



College prep timeline for 12th graders

AUGUST

- ☐ Work together to revise the list of colleges your teen will apply to.
- ☐ Register to take (or retake) the SAT or ACT this fall.
- ☐ Decide if applying early ("early action" or "early decision") is a good strategy.

Also this month...



Get organized. Sit down with your teen and mark up a calendar, agree on a strategy, and get excited for the admissions season ahead.



Make contact with schools. Private colleges tend to weigh signs of interest (e.g., visiting the campus, emailing to ask questions) positively.

SEPTEMBER

- ☐ Check in with your teen's college counselor
- ☐ Decide which schools to apply to early.
- ☐ Ask for letters of recommendation.

Also this month...



Collect information you'll need to file for FAFSA and PROFILE starting October 1st.

OCTOBER

- ☐ Fill out FAFSA (along with PROFILE, if your teen is applying to private schools).
- ☐ Keep working on the college essay. Revise, revise, revise!
- ☐ Finalize the college list.

Also this month...



Do a social media cleanup: 40% of admissions officers look at applicants' social media!

NOVEMBER

- ☐ Register for a final shot at the SAT or ACT to get scores in time for applications.
- ☐ Plan a college visit. (Is there a college you can tour over Thanksgiving weekend?)

Also this month...



Research scholarships and learn the difference between federal and private student loans.

DECEMBER

- ☐ Application due dates start this month!

Also this month...



Some schools have rolling admissions (meaning no hard application deadline), but it's still a good idea to apply as early as possible.



If your teen was accepted early decision, congrats! Be sure to withdraw any other outstanding applications.

JANUARY

- ☐ Submit a mid-year grade report to colleges that require it.
- ☐ Plan to visit the colleges on your teen's short list.

FEBRUARY - MARCH

- ☐ Remind your teen that grades still matter!

Also this month...



Support your child as decision letters arrive. (Remind your teen that *where* they get in or go to college is not *who* they will be.)

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APRIL

- ☐ If your teen is on a wait list and wants to get in, have them follow up with the school. (Politely, proactively, and persistently!)
- ☐ Compare financial aid offers.
- ☐ Get ready to accept an offer (and decline any others).

Also this month...



Decide whether or not your child will live on campus next year. Research shows students who live on campus are more engaged and more likely to graduate.

MAY - JUNE

- ☐ Time to enroll!
- ☐ Suggest your teen send thank you notes to anyone who helped with college admissions.