

College Planning Calendar

Junior Year - Spring Semester

- .. Make an appointment with your advisor or guidance counselor in the spring semester. Make use of CollegeBoard.com, books, videos, and other resources listed on our website to help you research colleges.
- .. Arrange college visits over spring break or other holidays. Summer visits give you a chance to see a campus and meet with admissions folks, but regular classes are not in session and most students are gone.
- .. Consult one of the lively, opinion-filled college guides listed in the bibliography. We recommend [The Fiske Guide](#) or [The Best \(371\) Colleges](#). These guides will also give you telephone numbers and addresses for arranging your college visits.
- .. [Register](#) for the March or May [SAT Reasoning Test](#). Most students will take two or possibly three [SAT Subjects Tests](#) in June; many colleges require only two SAT Subjects. Please note that the University of California requires two SAT Subjects of your choice, but if you choose to take Math, the UC campuses accept only the [Math Level 2](#). Click [here](#) to learn more about the University of California's testing requirements.
- .. You may wish to take the [ACT](#) Assessment [Plus Writing](#) with a 30-minute essay in April or June. Colleges accept this form of the ACT as equal to the SAT Reasoning Test.
- .. Consider whether or not it would be advisable to work on your SAT preparation, either in a course or independent review, based on your PSAT scores. The summer before senior year is an excellent time for this.
- .. Have a candid conversation with your family about finances, need for financial aid, and values, as they can influence your college choices.
- .. If financial aid will be important, go online to explore possible scholarships, as well as to make use of helpful "[need estimators](#)," which can give families a sense of how much they will be expected to pay for college.
- .. Organize the college information you gather or receive. Set up a file box or something similar so that you can keep track of things more easily.

** Be sure the [courses](#) you select for senior year will be a good indication of your intellectual commitment and your interests. Colleges look very carefully at senior year when assessing students; most selective colleges expect five academic solids.

Summer Before Senior Year

** Begin to think about narrowing your list of colleges, so that by November you will have a realistic list of about 8 schools of interest. Email each college on your list to tell them of your interest and to request viewbooks, course catalogues, and applications. Most colleges' websites allow you to view and print their course catalogues and applications.

** Use the [Common Application](#). Click [here](#) to view the more than 300 schools that accept the "Common App." You may prefer to submit the application electronically or download the PDF version and type in your information, then print and mail the application.

** Continue to visit and evaluate colleges, as opportunities arise, in light of your priorities.

** Take advantage of the many opportunities available in the summer!

Senior Year - Fall Semester

** Plan to take the [SAT Reasoning](#) and/or [SAT Subjects](#) in October, November, or December. The [ACT](#) also has a fall option.

** If you are planning an Early Decision or Early Action application, it is important to complete your testing as early as possible. Most Early applications are due either November 1 or November 15. Scores from the October SAT test date will certainly be reported on time. However, students should check with individual colleges to see if they will accept November scores, and how the scores should be sent. ([Rush Reporting](#) isn't necessarily the fastest way for colleges to receive scores.)

** If possible, make an appointment with your advisor or guidance counselor, to review your final list of colleges and to discuss any questions.

** Ask two academic faculty members from different academic areas who taught you junior or senior year to write your recommendation letters. If appropriate, ask a coach, mentor or an elective teacher for an additional recommendation. **Don't wait until the last minute!**

- .. Consider further college visits if possible and appropriate.
- .. Arrange interviews in the Bay Area with an alumnus/a associated with each private college. If you happen to be visiting a college, you can see if you can have an interview at that time.
- .. Work closely with someone like a teacher, or some other trusted mentor, on the college essays. We will go into much greater detail on this part of the application in the fall workshop.
- .. Be sure all finished applications are duplicated so that you have a copy at home on record.
- .. If you intend to apply for financial aid at private colleges, register for the [CSS/Financial Aid Profile](#). Use the newest version of the [worksheet](#) for the [FAFSA \(Free Application for Federal Student Aid\)](#) to help you complete the FAFSA. The newest FAFSA will be available online in December. Although the site won't go "live" until January 1, it's best to for students and one parent/guardian to obtain their [PIN](#) now.
- .. Families should plan to do their [income taxes](#) as early as possible. In the meantime, [Finaid.org](#) is an excellent resource to help you understand the process of applying for financial aid.
- .. The [FAFSA](#) financial aid form should be submitted online as early as possible after January 1 and **no later than March 2**. Check with each individual college to confirm their financial aid Priority Deadlines.

Senior Year - Spring Semester

- .. If needed, plan final college visits to facilitate your decision. Spring break is an ideal time for this.
- .. Be sure to thank the teachers who wrote your recommendations.
- .. By May 1, accept the offer of only **ONE** college; it is against [NACAC's Statement of Principles of Good Practice](#) for you to "double deposit." Mail your intent to register by **May 1** with your deposit check. Write to each college you will not be attending to thank them and to let them know you have accepted another offer.

** If financial aid offerings are affecting your final college choice, speak to your college counselor and call the colleges to discuss financial aid offers. You may request an extension in responding if finances are a problem.

** Check on housing dates, deadlines, and options. Send in housing deposits promptly.

** **IMPORTANT:** Remember that college acceptance is contingent upon completing all your courses at the level you have achieved in previous semesters. **If grades fall drastically, colleges can rescind your acceptance.** If you drop any courses after the first semester, you must notify each college.

** Celebrate, take a deep breath, and enjoy the rest of the year!