



A College Planning Checklist:

FOR JUNIORS

Junior year is busy as you begin to plan for the college application process. Here's what you need to check off your list in order to have a successful junior year:

DEVELOP A ROUGH DRAFT OF YOUR COLLEGE LIST.

- Research majors, location, financial aid, and internship/research opportunities to narrow your list down. You might begin by using College Board's Big Future search engine.
- Finalize an initial list of 12-15 schools with an even spread of "safety," "match," and "reach."

BRAINSTORM IDEAS FOR YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENTS AND BEGIN WRITING A DRAFT.

- Check out the personal statement prompts for both the common app and the coalition app. It may be helpful to look at which application platforms schools on your college list accept.
- Narrow down the prompts you are interested in and outline your ideas.
- Write a rough draft of your personal statement.
- Get some feedback on your draft.

TAKE THE SAT AND/OR ACT AT LEAST ONCE.

- Research the differences between the SAT and ACT tests. Decide which one(s) you will take.
- Come up with a study plan that includes what you will use to study and when you will study. Take practice tests, study what you get wrong, repeat.
- Take the test.
- Plan out your next steps. Will you take the SAT or ACT again? What do you need to study to improve?





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CONSIDER TAKING SAT SUBJECT TESTS.

- See if any schools on your colleges list require or strongly recommend taking SAT subject tests. If so, are there any guidelines on which tests you should take?
- If you plan to take, come up with a study plan that includes what you will use to study and when you will study. Take practice tests, study what you get wrong, repeat.
- Take the test(s).

PLAN OUT WHOM YOU MAY ASK FOR A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION AND CONTINUE TO CEMENT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM.

- How many letters of recommendation do schools on your college list require? Given this, write a list of who you can ask.
- Talk to potential recommenders about your future academic goals and your college application process. Keeping them in the loop on your goals, ambition, and intentions for the application process will help them write a better letter when the time comes.

WORK ON YOUR RÉSUMÉ.

- If you already have a draft, seek feedback from a school counselor, teacher, or mentor.
- If you do not have a draft, search out high school résumé examples and begin constructing your own.

MEET WITH YOUR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR.

- Get to know the person writing your counselor recommendation and see if they have any resources to offer you.





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ACHIEVE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE NOW AND DURING YOUR SENIOR YEAR.

- Keep up with your grades. If you are struggling in any of your courses, seek help immediately.
- Keep challenging yourself. Brainstorm ways to continue building upon your academic areas of interest inside and outside the classroom during your senior year.

ARRANGE SOMETHING INTERESTING TO DO OVER THE SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR.

- Research internship, academic, and work opportunities in your area or beyond. This may include summer programs at colleges, working for pay, volunteering with a new organization, interning at a local business, and/or taking a test-prep course, among other things.
- Make a list of 3-5 opportunities you'd be interested in and complete applications as necessary.

DEVELOP A GAME PLAN FOR SENIOR YEAR

- Familiarize yourself with the components of the college application process and financial aid application process
- Make a deadline calendar and set goals for completing certain requirements
- Set 3-5 goals to complete components of your applications so you start senior year with a head start

