

The College Planning Checklist

Use this worksheet throughout your high school years to document your progress.

FRESHMAN YEAR

- **Study hard.** Focus on classes and get good grades!
- **Network.** Reach out to professionals to gain a better understanding of career options.
- **Volunteer.** Work for a local charity like a food bank or an after-school program to show community involvement.
- **Get involved in extracurricular activities.** Sports or clubs demonstrate your diverse interests and how you will add value to a campus community.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- **Focus on academics.** If you're struggling in school, consider working with a tutor.
- **Keep networking.** Professional connections may lead to future internships or career inspiration.
- **Take the PSAT.** A practice run can help improve your scores on the SAT and other standardized tests.
- **Draft a resume.** This can help with applying for part-time jobs, and show you where there may be gaps you want to fill with activities like community service, clubs or sports.

JUNIOR YEAR

- **Get a part-time job or job shadow.** Involvement in activities outside of school looks great on a college application.
- **Update your resume.** Add part time jobs or other relevant experiences.
- **Research and visit schools.** Create a list of potential colleges and try to visit them.
- **Take the SAT and ACT.** Test requirements vary by college, but many still require or encourage these two.
- **Request letters of recommendation.** Ask teachers or professional connections.
- **Begin working on college applications.** Application deadlines vary by school and may start as early as August.
- **Write a compelling essay.** Allow enough time to proofread and make revisions.

SENIOR YEAR

- **Finalize your application list.** Include the application deadlines and requirements for each school.
- **Update materials.** Make sure your resume and applications are up to date with the relevant experience you've accrued in high school.
- **Apply.** Pay attention to deadlines and requirements such as test scores, recommendations and essays.
- **Research and apply for scholarships.** The [Federal Student Aid website](#) is a good place to start.
- **Follow up.** Some schools may reach out and require replies or additional information.
- **Celebrate!** When you know what school you will attend, carefully review the acceptance package and start a new to-do list—to prepare for next fall!