

College Application Timeline & Checklist



Applying for College? You've got this!

This is one of the most **exciting** times in your life! But we know it can feel **overwhelming** if you don't know where to start.

Based on our **years of experience** and **in-depth knowledge** of the US college system, we have taken the **planning** on us to help you **cruise** through the process.



My College Application Timeline

Junior Year		March	Prepare for standardized test
		April	Collect letters of recommendation
		May	Plan campus visits/tours
		June	Visit colleges
		July	Draft application essays
		August	Finalize my college list
Senior Year		September	Prepare my application materials
		October	Submit my application
		November	Apply for Financial Aid



*The timeline applies to applications at most US colleges, some variation may apply at selected colleges.

Here's a handy **checklist** to make sure you don't miss a thing and get your college application in, on time, to the right place.

College Application Checklist

- Select a standardized test. ACT or SAT? You only need to do one.
- Take a practice exam to help you know if you are ready.
- Approach teachers and mentors for letters of recommendation.
- Plan campus visits to the colleges that you are considering.
- Write your college application essays, concentrating on the personal statement and college-specific requirements.
- Finalize your list of colleges to apply for.
- Make a list of application requirements and deadlines for these colleges.
- Register on a central application platform/portal.
- Craft your supplemental essays.
- Complete your application, including college-specific prompts and requirements.
- Investigate your options and apply for financial aid. (Such as FAFSA or CSS Profile)
- Submit your application. (*Early Action, Early Decision or Regular Decision applications**)
- Ensure your school sends final transcripts to your chosen college.

*Do you know the difference between Early Decision, Early Action and Regular Decision applications?



College Application Types

Early Decision

- Binding agreement
- Nov 1st deadline
- Use for first choice school
- Pro: + Better chance of getting in
- Cons: - Withdraw other applications
- - Loss of financial leverage

Early Action

- Non-binding
- November 1st deadline
- Preferred application type
- Pro: + Open admissions
- + Flexibility
- + Early feedback on admission and financial aid
- + Financial leverage

Regular Decision

- Non-binding
- Late December/early January
- Pro: + More time to prepare your application
- Cons: - Less time to make a decision
- - Fewer responses



Each application type has its own pros and cons. At Pathfinders, we can help you select the **best option** for you individually!

If you need help **customizing your timeline** or if you are unsure how to handle any of the items on the **checklist**, contact us to **learn more** about our comprehensive college and career advisory **courses, resources, and 1:1 contact sessions** with an experienced Pathfinders Advisor.

We have assisted more than 1500 families with career planning and college advice.

There are a lot of great schools out there. Let us help you find the right one for you.

