

“Going-to-College” Calendar

Use this checklist to make your “going-to-college” planning easier. It offers helpful reminders for tasks to complete during the college planning process.

As you review this checklist, keep in mind your calendar may differ depending on the type of education you pursue.

FRESHMEN & SOPHOMORES

- Get to know your high school guidance counselor.
- Plan a family college discussion.
- Develop good study skills.
- Explore careers you find interesting.
- Get a Social Security Number (visit www.ssa.gov)
- Evaluate your personality, interests, and skills.
- Take challenging courses.
- Participate in extracurricular activities.

JUNIORS

September

- Plan a family college discussion.
- Review your courses with your guidance counselor.
- Prepare a list of questions to ask college reps.
- Make a list of schools you might want to attend. Use College Answer's **School Search Tool**.
- Collect college catalogs.
- Register for the PSAT.
- Create files to keep copies of applications and correspondence.
- Set up a calendar to track important dates and deadlines.

October – November

- Print College Answer's **College Fair Checklist**.
- Attend college fairs and financial aid nights.
- Take the PSAT.
- Search for scholarships and student financial aid.
- Learn the basics about federal and private loans.
- Print College Answer's **Campus Visit Checklist**.
- Schedule and make college visits.

December

- Review your PSAT results with your counselor.
- Talk with friends who are home for college.
- Take both the SAT and ACT at least once.

January – February

- Identify characteristics you want in a college.
- Attend college fairs and financial aid nights.
- Run College Answer's **FREE Scholarship Search**.
- Register and study for the SAT and/or ACT.

March

- Schedule and make campus visits.
- Narrow your college list to a reasonable number.
- Discuss ways to pay with each college on your list.
- Visit College Answer's College Advice section.
- Estimate how much each college will cost.

April

- Compare college requirements to your course load.
- Select senior year courses.
- Visit colleges.
- Register and take the SAT, if necessary.
- Planning to attend a military academy or enrolling in an ROTC program? Meet with your high school counselor before leaving for summer vacation.

May

- Register and take the ACT and/or AP tests.
- Ask about college prep programs and workshops offered during the summer.
- Search for scholarships and ways to pay for college.
- Get a summer job to save money for college.

June – July

- Talk with friends who are home from college.
- Create a list of schools you would like to attend.
- Schedule college visits and interviews.
- Talk to people in career fields you find interesting.
- Search for scholarships.

August

- Request college applications.
- Give thought to essay topics.
- Consider whom to ask for letters of recommendations.
- Schedule a family meeting to discuss your college plans.

SENIORS

September

- Discuss your course load, college plans, and test scores with your high school counselor.
- Request college applications.
- Arrange campus visits.
- Register to take the SAT/ACT, if necessary.
- Search for scholarships and ways to pay.
- Run College Answer's **FREE scholarship search**.
- Submit a CSS/PROFILE form, if required.
- Stay organized. File copies. Update your calendar.

October

- Verify that your transcripts are accurate.
- Find out which financial aid applications are required at your choice colleges.
- Ask for letters of recommendation to include with your admissions and/or scholarship applications.
- Work on admission application essays.
- Attend college fairs and financial aid nights.
- "Early decision" candidates should complete college applications (deadline is often November 1 or 15).

November

- Continue completing your college applications.
- Determine which financial aid forms your choice colleges require—when in doubt contact the financial aid office.
- Search for additional sources of student financial aid.
- Use College Answer's **Expected Family Contribution (EFC) Calculator** to estimate how much your family could be expected to contribute to your education.

December

- Complete school applications ideally by December 1.
- Print the "FAFSA on the Web Worksheet." This form can help you gather the necessary information to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Visit <http://fafsa.ed.gov>.
- Take SAT or Achievements, if registered.
- Stay organized and watch deadlines.

January

- Submit your FAFSA via the Web as soon after January 1 as possible because some student aid programs award funds on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Fill out and submit required financial aid forms. Follow instructions carefully and make copies.

February – March

- College acceptance and financial award letters begin to arrive.

- Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR). Carefully examine the results.
- Don't panic if you're selected for verification. Just provide the college with the documents they need.
- Stay on top of important financial aid deadlines.
- Respond quickly to college requests for additional documentation.

April

- Use College Answer's **Award Analyzer** to compare the award letters you receive.
- Make a decision, most colleges request your reply by May 1, and send your tuition deposit.
- Register for Advanced Placement (AP) tests, if necessary.
- Mark your calendar with important deadlines (housing, meals, transportation, financial aid, etc.).

May

- Verify that your final transcripts have been mailed.
- Notify other colleges of your decision not to attend.
- Continue to search for scholarships.
- Look for a summer job and save money for school.
- Evaluate student loan lenders.

June

- Save some of your graduation money for school.
- Respond to requests from the college you will be attending. Keep copies of everything you send.
- Read and be familiar with your college catalog and semester class schedule.
- Talk with friends who are home from college.
- Make travel arrangements, if necessary.
- Send thank-you notes or postcards to those who helped you get into college.

July – August

- If you still need money to pay for college, consider a student loan. **Apply online at College Answer.**
- Register and attend a college orientation session.
- Confirm housing arrangements and meal plans.
- Finalize your college budget.
- Notify the financial aid office of loans you will receive.
- Consider taking out a renter's insurance policy.
- Return borrowed items, such as library books, rental videos and things borrowed from friends.
- Make note of tracking numbers of boxes you are shipping to school.
- Open a bank account near campus.
- Review your cell phone plan to limit roaming charges.
- Contact your roommate and coordinate what to pack.
- Pack for college. Use College Answer's **Packing for College Checklist**.