

# SENIOR STUDENT GUIDE

2023 - 2024



# TRiO

**UPWARD BOUND &  
EDUCATIONAL TALENT SEARCH**

**UVU** UTAH VALLEY  
UNIVERSITY™

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>12<sup>th</sup> Grade Checklist - Student</b>	<b>pg. 3</b>
<b>12<sup>th</sup> Grade Checklist – Parent</b>	<b>pg. 4</b>
<b>College Application Tracker Tool</b>	<b>pg. 5</b>
<b>College Planning</b>	<b>pg. 6</b>
<b>Get Organized</b>	<b>pg. 7</b>
<b>Completing Applications</b>	<b>pg. 8</b>
<b>Letters of Recommendation</b>	<b>pg. 9</b>
<b>The Application Process</b>	<b>pg. 10</b>
<b>Choosing a Major/Program</b>	<b>pg. 11</b>
<b>Finding the Right Fit</b>	<b>pg. 12</b>
<b>Local College &amp; University Information</b>	<b>pg. 16</b>
<b>College Course Selection</b>	<b>pg. 19</b>
<b>Paying for College</b>	<b>pg. 20</b>
<b>Getting Money for College</b>	<b>pg. 22</b>
<b>Understanding Financial Aid</b>	<b>pg. 23</b>
<b>Step-by-Step Guide to Completing the FAFSA</b>	<b>pg. 24</b>
<b>5 FAFSA Changes to know for 2023</b>	<b>pg. 25</b>
<b>FAFSA Checklist</b>	<b>pg. 26</b>
<b>Financial Aid Comparison Table</b>	<b>pg. 27</b>
<b>Don't Lose your Scholarship</b>	<b>pg. 28</b>
<b>Financial Aid &amp; Scholarship Resources</b>	<b>pg. 29</b>
<b>Sample Monthly Budget</b>	<b>pg. 30</b>
<b>My Monthly Budget</b>	<b>pg. 31</b>
<b>Your Support Network</b>	<b>pg. 32</b>
<b>Resumes for High School Students</b>	<b>pg. 33</b>
<b>Resume Blueprint</b>	<b>pg. 37</b>
<b>First Year of College</b>	<b>pg. 41</b>
<b>Headed to College? Pack This . . .</b>	<b>pg. 45</b>

# 12TH GRADE CHECKLIST

## For Students :

### ALL YEAR:

- Work hard in your classes all the way to graduation; second-semester grades can affect scholarship and admissions eligibility. Learn more at: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/scholarships>
- Stay involved in after-school activities and seek leadership roles, if possible.

### FALL:

- Research fee waivers for college applications and standardized test registrations. ACT and SAT fee waivers may be limited to a few uses, but college application fee waivers may be unlimited. Save yourself possibly hundreds of dollars (fees range from \$10 up to \$100+ per application) by requesting fee waivers from your counselor or academic advisor.
- As soon as possible after October 1st, complete and submit your FAFSA (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>), along with any other financial aid applications your chosen college(s) may require. You should submit the FAFSA by the earliest financial aid deadline of the colleges to which you are applying.
- After you submit the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within three days to three weeks. This document lists your answers to the questions on the FAFSA and provides some basic information about your aid eligibility, like potential Pell Grant and loan amounts. Quickly make needed corrections and submit. Learn more at <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/review-and-correct/review>.
- If you haven't done so already, register for and take the standardized tests required for college admission. Check with the colleges of interest to see what tests are required.
  - SAT Website: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat>
  - ACT Website: <https://www.act.org/>
- Apply to the colleges you have chosen. Prepare your applications carefully. Follow the instructions, and PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO DEADLINES! Stick to a calendar or schedule of application deadlines.
- Before the college application deadlines, ask your counselor and teachers to submit the required

This is your year!

Stay on top of tasks to reach your goals and manage potential stress.

You're so close to the finish line!

documents (e.g., transcript, recommendation letters immunization records, etc.) to the colleges to which you're applying.

- Continue submitting scholarship applications for colleges and local/private scholarships.
- Understand the FAFSA process better by watching the videos in the "FAFSA: Apply for Aid" playlist: <https://www.youtube.com/user/FederalStudentAid>.
- Follow or like the office of Federal Student Aid on Twitter ([Twitter.com/FAFSA](https://twitter.com/FAFSA)) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/FederalStudentAid>) to get regular financial aid tips and updates.

### SPRING:

- Review your college acceptances and compare the colleges' financial aid offers. Learn how here: <https://studentaid.gov/complete-aid-process/comparing-aid-offers>.
- Contact the financial aid office if you have questions about the aid a college has offered. Getting to know the financial aid staff early is a good idea—they can tell you about deadlines, other aid for which you might apply, and important paperwork you might need to submit.
- When you decide which college you want to attend, notify them of your commitment and submit any required financial deposit. Most colleges require this notification and deposit by May 1st. Contact others about your decision to free up aid and admission for other students.
- Make informed decisions about student loans:
  - Federal Versus Private Loans: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/federal-vs-private>
  - Federal Student Loans: Basics for Students: <https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/direct-loan-basics-students.pdf>
- Ask your high school counselor to send your final transcript to your college.
- Review the Summer-Before-College Checklist: <https://blog.collegeboard.org/summer-before-college-checklist>

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# 12TH GRADE CHECKLIST

continued...

