Senior year checklist

Fall

College planning
- Attend college information nights in your community (https://www.collegenights.org)
- Check college websites for applications, deadlines, financial aid and housing information
- Ask your counselor to evaluate your transcript for high school graduation and college eligibility
- Register to take or retake college entrance exams
  - Several colleges are test optional—check www.fairtest.org/university/optional for the most comprehensive list
- SAT (www.collegeboard.org)
- ACT, with essay option ACT (www.act.org)

Financial aid
- Review the financial aid application process and timeline required by the colleges on your list
- Register for an FSA ID, which serves as your FAFSA e-signature; student’s parents/guardians must also register for an FSA ID (https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/sign-in/landing)
- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which opens on October 1 (https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/ffasfa)
  - Information from the 2020 tax year will be used for the entering class of 2022 as they apply for financial aid for the 2022-2023 academic year
- Attend financial aid workshops in your community for help completing the FAFSA
- Be aware that private colleges may require additional financial information from the CSS Profile (https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/)
- Check your state financial aid websites for more information about in-state financial aid opportunities for undocumented, DREAMer and DACA students (https://www.ecmc.org/students/resource-guides.html)
- Search and apply for scholarships (www.fastweb.com, https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org)
- Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) once FAFSA has been processed and make any needed corrections

Winter

College application follow-up
- Check your email frequently for additional information colleges might request within their timeline
- Send your mid-year transcript to colleges that request them
- Continue scholarship searches over winter break and continue to submit applications

Spring

Academics
- Keep up your grades—college admissions are conditional and can be rescinded if you do not continue academic excellence
- Check with the colleges where you have applied before considering dropping a senior year class; colleges expect you to complete all of the high school courses you listed as “in progress” on your admissions application
- Take your Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams
- Visit campuses that most interest you during admitted-student’s day or before
- Carefully review your financial aid offer for each campus where you have received admissions and compare each offer; ask a college advisor for help in clarifying your financial aid offers
- Finalize your financial aid; accept your financial aid offer or work with the college’s financial aid office to adjust it
- Discuss your options with your parents/guardians (refer to worksheet on page 5)
- Call financial aid offices to answer questions or update them on any changes to your family’s financial situation
- If you’ll be attending a four-year college, notify and place a deposit at the college of your choice by National College Decision Day (May 1)

Best college and financial fit
- Check your email or college admissions portal for admission decision notification
- Visit campuses that most interest you during admitted-student’s day or before
- Carefully review your financial aid offer for each campus where you have received admissions and compare each offer; ask a college advisor for help in clarifying your financial aid offers
- Finalize your financial aid; accept your financial aid offer or work with the college’s financial aid office to adjust it
- Discuss your options with your parents/guardians (refer to worksheet on page 5)
- Call financial aid offices to answer questions or update them on any changes to your family’s financial situation
- If you’ll be attending a four-year college, notify and place a deposit at the college of your choice by National College Decision Day (May 1)
College admissions follow-up

☐ Sign into your college portal and review your task list and deadlines
☐ Check your email for correspondence and deadline reminders
☐ Request your final transcript be sent to your college choice from your high school registrar before the deadline
☐ Request AP and IB scores be submitted to your college choice
☐ Ask about college placement tests—some colleges require them for certain subjects, such as English and math; make sure to register in time and study beforehand
☐ Sign up for summer and/or fall orientation; some are mandatory and some have a cost
☐ Register for your classes during orientation
☐ Figure out housing—if living on campus, complete any roommate survey forms, sign the housing contract and submit a housing deposit to make sure you have a reserved room

Summer

Final steps

☐ Work and save money for college
☐ Make a budget with your parents/guardians (refer to worksheet on page 26)
☐ Download the college’s health forms and see your doctor; colleges may require evidence of immunizations
☐ Check with your college to see if a COVID-19 vaccine is required before arriving on campus
☐ Plan your payments; tuition payments are due at the beginning of the semester or term so research payment options beforehand
☐ Make travel arrangements if you are traveling far to college; buy travel (plane, train, bus) tickets and make hotel reservations early (if necessary)
☐ Send thank-you notes to everyone who helped in your college process, such as counselors, college advisors and teachers who wrote letters of recommendation
☐ Check your student portal or college website regularly so you don’t miss out on any virtual or local welcome events for students before classes start
☐ If you will be living on campus, check https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/making-a-decision/off-to-college-checklist for a list to help you pack
☐ Spend time with your family and friends if you will be leaving home; set expectations for while you are in college on how and when you will communicate during the school year