

ACTION PLAN: HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

~MONTHLY PLANNER FOR COLLEGE~

Fall

Pulling Your Applications Together

- Narrow your [list of colleges](#) to between 5 and 10 and review it with your counselor. Get an application and financial aid info from each. Visit as many as possible.
- Make a master [calendar](#) and note:
 1. Test dates, fees, and deadlines
 2. College application due dates
 3. Required [financial aid applications](#) and their deadlines
 4. Recommendations, transcripts, and other necessary materials
 5. Your high school's deadlines for application requests, such as your transcript
- Ask for [recommendations](#). Give each person your resume, a stamped, addressed envelope, and any required forms.
- Write [application essays](#) and ask teachers, parents, and friends to read first drafts.

Applying Early Action or Early Decision?

- November 1: For [early admissions](#), colleges may require test scores and applications in early November. [Send your SAT® scores](#) at collegeboard.com.
- Ask if your college offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility

Get Financial Aid Info

- Attend financial aid info events in your area.
- Talk to your counselor about CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® and learn about it with [Completing the PROFILE](#).
- Use [Scholarship Search](#) at collegeboard.com, review scholarship books, and ask your counselor about local and state funding sources.

Winter

Application Details

- Most regular applications are due between January 1 and February 15. Keep copies of everything you send to colleges.
- Have your high school send your transcript to colleges.
- Contact colleges to make sure they've received all application materials.

Financial Aid: Apply Early. Apply Right.

- You and your family should save this year's pay stubs to estimate income on aid forms that you'll file early next year.
- Submit your [FAFSA](#) as soon after January 1 as possible. Men 18 or older must register for the selective service to receive federal financial aid.
- Many priority financial aid deadlines fall in February. To get the most attractive award package, apply by the priority date. Keep copies of everything you send.

Spring

When the Letters Start Rolling In

- You should get acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April.
- Use [Compare Your Aid Awards](#) to compare awards from different colleges. Questions? Talk to financial aid officers. Not enough aid? Ask if other financing plans are available.
- If you haven't already, visit your final college before accepting.

May 1: Making Your Final Choice

- You must tell every college of your acceptance or rejection of offers of admission or financial aid by May 1. Send a deposit to the college you choose.
- [Wait-listed](#)? If you will enroll if accepted, tell the admissions director your intent and ask how to strengthen your application. Need financial aid? Ask if funds will be available if you're accepted.

Summer

Next Steps

- Ask your high school to send a final transcript to your college.
- Start preparing for the year ahead.