## For Parents:

### SUMMER:

- If you haven't already, **visit college campuses** of interest to student. Use a Campus Visit Checklist to ensure you get the most out of these experiences: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/CollegePlanning/media/pdf/campus-visit-checklist.pdf>
- Assist in **finalizing your student's college list**. You can help them choose which colleges to apply to by weighing how well each college meets their needs and provides the most financial aid. Find out more about how to finalize a college list using this link: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/applying-101/how-to-finalize-your-college-list-admissions-college-application>
- Find out the actual cost of colleges** using the College Scorecard (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>). Search the individual college then scroll to "Calculate Your Personal Net Price" to get a custom net price. You can also use the College Board's Net Price Calculator together to find out the potential for financial aid and the true out-of-pocket cost, or net price, of each college at this link: <https://professionals.collegeboard.org/higher-ed/financial-aid/netprice/participating-schools>
- Encourage your student to start college applications early**. Some colleges open their applications to rising seniors as early as July before senior year. Your student can at least begin their applications with the required fields and save other fields for later. Find out more about getting started on applications here: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/applying-101/college-applications-how-to-begin-admissions>

### FALL:

- Work with your student to **complete the FAFSA**, which opens October 1st. You'll need your tax returns from 2 years prior and an FSA ID to complete the FAFSA.
- Make sure your teen's personal information is safe** when they apply for financial aid; learn more about reducing your risk here: <https://studentaid.gov/resources/scams#reduce-your-risk>.

**Congratulations! Your student is close to a major life accomplishment...graduating high school!**

**Help you teen cross the finish line and start a new journey—COLLEGE!**

For tips, read *Federal Student Aid and Identity Theft*: <https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/student-aid-and-identity-theft.pdf>

- Read *IRS Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education* to see how **you might benefit from federal income tax credits for education expenses**: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p970.pdf>
- Review communications from colleges** to which your student sent FAFSA information. If a college has offered you or your child Direct Loans, review the [Federal Student Loans: Basics for Students](#) and [Federal Student Loans: Direct PLUS Loan Basics for Parents](#).

### SPRING:

- Learn about college loan options together**. Borrowing money for college can be a smart choice, especially if your high school student gets a low-interest federal loan. Learn more about the parent's role in borrowing money: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/loans/borrowing-the-parents-role-college-financial-aid>
- Review financial aid offers together**. Your student will need help reading financial aid award letters and deciding which package works best. Be sure your student pays attention to and meets any deadlines for acceptance. Get more information on financial aid awards: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/financial-aid-awards/your-financial-aid-award-explained>
- Help your student complete the college acceptance paperwork**. Once a decision has been made, they review and accept a college's offer, mail a tuition deposit (not all colleges require this), and submit other required paperwork. [Learn more about your high school senior's next steps](#).
- Enjoy this time with your student**, but know that it can come with a lot of changes and stress. Read *Kids Going to College* for more advice and assistance with the college transition: <https://grownandflown.com/kids-going-to-college/>

# COLLEGE APPLICATION TRACKER TOOL

<b>COLLEGE APP CHECKLIST:</b>	<i>Ex: My Fave University</i>				
Reach, Match, or Safety	✓ Match				
Obtained or accessed application	✓ Online app				
Application deadline	11/1/2023				
Transcript sent by high school	Requested 10/5/23				
Sent ACT or SAT scores	4/14/2023				
Recommendations required? Date requested? Who's writing?	Yes. Due 11/30/23; asked Mr. Lee 10/15				
Sent thank-you notes to recommenders	Sent 12/1/2023				
Essay required?	Yes				
Asked at least 2 people proofread essay	✓ Yes, asked Mrs. Yu and Dr. Ross				
Paid application fee (how much?) or asked for waiver letter	✓ Yes, \$45 pd. w/ application				
Application submission date	10/20/23				
Sent vaccination/shot records	10/20/23				
Gave school counselor list of colleges to which you applied	✓ Yes, on 11/15/23				
Confirmed all required materials received by college	✓ Yes, on 12/1/23				
Accepted?	YES! On 12/20/23				
Deadline to accept admission & financial offer	5/1/2024				
Admission accepted & deposit submitted (if applicable)	Will decide on 2/15/2024				
Housing application deadline	2/18/2024				
Residence Hall selection date	3/1/2024				
Notify other college(s) you won't be attending	Will notify 4/30/24 if not attending				
Orientation scheduled	6/1/2024 date picked				
Requested final transcript be sent to college	5/1/2024				
Other:					

# COLLEGE PLANNING

**As a college-bound senior, you are going to have a very busy year. Besides your classes and everything else going on at school, you have applications to complete, forms to fill out, colleges to visit, and decisions to make.**

There's a lot to keep track of your senior year, and if you don't stay on top of things, the year can be stressful. So, stay organized and focused, and get help whenever you have questions—or just need some support.

