

CHECKLIST



HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR COLLEGE PREP CHECKLIST

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HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR CHECKLIST

While some students have the drive and motivation to make it through the college prep and scholarship process without any parental guidance, most students need a little extra nudge. Still, many parents aren't sure where they can or should step in. This checklist will help you guide your child through their high school senior year so they can stay on track as they prepare for college and help them secure money for a debt-free education.

How to Use This Checklist

While these checklists are strong guidelines for the admission and scholarship process, feel free to adapt them as needed.

If your child is younger than a senior, start working through the items for senior year. It never hurts to start researching and preparing earlier than senior year.

If your child is already in college, they can still focus on getting involved and working on scholarship applications. Follow the steps for these topics and they can work towards a debt-free school year!

- Finalize your college list: use all the information that has been gathered from your college visits, interviews and your own research to determine which schools you wish to apply to
- Stay on track with grades and extracurricular activities: don't slack off colleges look into what you have done your senior year too!
- Take your standardized tests: Register for and take the [ACT, SAT, or SAT Subject Tests](#) (as necessary)
- Create a calendar detailing application deadlines for admissions, financial aid, and scholarships
- Create a final draft of your resume
- Ask for [letters of recommendation](#): request these with at least a 2-week notice
- Meet with your guidance counselor to discuss options for scholarships and admissions
- Retake the ACT/SAT at least once, perhaps twice depending on score
- Complete applications: Finish application forms for the schools you are interested in. *To avoid rushing to make deadlines, complete prior to winter break*
- Check that colleges received all materials: applications, letters of recommendations, and test scores
- Submit financial aid forms: Fill out the [FAFSA](#) no matter what, and if necessary, the PROFILE as early as possible beginning in October
- [Continue your scholarship search](#): use the successful [strategies we cover](#) – October is a major scholarship month!

Winter:

- Continue building involvement
- Follow up on your college applications: Check with the schools to make sure they have received all your

information, including test scores, transcripts, and recommendations

- Take the ACT/SAT if scores can still be submitted to colleges
- Keep working hard on your grades
- Complete remaining admissions applications
- Compare the costs of the schools your child is considering
- Update personal statement with fall semester experiences
- If a [course member](#), winter break is a great time to implement a large portion of the materials
- Work a part-time job for experience and to save money
- Continue with your scholarship search: Holiday breaks are a great time to knockout some applications

Spring:

- Continue saving up for college (part-time job wages)
- Keep an eye out in the mail for notification from colleges: Admissions decisions go out by March or April
- Keep your grades up
- Have a family meeting about college finances/financial aid and compare financial aid packages: ideally debt-free options
- Check out your options if you're put on a waitlist: Keep in mind being put on a waitlist does not mean rejection. You should receive a decision by May
- Prepare for any last standardized tests: [AP, IB and CLEP exams](#)
- Choose your school: Notify all colleges your decision by May 1st
- Complete enrollment paperwork for the college you will attend: complete all paperwork by the deadline (this includes: course scheduling, orientation sessions, housing arrangements, and other necessary forms)
- Don't give up on scholarships there's still time to apply and receive money for the fall semester! Use the successful strategies we cover

- Just in case, begin researching and learning about [student loans](#)

Summer:

- Getting involved: Have your child join organizations if they haven't already
- Work and save money for college expenses
- Continue to apply for scholarships - deadlines go all the way through July and into August for money for the fall! Use the successful strategies we cover
- Be on the lookout for college admission notifications
- [Research student loans](#) if needed, narrowing down your choices
- Talk with your child about college bills