

Senior year checklist

Fall

College planning

- Attend college information nights in your community (<https://www.collegenights.org>)
- Check college websites for applications, deadlines, financial aid and housing information
- Ask your counselor to evaluate your transcript for high school graduation and college eligibility
- Register to take or retake college entrance exams
 - Several colleges are test optional—check www.fairtest.org/university/optional for the most comprehensive list
 - SAT (www.collegeboard.org)
 - ACT, with essay option ACT (www.act.org)
- Keep your test scores, resume and transcript organized to help in completing college applications
- Ask teachers and counselors for any required or optional letters of recommendation
- Finalize portfolios, audition materials or writing samples if required as part of the application
- Get feedback from a college advisor, teacher or parent/guardian and complete revisions of all applications and essays

Financial aid

- Review the financial aid application process and timeline required by the colleges on your list
- Register for an FSA ID, which serves as your FAFSA e-signature; student's parents/guardians must also register for an FSA ID (<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/sign-in/landing>)
- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which opens on October 1 (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>)
 - Information from the 2020 tax year will be used for the entering class of 2022 as they apply for financial aid for the 2022-2023 academic year
- Attend financial aid workshops in your community for help completing the FAFSA
- Be aware that private colleges may require additional financial information from the CSS Profile (<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>)
- Check your state financial aid websites for more information about in-state financial aid opportunities for undocumented, DREAMer and DACA students (<https://www.ecmc.org/students/resource-guides.html>)

- Search and apply for scholarships (www.fastweb.com, <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>)
- Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) once FAFSA has been processed and make any needed corrections

Winter

College application follow-up

- Check your email frequently for additional information colleges might request within their timeline
- Send your mid-year transcript to colleges that request them
- Continue scholarship searches over winter break and continue to submit applications

Spring

Academics

- Keep up your grades—college admissions are conditional and can be rescinded if you do not continue academic excellence
- Check with the colleges where you have applied before considering dropping a senior year class; colleges expect you to complete all of the high school courses you listed as "in progress" on your admissions application
- Take your Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams

Best college and financial fit

- Check your email or college admissions portal for admission decision notification
- Visit campuses that most interest you during admitted-student's day or before
- Carefully review your financial aid offer for each campus where you have received admissions and compare each offer; ask a college advisor for help in clarifying your financial aid offers
- Finalize your financial aid; accept your financial aid offer or work with the college's financial aid office to adjust it
- Discuss your options with your parents/guardians (refer to worksheet on page 5)
- Call financial aid offices to answer questions or update them on any changes to your family's financial situation
- If you'll be attending a four-year college, notify and place a deposit at the college of your choice by National College Decision Day (May 1)



The **Senior Year Checklist** is part of the 2021-2022 *Opportunities Preparing for College Guide and Workbook*. This free college planning publication provides students and families with important information and tools to guide their pursuit of postsecondary education. These books are available in English and Spanish. Full PDFs of each *Opportunities* booklet can be downloaded at www.ecmc.org/opportunities.

College admissions follow-up

- Sign into your college portal and review your task list and deadlines
- Check your email for correspondence and deadline reminders
- Request your final transcript be sent to your college choice from your high school registrar before the deadline
- Request AP and IB scores be submitted to your college choice
- Ask about college placement tests—some colleges require them for certain subjects, such as English and math; make sure to register in time and study beforehand
- Sign up for summer and/or fall orientation; some are mandatory and some have a cost
- Register for your classes during orientation
- Figure out housing—if living on campus, complete any roommate survey forms, sign the housing contract and submit a housing deposit to make sure you have a reserved room

Summer

Final steps

- Work and save money for college
- Make a budget with your parents/guardians (refer to worksheet on page 26)
- Download the college's health forms and see your doctor; colleges may require evidence of immunizations
- Check with your college to see if a COVID-19 vaccine is required before arriving on campus
- Plan your payments; tuition payments are due at the beginning of the semester or term so research payment options beforehand
- Make travel arrangements if you are traveling far to college; buy travel (plane, train, bus) tickets and make hotel reservations early (if necessary)
- Send thank-you notes to everyone who helped in your college process, such as counselors, college advisors and teachers who wrote letters of recommendation
- Check your student portal or college website regularly so you don't miss out on any virtual or local welcome events for students before classes start
- If you will be living on campus, check <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/making-a-decision/off-to-college-checklist> for a list to help you pack
- Spend time with your family and friends if you will be leaving home; set expectations for while you are in college on how and when you will communicate during the school year