Do you feel that you are on the path to college? Why or why not?

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What in your high school record could be improved? How can you improve it this year?

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What concerns or questions do you have about college? Or about your future??

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**Check the box that best describes how you feel about going to college.**

- I definitely want to go to college and I'm doing the things I need to do.
- I want to go to college, but need help figuring out what to do.
- I don't know if college will be right for me.
- I'd like to go to college, but don't think I will be able to because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I don't think going to college is right for me because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

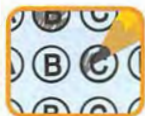


# GET ORGANIZED

With so much going on this year, it's important for you to be organized. Use this checklist to help you stay on track. Check items off as they are completed.



**Set up a master calendar.** Use this calendar to help you keep track of test dates, college visits, application deadlines, and college events at your school.



**Make a testing plan.** If you plan to go to a 4-year college and you haven't taken the ACT or SAT, or you want to improve your scores, register for one of these tests as soon as possible. For information and to register, go to [act.org](http://act.org) or [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org).



**Set up a college file.** In this file, keep copies of test scores and applications, notes on college visits, and anything else you want to keep.



**Plan college visits.** If you haven't visited a college you're seriously considering, schedule a visit as soon as possible.



**Meet with your counselor.** Talk to your counselor about your college choices, possible majors, and financial aid. Your counselor can help you with any questions or concerns you may have.



**Discuss college costs.** Talk to your parents about the cost of the college(s) you're considering, and discuss how your education will be paid for.



**Decide where to apply.** Determine what's needed for each application (essay, transcript, recommendations, etc.).



**Complete applications.** Be aware of deadlines! Make sure you give your counselor and anyone who's writing a recommendation plenty of time.



**Complete the FAFSA** (Free Application for Student Aid). *This is important!* The FAFSA is available on October 1. [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov)

Be sure to continue to work hard to get good grades. You may have heard that your senior grades aren't important. This is not true. Colleges often ask to see first semester senior grades, and at the end of the year, your high school will forward your final transcript (with your senior grades) to the college you plan to attend.

# COMPLETING APPLICATIONS

Your college application is a representation of you, and it's important that you present yourself in the best possible light. Here are some tips to help you submit an impressive college application.



## College Application Tips

- ▶ Follow the instructions exactly, and answer every question honestly.
- ▶ Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and submit an application that is clean, neat, accurate, and complete.
- ▶ Include all of your activities, both in and out of school. (Quality is more important than quantity.)
- ▶ If you have a noteworthy achievement, special talent, unique characteristic, or something that will bring diversity to a campus, be sure it's included.
- ▶ If you're required to write an essay, think of it as an opportunity to provide the admissions committee with insight into who you are and what makes you unique.
- ▶ Proofread, proofread again, and then have someone else look over your application.

Applications for admission require a high school transcript, and most have sections for your counselor to complete. Follow your school's procedures for submitting applications, requesting transcripts, and getting the required forms completed. Be aware of deadlines!

Most 4-year colleges also require ACT or SAT scores. Make sure your scores have been sent to any college requiring them.

## What do you want colleges to know about you?

Think about who you are, and about what makes you someone a college would want to have as a student. Consider your activities, talents, interests, motivations, unique characteristics, achievements, experiences, and/or any obstacles you've overcome.

On the lines below, write down some things you want a college to know about you.

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# Letters of Recommendation

## WHO, WHEN, AND HOW TO ASK

### WHO TO ASK?

If you have a favorite teacher, coach, or employer (and the sentiment is mutual), ask him or her. If not, your math or English teachers are good people to ask. Ask a person who has known you about a year, at least. If that's not an option, pick the person who has known you the longest. They should be able to discuss your class participation, personal interaction, and your work on the subject or your role. It doesn't really matter what the outcome was for the particular job or subject; it matters how much work you put in, improvements you made, and any obstacles you overcame.



### WHEN TO ASK?

Ask for your letter(s) of recommendation about a month ahead of the deadline, three weeks at minimum. If you're asking someone who seems fairly popular with other seniors, you might even consider asking earlier than originally planned. Writing a letter of recommendation, when done with care and intention, can take up to an hour of a teacher or counselor's time. Some might have a template they use, and that's okay too, but for a quality letter, extra time must be considered. Build in some cushion time for the deadline provided by the college. If the letter needs to be mailed, the college wants the letter in hand by the deadline.



### HOW TO ASK?

Teachers aren't required to write you a letter of recommendation. They're doing you a favor if they agree to write a rec letter; don't demand anything of your teachers when requesting one. However, don't be shy about asking. Most of the time, teachers will be thrilled to assist as long as you respect their other responsibilities and the time it takes to write your letter. Ask in a way that allows the teacher to politely decline. Phrase your request like this: *"Do you believe that you know me well enough and do you have the time to write a letter of recommendation for my application to [COLLEGE]?"* Give the teacher the instructions, deadline, an envelope (if needed), and other info, like your student resume.



