Utilizing Common App

This application will help users easily manage all their college applications in one place, instead of having to check multiple different locations. It may seem a bit overwhelming as there are many detailed steps, but as you create an account and follow the steps, you will interact with Common App’s user-friendly interface. Please scroll through the steps and feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns that you may have.

**Signing Up for Common App:**

1. Click on the following link: <https://www.commonapp.org/>
2. Click “Start your application” button to begin the application.
3. Indicate who will be using the application; first-year students (students who will be attending college for the first time), transfer students (college students transferring to another college), “educational professional” (teacher, counselor, etc.), or parent/guardian.
4. Regardless of the selected choice, all users will have to create an account. Please fill out the boxes, accordingly, making sure that all requisites are completed. Ensure that the name entered is the has the user’s legal name, phone number, birthday, and current home address.

**Navigating your Account within Common App:**

1. Once logged in, the user will see the “Dashboard.” On the dashboard, users will be able to see how their application process is going. This helps users be able to toggle between different applications and get notifications for any new updates on the admissions progress.
2. On the second tab, users will see “My Colleges.” Users will be able to look at all the colleges they have already applied for to make sure they answer all specific questions regarding a college, add and manage recommenders (teacher/other recommendations), and most importantly, submit their application! If users need assistance with this tab, there is an “Applicant Solution Center” link, <https://appsupport.commonapp.org/applicantsupport/s/> for users to navigate popular FAQs as well as be able to contact support with specific questions.
3. The third tab is titled “Common App.” This is the real nitty gritty of the application in terms of personal information that applicants need to fill out. This section is very information heavy, so it may take a while to get all the information in (especially waiting for test scores, etc.)
   1. In “Profile,” users will fill in their personal information such as their legal name(s), birthday, address, contact information, demographics, language, geography and nationality, fee waivers.
   2. In “Family,” users will fill in their families (parent(s) and sibling(s)) information such as their names, marital status, occupation, and educational level.
   3. In “Education,” users will fill in their school accomplishments, grades, classes, honors, community-based organizations, and future plans as applicable.
   4. In “Testing,” users will select the option to send and self-report official score reports on standardized tests i.e., ACT, SAT/SAT Subject, AP, IB, Cambridge, TOEFL, PTE Academic, IELTS, and Duolingo English Test
   5. In “Activities,” users will have the opportunity to showcase their involvement in extracurriculars.
   6. In “Writing,” users will acknowledge that some colleges may require a personal essay as part of their application. Some colleges require the personal essay in their applications, while some others may not. Students who are completing the personal essay will have an option between seven different topics to help readers get a better understanding of who the applicant is as a person to show off who they are to their reader. Applicants must adhere to the clear guidelines involving word count and addressing the specific topic in this section.
   7. In “Colleges & Grades,” users will need to input data from their high school (first-year) or college (transfer) transcripts regarding classes taken and grades received.
4. By utilizing the “College Search” tool, users can understand what their dream schools require, but also learn about new colleges that they may not have heard of which align with their goals/needs. Users will be able to search within the 1031 results available. It can be a bit overwhelming as most users utilizing Common App will not be applying to all 1,031 schools, haha! If the user knows exactly what schools they want to apply to, then they can click on it using the search bar.

By clicking ‘More Filters,” users can search for schools that meet specific requirements of a college that may align with more personal needs. In this section, users can look within a specific country, a specific state, distance from a zip code, the term that they would like to attend school, when the application deadline is, whether there is an application fee, personal essay requirement, standardized test policy, and if letter of recommendation is required. Users can also sort by college name or distance.

1. Finally, the “Financial Aid Resources” tab will help users learn and understand how they will be attending college financially. This page provides informative details about how to save for college, plan for college costs, and how to apply for financial aid (FAFSA) and apply for scholarships.