

Preparing for College Admissions

The Summer Before 12th Grade

How are you spending the summer before your senior year? In addition to [activities](#) like working, volunteering, or taking classes, summer is the perfect opportunity to research colleges and prepare for the admissions process. Set a goal number of hours per week dedicated to set yourself up for success. Use the checklist below to help organize your efforts.

GENERAL PREPARATION

Determine your favorite places to study and concentrate, like your home, local library, or a cafe.	
Seek a community that can support you, such as family members, teachers, friends and peers, older students who have applied to college, mentors from jobs or extracurriculars, or online communities.	
Self-reflect and create a list of three academic and/or career areas you are interested in.	
Have an open mind toward colleges you are unfamiliar with and consider opportunities that seem beyond reach. Top colleges can be more affordable for students from low-income backgrounds than public or community colleges.	

COLLEGE RESEARCH

Sign up online for college mailing lists to receive information and alert admissions offices of your interest.	
Get to know college campuses! Visit local campuses, attend fly-in programs, or use free online virtual tours.	
Attend online information sessions and webinars hosted by colleges you are interested in.	
Review standardized testing requirements or recommendations and determine if you need to take the SAT and/or the ACT.	

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Register early for test dates and fee waivers, and note the different locations and times.	
Map out your test preparation and testing dates on a calendar to pace yourself and be best prepared. Test: _____ Date: _____ Fee Waived: _____ Test: _____ Date: _____ Fee Waived: _____ Test: _____ Date: _____ Fee Waived: _____ Test: _____ Date: _____ Fee Waived: _____	
Prepare for exams using study books and online resources , such as lessons and practice tests/questions.	

COLLEGE APPLICATION

Begin brainstorming your outline for application essays . Some prompts are available on college websites!	
Think about who you want to ask for recommendation letters. Visit our website for helpful criteria .	
Get ready for the National College Match application to open in late summer and research colleges to rank.	