### WHAT NEXT?

Give the teacher, coach, or counselor something to work with, like your student resume or "brag sheet." They might only know that you improved your grades from a C to a B, and not that you stock shelves at the grocery store on the weekend and volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club after school, or that you are a first-generation college student who participates in multiple clubs and sports and maintains a 3.5 GPA. The person writing your letter of recommendation will have more information to work with using your resume to be able to write a quality letter. Don't forget to follow up prior to the deadline and ask if additional info is needed. Send a thank-you note afterward. Your teacher will appreciate your thoughtfulness!



# Recommendation Request

## EMAIL SAMPLE

(DATE)

Dear (TEACHER, COACH, OR COUNSELOR'S NAME),

I am applying to (COLLEGE) and a letter of recommendation is required. Would you consider writing a letter for me? I have attached the instructions for the letter and my student resume. I hope you find both helpful.

The deadline is (DATE). Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can assist you in this process.

Sincerely,

(YOUR NAME)

Begin by asking in person for a letter of recommendation and follow up with a written request about a month before the deadline, three weeks at minimum. Your letter or email can be short and sweet, providing your student resume or brag sheet, and any other instructions you deem necessary. Make sure to include the deadline as well as the submission address and offer to assist if needed. If the letter needs to be printed and mailed, provide an envelope that is stamped and pre-addressed.

Follow the sample to the left and add or subtract any verbiage you want to make the letter yours and to assist the letter writer.



# THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Completing your college application is just the first step. Here is how the college application process works.

## **Step 1** Submission

You submit your application and all required documents before the deadline. If you are applying for financial aid, also complete the college's financial aid application form.

## **Step 2** Review

The college admissions office puts all of the information regarding your application into a file. When all of the required documents have been received (test scores, recommendations, etc.), your application is evaluated by an admissions committee.

## **Step 3** Notification

Once your application has been evaluated, the college will let you know whether you have been accepted, rejected, or put on a waiting list. Most acceptance letters are sent out by mid-April.

## **Step 4** Your Decision

After comparing all college and financial aid offers, you decide which college you want to attend. This decision generally needs to be made by May 1.



## Your College Application Record

College you're applying to: \_\_\_\_\_

- Application for admission submitted Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Notified that all required documents have been received Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Application for financial aid submitted Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Notified of the college's admission decision Date \_\_\_\_\_

College you're applying to: \_\_\_\_\_

- Application for admission submitted Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Notified that all required documents have been received Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Application for financial aid submitted Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Notified of the college's admission decision Date \_\_\_\_\_

# CHOOSING A MAJOR/PROGRAM

Choosing a major or program is a big decision and it's important that you choose one that you will enjoy and be successful in. Learn all you can about your options.



## 4-Year College Majors

Students who go to a four-year college must choose one subject to study in depth. This is their major. Since you will take almost half of your courses in your major, it's very important to choose a major you find interesting. Some of the most popular college majors include business, education, computer science, engineering, nursing, accounting, psychology, communications, biology, and political science.

Not all students know what they want to major in when they start college. These students use their first year of college to take their required General Education courses (e.g., English, science, math), talk to their advisor, visit Career Services, and learn about the majors offered at their college.



## 2-Year College Programs

**Career Programs** – Students in one and two-year career programs take classes that will prepare them for a specific career field. Some of the most popular career programs are in healthcare, computer science, engineering technology, and human services.

**Transfer Programs** – Students who want a four-year degree can take their general education courses (English, history, math, etc.) at a two-year college and then transfer to a four-year college. Many students start at a two-year college to save money, or because they don't feel ready to attend a four-year college.

## Your College Plans

What are your current college plans? What college(s) and majors are you considering?

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What questions or concerns do you have?

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I don't know what I'm doing and need some help figuring it out.



# Finding THE RIGHT FIT

Have you started investigating potential colleges yet? How soon should you begin? Perhaps you already have an idea of where you want to attend (or at least a place to begin the search). A decision this important is worth serious consideration, given the time, effort, and financial commitment involved. Selecting a college or university that's perfect for you will require dedication. Every institution is completely unique, and with nearly 5,000 colleges in the U.S. alone, there are plenty from which to choose. Perhaps the best way to find the right fit? **TRY SOME ON!** Visit colleges and see for yourself how each campus "fits." You may find that some colleges feel too big or small, or aren't your style whatsoever. Think about what you're looking for in a college or university and begin your research using the suggestions below. Also helpful to your search might be the College Scorecard tool at <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov>.

FOR COLLEGE &

FITTING IN ON CAMPUS

Start Here!

- Research colleges online
- Talk with family and friends
- Visit with your H.S. counselor or college prep advisor
- Make a college "Wish List"
- Talk to college students
- Look at college brochures
- Chat with a college rep
- Read mail sent from colleges
- Attend a college fair
- Visit a college campus (while classes are in session)
- Don't get too fixated on one particular college

A college education will change your life. Whether you choose to pursue a certificate program, 2-year associate degree, 4-year bachelor's degree, or beyond, committing yourself to postsecondary education *can* be expensive even with financial aid. Although that may seem daunting, think of the expense as an **INVESTMENT** in your future. It *will* pay off in the long run, but only if you **STICK WITH IT** and don't drop out before getting that hard-earned degree. Avoid unnecessary risks to your investment by **CHOOSING WISELY** in a college. Not every institution is perfect for everyone, so finding the right fit is imperative to your success.

