconfirm that they still satisfy your requirements. Make a final list of schools that interest you and review the deadlines and requirements to make sure you are on target to apply.
- ❑ **Take the SAT or ACT tests.** Request that official scores be sent to the colleges or universities that have made your final list of schools. If you did not register in time, or if you plan to retake the tests, register for the December or January SAT and SAT Subject tests.
- ❑ **Begin writing the final drafts of your college essays.** Ask your teachers, counselors, parents, friends or mentors to review your essay to make sure the essay is grammatically correct and without spelling errors and that it represents your authentic self.

NOVEMBER:

- ❑ **Submit your college admission applications.** Review them thoroughly before submitting to make sure there are no errors and that you have included all of the required documents and information.
- ❑ **Finalize your scholarship search and begin to apply.** Many untapped scholarships are offered by community organizations and businesses. Finding these scholarships takes time but can be rewarding if you stick to it. Consult with the guidance counselor or the following [list of websites](#) for scholarship search engines. Note: Your parent's place of employment often is a great and untapped source for scholarships.
- ❑ **Review your Student Aid Report.** If you completed the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks. Make the necessary corrections and return it to the FAFSA processor at your school. If you have not yet submitted an application to that school, you will not receive a student aid report until you

have applied and have been admitted.

DECEMBER:

- Monitor your emails closely.** If you applied early decision, you should be receiving a response soon.
- Request or confirm that your official test scores** are being sent to the colleges to which you are applying. You should be able to log in to your ACT/SAT account online to confirm all of the schools you sent your scores too. You do not want your admissions decision to be held up because you forgot to send your scores.
- Schedule any remaining required interviews.** Some colleges require in person interviews during the admissions process. These interviews are often conducted local alumni or representatives of the admissions office who live in your geographic area. Talk to your guidance counselor or College and Career Counselor about how to prepare for college interviews.
- Start thinking about how you're going to spend your summer.** Summer is a great time to earn extra money and gain work experience. Ask your counselor about internships, and start researching the summer job market in your area.

JANUARY:

- Make a list of thing you will need for college.** If you don't already have a good computer, investigate purchasing one for college. Ask about student discounts. You or your parents can subsidize the cost of a computer for college in your student loans. Begin purchasing other items you will need either for studying, or for your residence hall.
- Request that your high school send your official transcripts** to the colleges to which you are applying. Each college will require you to submit your high school transcript to them. Contact the admissions office at the colleges to which you have applied to make sure your information has been received, and that they have everything they need from you.
- Continue searching and applying for scholarships.** Review your list frequently to make sure you do not miss deadlines and that all of the required documents have been requested and mailed.

FEBRUARY:

- Continue searching and applying for scholarships.** Review your list frequently to make sure you do not miss deadlines and that all of the required documents have been requested and mailed.

MARCH - APRIL:

- Compare your acceptance letters, financial aid and scholarship offers.** The hard part is not yet over! Once you receive acceptances, you will want compare your important factors with your financial aid packages and scholarship offers. Some students may decide to revisit the school or ask to speak to a current student or faculty member to help them their decision.

MAY:

- Make a commitment by May 1!** When you choose a college that has accepted you, you will be required to pay a non-refundable deposit for tuition. This deposit lets the college know that you plan to enroll. Many

colleges require that your notification letter and deposit be postmarked by May 1 – Decision Day!

- Take AP exams for any AP subjects you studied in high school.** Some colleges will award college credit for when at student scores at a certain level on the AP Exam. This may also help determine which level classes you are eligible to take during your first year of college.

JUNE:

- Send your final transcript to the college!** Even though you sent your transcripts for admissions, you are now required to submit your final transcripts to your college. The transcripts must come directly from the school in a sealed envelope.
- Attend Summer Orientation Programs.** Schools offer an orientation program designed to acquaint you with the campus facilities, programs, student organizations and other students.
- Update your Bacterial Meningitis Vaccine.** If you are attending a Texas state school, you will be required to submit a record of a bacterial meningitis vaccine that was administered within the last five years.
- Plan to take College Placement Test.** If you are planning to attend a community college in the state of Texas, you may be required to take the [Texas Success Initiative Test](#) or the TSI. This test assesses your skill level in reading, writing and math. Your results, will determine if you are eligible to take college level course. If you are planning to attend a community college outside the state of Texas, you may be required to take the [College Placement Test](#).