

THE ULTIMATE COLLEGE APPLICATION CHECKLIST



1

FRESHMAN YEAR

- Learn how your school calculates your GPA
- Maintain good grades
- Get involved in meaningful extracurricular activities
- Search for scholarships: Start with Niche's How to Pay for College video for tips

2

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- Meet with your school counselor to go over your class schedule and future goals
- Keep up those good grades!
- Stay involved in your extracurriculars
- Create a Niche account to start researching colleges
- Take The Niche College Quiz for personalized recommendations
- Research potential majors
- Take the PSAT if your school offers it
- Continue scholarship search

3

JUNIOR YEAR

- September thru February**
- Begin test prep and take the PSAT to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program
 - Attend college fairs
 - Build your college list on Niche by adding 5-10 schools
 - Find out which colleges on your list are test-optional and create a testing plan
 - Register for SAT/ACT (if necessary)

4

YOU CAN DO IT

February thru June

- Sign up for campus visits and/or virtual tours
- Meet with your school counselor to review your college list and senior year schedule
- Research majors and related careers
Take the SAT/ACT and retest (if necessary)
- Keep your grades up!
- Request recommendation letters

July

- Continue scholarship search
- Read student/alumni reviews on Niche to see what the colleges on your list are really like
- Narrow down your college list
- Get summer experience through volunteer work, job shadowing, etc.
- Make an activities/honors list
- Brainstorm personal essay ideas
- Start planning out your finances

August

- Many application portals open Aug. 1st!
- Finalize your college list
- Create application account(s)
- Review applications to note requirements, essays, deadlines, etc.
- Get your materials together (resume, unofficial transcript, etc.)
- Draft your personal essay

SENIOR YEAR

September

- Follow up with your recommenders
- Begin online portion of applications
- Retake SAT/ACT (if necessary)
- Complete CSS profile for non-federal financial aid

October thru November

- Tell your school counselor you'll need your transcript and/or a recommendation letter for EA/ED/Priority deadlines (if necessary)
- Review all application materials for errors or missing pieces
- Submit EA/ED/Priority applications and send any supplemental documents (transcripts, letters, test scores) required
- Set up your account for each college's portal to ensure your materials have been received and you've completed the application
- Create an FSA ID

December

- Tell your school counselor you'll need your transcript and/or a recommendation letter for regular deadlines (if necessary)
- Complete and submit FAFSA
- Review EA/ED acceptances
- Submit regular deadline applications and send any supplemental documents (transcripts, letters, test scores) required
- Set up your account for each college's portal to ensure your materials have been received and you've completed the application

January thru February

- Submit mid-year grade reports (if necessary)
- Apply for scholarships
- Prep for any interviews you may have
- Review EA/ED/Priority acceptances

March thru April

- Review acceptance letters and financial aid packages
- Decide on your top schools
- Keep applying for scholarships

May

- Make your final decision by May 1 — and celebrate!
- Submit your deposit and housing application
- Sign up for orientation
- Send your final transcript
- Thank your supporters for all of their help

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* KEEP IT UP *