Consider These Criteria

TYPE OF COLLEGE, ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS, MAJORS, LOCATION, OVERALL PRICE TAG, AVAILABLE FINANCIAL AID, SIZE OF INSTITUTION, & ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Once you've found the perfect college, discover what it takes to fit in with campus life. College can seem overwhelming, but utilizing some specific strategies can help ease the transition from high school. Try to maintain a **FLEXIBLE** attitude to better adapt to new experiences and forgive yourself when you make mistakes. College graduation is *years* down the road, but in the meantime you can start working on the skills necessary to succeed not just in college, but as a professional adult.



# FIND YOUR FIT

**NOPE.  
DON'T EVEN  
GO THERE.**

## REASONS **NOT** TO PICK A COLLEGE

### IT'S THE CHEAPEST (OR MOST EXPENSIVE) SCHOOL

Judging a college or university based solely on the price tag isn't the best approach. Consider the fact that some of the most expensive schools in the country are also the most generous when it comes to financial aid. That "expensive" college may actually cost you *less* than a state school if you qualify for aid. Furthermore, the "cheapest" colleges aren't always a bargain. What you save on cost, you may sacrifice in student activities or programs of study. Be sure to do your homework, because price tags can be deceiving. All colleges should have a **NET PRICE CALCULATOR** on their websites to help determine actual cost at their institution. A (sort of) exception to the rule? Saving money by taking classes at a community college before moving on to complete your degree at a 4-year college.

### YOUR GIRLFRIEND/BOYFRIEND/BESTIE IS GOING THERE

College is a time to broaden your social circle, meet new people and discover who you are as a person. Starting college tied to previous relationships can complicate your collegiate social experience. You can maintain old friendships, but it is important to make new friends once you arrive on campus.

### IT'S YOUR PARENTS/SIBLINGS' ALMA MATER

You may have heard great stories from their good old days on campus, but don't let that nostalgia rub off on you. Everyone's college experience is unique, and what was good for them may not be the same for you. Hopefully your parents will respect your choice of college, wherever that may be.

### YOU WANT TO STAY CLOSE TO HOME

Over half of students end up choosing a college within 100 miles from where they live. Be honest with yourself as to why you feel it necessary to be near home. Although it's tempting to have the comforts of home a short drive away, it shouldn't be the only reason to pick a college. Plus, going home every weekend hampers social connections and may prevent you from fully experiencing college life.

### THE COLLEGE IS HIGHLY RANKED

College rankings have come under serious criticism in recent years because the metrics used by ranking companies can be unfair or flawed. Inflated rankings for certain institutions may dwarf colleges of equal or arguably better quality based on minor differences in the metric. Don't put too much stock into college rankings; focus instead on the criteria that are important to **YOU** when researching colleges.

### YOU WANT A COLLEGE WITH A GREAT SPORTS TEAM

Whether you play a sport or root for your team in the stands, many colleges place extreme emphasis (and money) toward athletics. School spirit is a fabulous thing and attending athletic events (or playing) contributes to feeling connected to the college. *However*, athletics on campus isn't the same as academics. You attend college to get an *education* and that's paramount to whether or not the *[insert beloved team mascots here]* have a winning season.

### GOING TO COLLEGE IN A CITY (OR NEAR THE BEACH) SOUNDS FUN

Choosing a college because you want to live in a warmer climate or in an urban setting might not make practical sense if you factor in the added cost of living in those areas. The basic cost of living is often higher, so what little money you have will need to stretch even further when it comes to expenses outside of college costs. Plus, tuition at these schools may be higher than what you'd pay elsewhere. Financial aid could be harder to come by, as well. Colleges don't have to be generous when plenty of students want to attend. Maybe save the beach (or city) for spring break.

## Summer Melt IS A THING

**SUMMER MELT** is what colleges and universities call the odd phenomenon of prospective students failing to show up for college, even though they have applied to (and been accepted by) the institution. According to Harvard research, between 10-40% of admitted college freshmen end up "melting" over the summer and do not show up for college after high school graduation. Melters often come from lower-income and/or minority backgrounds, but could just as easily be from any demographic. Reasons for melt have been linked to lacking support and resources to cover college expenses; however, that isn't always the case, so the problem remains a mystery to education researchers. Now that you know what it means to "melt," be sure you're not one of the many who do! Stay cool during the summer and seek out support from high school counselors (before and after graduation), college admissions staff, mentors, and/or advisors to get assistance or even a pep talk, if necessary. Remember, you are **NOT** alone in your college aspirations, so be sure to ask for help. Don't quit before you start!

