



# 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.

For more info on the college admissions process, check out the full interactive timeline at [GreatSchools.org/gk/12th-grade-college-prep/](https://GreatSchools.org/gk/12th-grade-college-prep/).

## 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.)

## 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.

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