Tips for Undertaking the Application Process

College & Retirement Solutions
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Getting started

- Set up a folder for each application. Keep all material relevant to each college in its own folder.
- If you are filing online applications, be sure to save drafts to a disk.
- Review all application materials as they arrive. Include on your schedule for dates you need to complete them. Completing applications is not much fun, and you may be inclined to put off this task as long as you can. Procrastination is risky There is a lot to do, especially if you have several essays to write. You may not do the application (and yourself) justice if you leave it until the last minute. Remember: Leave enough time for correcting and revising.
- Make two or more copies of the whole application to use as rough drafts and extras in case you make a serious error and ruin the original.

Completing the application process

- Review the application and its directions completely before you start to work on it.
- Work on your rough draft in pencil so that you can make changes easily.
- Be accurate, honest, and neat. Spell correctly and use correct grammar.
- It maybe better to type the factual sections of your application form, though typing is not required. If you believe you can do a neat, legible, and accurate job completing it by hand, go ahead. Be sure to print legibly in ink. Black ink is preferred because it photocopies clearly.
- If possible, type your essay question responses.
- At your request, the College Board and ACT will send the official records of your test scores directly to the colleges. Do not send a photocopy of your own test score report unless requested to do so. Sometimes, a college accepts a photocopy as a means of obtaining preliminary information, but it will need the official report to make an offer of admission.
- When you have completed your application, ask someone to review it and check it for errors. Keep a blank copy on hand in case you need to redo the application.
- If you are applying electronically, print a copy of the completed application before you send it. Your counselor will be happy to look it over before you push the "send" button.
- If you file an online application, be sure to tell your counselor when you have submitted the application and which materials the school needs to send to the college (such as recommendations or the transcript).

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Tips for online applicants

- Make sure a person whose opinion you trust reviews the application for errors before you send it.
- Use standard spelling and grammar—not e-mail-ese: treat this like a paper application.
- Have your test scores sent to the colleges to which you are applying, if you haven't already.
- Print out a paper copy for your records.
- Do not apply electronically and send a paper copy in the mail: wait for confirmation that the electronic copy was received (you should get that within three or four days, if not sooner).
- Tell your counselor of every online application you send, so he or she can send transcripts and letters of recommendation.

Source: College Counseling Sourcebook, 4th Edition