## "COLLEGE" VS. "UNIVERSITY" What's the Dif?

**COLLEGE** - this is a postsecondary educational institution that provides instruction beyond 12th grade in a range of programs that meet the requirements for a degree at the associate, baccalaureate (bachelor's), or graduate (master's or beyond) level. Often has fewer program offerings than a university.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

About 1 in 3 U.S. college students end up transferring to another school. One key factor in all this moving around? Choosing a college for the wrong reasons. Reduce the odds of school-hopping by **CHOOSING WISELY** from the start, saving yourself frustration, time, and money in the long run.



# Fitting THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

THESE ARE LEGIT.

## Admission Rate

How likely are you to get admitted to the college? Some colleges have low admission rates (very competitive), whereas other colleges have high admission rates (easy to get admitted). Consider your GPA and ACT/SAT scores to see if you qualify for the minimum admission requirements before applying. Although it's good to apply to "reach" colleges, you need to apply to "match" and "sure thing" colleges, too.

## Graduation Rate & Freshman Retention Rate

Find out the percentage rate of students who actually graduate in 4-6 years from the college. Institutions take this number seriously, and so should you. The most important thing about your whole college experience is that you graduate. Seeing how many other people make it to the finish line at a particular college speaks volumes about the institution and the support it can provide in reaching your goal. Seek out the college's freshman retention rate, a critical reflection of how freshman students survive their first year there.

## Student-to-Faculty Ratio

The number of students in an average class will vary depending on the institution, but this number will give you an idea of how much individual attention you can expect from a professor. At large universities, these numbers (especially for freshman and sophomore classes) may be *hundreds* of students to one instructor. Class sizes will reduce as you progress toward taking classes specific to your major, which will help you feel less like a "number" in the crowd. Note that many colleges take pride in having smaller class sizes, even at the lower undergraduate level.

## Quality of Professors (TA/GA Usage)

To get the best education possible, you want professors who have impressive qualifications (such as degrees from elite schools and/or real-world experience). Professors at research institutions or those pursuing tenure (an earned status that secures their position indefinitely) are required to conduct research related to their field and publish their findings. Because of that added responsibility, most professors teach smaller upper level courses, leaving the big classes to be taught by TAs (teaching assistants) or GAs (graduate assistants) who lack the experience and expertise of a professor. It's worth asking how many of your classes will be taught by actual professors (or adjunct/visiting professors who aren't pursuing tenure). If you have an option, select classes taught by the experts. You're paying for it, so get the most bang for your buck.

## Course of Study/Quality of Department

If you have a specific major or course of study in mind, seek out colleges that not only provide that course of study but also have recognition in that particular field. Some schools are "known for" certain majors, so seek them out first. Ask to meet with faculty in this department, then have questions prepared for the meeting, such as *How many students who graduate with this degree have jobs upon graduation? Will I need to pursue a degree beyond a bachelor's to be employable/successful in this field?*

## On-Campus Living

Living on campus is part of the collegiate tradition, albeit an *expensive* tradition, often costing as much as tuition itself. Perhaps you plan to live off campus or at home to save money; however many colleges recommend (or even require) that freshmen live on campus because it has been proven to help with retention. Although room and board is payable through financial aid, the cost is significant. Many college campuses try to woo potential students with cool residence halls and state-of-the-art workout facilities, but carefully weigh your options for on-campus housing. It costs less to stay in a basic dorm than a fancy apartment-style residence hall. Just because the college has a lazy-river pool at the rec center doesn't mean it's the best college choice for you. Also look into what meal plan options are available.

## Student Activities

Activities on campus are multitudinous, especially at larger colleges or universities. Of course, academics should take priority; don't get so involved that your grades suffer. Find the right balance of involvement and study time. Activities can help develop new friendships as well as establish connections on campus and in the community, which could benefit your resume.

Ready to Apply?

Many colleges charge non-refundable application fees. When applying to multiple colleges (aim for a minimum of 3), those fees can add up. If you qualify for an ACT/SAT fee waiver or participate in a federally-funded TRIO program like Talent Search or Upward Bound, colleges may waive the app fee. It doesn't hurt to ask!

Job Placement After Graduation  
Transportation On/Around Campus  
Professional/Grad School Options  
Safety Statistics  
Campus Demographics  
Work Study/Campus Jobs

What's tricky: not all institutions of higher education that could designate themselves a university choose to do so. Some schools opt to stick with college out of tradition. Universities aren't necessarily any easier to get into than colleges and vice-versa. Also, both could be either private or public.

UNIVERSITY - This is an institution of higher education that provides undergrad studies leading to the baccalaureate degree in a broad range of academic disciplines as well as graduate studies leading to advanced degrees in at least three academic and/or professional fields. Note that within the university system, the term "college" is used to indicate the educational department or collection of departments, such as College of Engineering or College of Arts & Sciences.



# FITTING IN ON CAMPUS

## START BY MANAGING YOUR EXPECTATIONS, BECAUSE COLLEGE CAN BE A KICK IN THE PANTS.

No matter how much you prepare for what college will be like, it will NOT be what you expect. It's human nature to picture events and scenarios to be a certain way, but things rarely work out *exactly* as you envision. That's life! Part of being a functioning adult in the world is managing your reactions, feelings, and expectations when things don't go as planned. Learn to make the best of situations by staying positive and **BEING FLEXIBLE**. Prepare for worst-case scenarios and know that obstacles and setbacks will happen. But that's okay! Be resilient and consider adversity a learning opportunity.

### Take Note of **BOREDOM**.

Sometimes college can be boring. You may sit through dry, seemingly unending class lectures about "boring" topics or have to read hundreds of pages in equally dull textbooks. Resist the temptation to pull out your phone and scroll through social media. Remember that you *pay* for the professor's wealth of knowledge to teach you that subject. Every minute wasted is money wasted. Develop your note-taking skills and start writing down quality notes. (The brain remembers best if you **WRITE** things old school pencil-to-paper.) Use your notes to study for the exam because any words spoken by the professor can be prime material to show up on the test. Taking notes helps with staying alert, as does taking sips of water every few minutes during class.

### Expect to Feel **AWKWARD**.

At college you will be surrounded by people from different places (even countries) who may look, speak, and behave differently from you. You likely won't know exactly how things work on campus just yet, which may feel disorienting and intimidating. Feeling out of place can be *awkward*, but try to overcome those feelings and embrace the awkwardness. Being around people who are different can be educational! Plus, striking up convos with total strangers is pretty much *required* in adult life, so college makes great practice. With every unfamiliar person, place, and experience you are provided an opportunity to build understanding that will likely connect to future experiences.

Keep an open mind and embrace what's new.

### Accept the **CHALLENGE**.

College is a world unto itself, quite different from your educational experience thus far. Perhaps you've taken a few college classes concurrently during high school and feel like you've "got it" when it comes to college. Newsflash: **YOU DON'T**. At least not yet. No matter how prepared you are, the rigor of balancing multiple college courses, plus adjusting to campus life, will be a challenge. Figuring it out will take time (like 4 years!) and then you'll move on to your professional adult life, which has challenges all anew. Keep frustration in check and know that you're not alone in feeling occasional stress. Don't hesitate to ask questions or seek help from professors, advisors, college staff, or other students.

## THESE CAMPUS SKILLS HELP YOU GO PRO

Working together in a team, even if you don't know your teammates very well (or at all).

Getting along with others and working through conflict.

Having a respectful conversation with someone who holds totally different points of view.

Accepting and respecting people from all different nationalities, backgrounds, religions, sexual orientations, and genders.

Showing up on time (or better yet early) and prepared for whatever the occasion; doing your part.

Taking full responsibility when you make mistakes. Don't make excuses for your behavior.

Following the rules even if you see others breaking them.

Asking questions when you don't understand. Asking for help when needed.

Avoiding drama; not gossiping about others, instigating conflict, or complaining.

## Fitting TIPS to Avoid Serious Snags

- Go to freshman orientation with the goal of meeting new people, making connections, and learning everything possible about your college, including campus policies and codes of conduct.
- Don't skip class. You'll fall behind and miss valuable lecture info. Learn new material as it's taught, rather than cramming before an exam.
- Get involved on campus! Join clubs and organizations that have a community service component as well as clubs/honor organizations related to your major to bulk up your resume and network. Look into summer internships and study abroad opportunities as well.
- Follow each course syllabus to the letter. Note that class policies can be specific to individual professors (such as attendance and tech device use). Get to know your professors during their office hours and seek out free tutoring (offered on most college campuses) if needed.
- Address conflict with roommates (or lab partners, teammates, etc.) immediately, with directness and a calm demeanor. Be specific about your concerns or grievances. Be willing to compromise to seek solutions.

## IF YOU HIT A SNAG

TRY NOT TO PANIC. Unless you've broken the law or violated campus policy, there's likely a solution. Before giving up completely (and moving back home to live with your parents), seek support from campus faculty and staff. Unless it's an absolute emergency, **DO NOT QUIT SCHOOL** in the middle of the semester; you'll lose money, time, and credit. Hang in there! You worked hard to get this far; sticking with it is in your best interest.

DREAMCATCHER Curriculum

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# LOCAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

Prices are approximate and subject to change. See college websites for exact information.

## Brigham Young University

[byu.edu](http://byu.edu)

Provo, Utah 84602  
 Admissions: (801) 422-2507  
 Financial Aid: (801) 422-4104

Approximate Enrollment	35,000
Tests Required	ACT or SAT
Priority Application Deadline Freshmen	Nov. 1
Application Deadline	Dec. 15
Application Fee	\$35
Scholarship Deadline	Dec. 15
Room and Board	\$4280 per semester
LDS Tuition/Fees	\$3152 per semester
Non-LDS Tuition/Fees	\$6304 per semester

## Ensign College

[Ensign.edu](http://Ensign.edu)

95 N 300 W  
 Salt Lake City, Utah 84101  
 Admissions: (801) 524-8145  
 Financial Aid: (801) 524-8111

Approximate Enrollment	2,600
Tests Required	(for scholarships only) ACT
Application Deadline	Sept. 1
Application Fee	\$35
Scholarship Deadline	Jul. 15
Room and Board	Varies (no on-campus housing)
LDS Tuition/Fees	\$1883 per semester
Non-LDS Tuition/Fees	\$3766 per semester

## Brigham Young University-Idaho

[byui.edu](http://byui.edu)

525 S Center St  
 Rexburg, Idaho 83460-4104  
 Admissions: (208) 496-1300  
 Financial Aid: (208) 496-1600

Approximate Enrollment	15,000
Tests Required	ACT or SAT
Priority Application Deadline	Feb. 1
Application Fee	\$35
Scholarship Deadline	Dec 1
Room and Board	\$4368 per semester
LDS Tuition/Fees	\$2268 per semester
Non-LDS Tuition/Fees	\$4536 per semester

## Salt Lake Community College

[slcc.edu](http://slcc.edu)

4600 South Redwood Road  
 Salt Lake City, Utah 84123  
 Admissions: (801) 957-4073  
 Financial Aid: (801) 957-4410

Approximate Enrollment (10 campuses)	34,000
Tests Optional	ACT or SAT
Application Deadline	March 1
Application Fee	\$40
Scholarship Deadline	Nov. 15
Room and Board	Varies (no on campus housing)
Tuition/Fees	\$2,134 per semester

### Student Support Services

**Thanhtung Thantrong,**  
**Director (801) 957-4334**

[Thanhtung.thantrong@slcc.edu](mailto:Thanhtung.thantrong@slcc.edu)

## Utah Tech University

[utahtech.edu](http://utahtech.edu)

225 South 700 East  
 St. George, Utah 84770  
 Admissions: (435) 652-7777  
 Financial Aid: (435) 652-7575

Approximate Enrollment	12,000
Tests Optional	ACT or SAT
Application Deadline	Aug. 15
Application Fee	\$35
Scholarship Deadline	March 1
Room and Board	\$3600 per semester
In-State Tuition/Fees	\$2532 per semester

### Student Support Services

**Jonathan Morrell, Director**  
**(435) 652-7656**

[morrell@dixie.edu](mailto:morrell@dixie.edu)

## Snow College

[snow.edu](http://snow.edu)

150 College Avenue  
 Ephraim, Utah 84627  
 Admissions: (435) 283-7144  
 Financial Aid: (435) 283-7131

Approximate Enrollment	5,800
Tests Optional	ACT or SAT
Application Deadline	Open
Application Fee	\$30
Scholarship Deadline	March 1
Room and Board	\$2100 per semester
In-State Tuition/Fees	\$2100 per semester

### Student Support Services

**Mike Anderson**  
**(435) 283-7393**

[mike.anderson@snow.edu](mailto:mike.anderson@snow.edu)



## Southern Utah University

[suu.edu](http://suu.edu)

351 West University Blvd  
Cedar City, Utah 84720  
Admissions: (435) 586-7740  
Financial Aid: (435) 586-7735

Approximate Enrollment	14,000
Tests Optional	ACT or SAT
Application Deadline	Feb. 1
Application Fee	\$50
Scholarship Deadline	March 1
Room and Board	\$4139 per semester
In-State Tuition/Fees	\$3385 per semester

### Student Support Services

**Chip Sharpe**  
(435) 586-7771

[chipsharpe@suu.edu](mailto:chipsharpe@suu.edu)

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## University of Utah

[utah.edu](http://utah.edu)

201 Presidents Circle  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84112  
Admissions: (801) 581-8761  
Financial Aid: (801) 581-6211

Approximate Enrollment	35,000
Tests Optional	ACT or SAT
Priority Application Deadline	November 1
Application Fee	\$55
Scholarship Deadline	December 1
Room and Board	\$6228 per semester
In-State Tuition/Fees	\$4981 per semester

### Student Support Services

**Makena Christiansen**  
(435) 581-7188

[mchristiansen@sa.utah.edu](mailto:mchristiansen@sa.utah.edu)

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## Westminster College

[Westminstercollege.edu](http://Westminstercollege.edu)

1840 South 1300 East  
Salt Lake City, UT 84105  
Admissions (801) 484-7651  
Financial Aid (801) 832-2500

Approximate Enrollment	1,516
Tests Optional	ACT or SAT
Application Deadline	Nov 1
Application Fee	\$50
Scholarship Deadline	Dec 1
Room and Board	5,029 per semester
In-State Tuition/Fees	19,916 per semester

## Utah State University

[usu.edu](http://usu.edu)

Taggart Student Center  
Logan, Utah 84322  
Admissions: (435) 797-1079  
Financial Aid: (435) 797-0173

Approximate Enrollment	27,000
Tests Optional	ACT or SAT
Application Deadline	Feb 1
Application Fee	\$50
Scholarship Deadline	December 1
Room and Board	\$4116 per semester
In-State Tuition/Fees	\$4614 per semester

### Student Support Services

**Anthonie Nichols**  
(435) 797-0595

[Anthonie.nichols@usu.edu](mailto:Anthonie.nichols@usu.edu)

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## Utah State University Eastern

[usueastern.edu](http://usueastern.edu)

451 East 400 North  
Price, Utah 84501  
Admissions: (435) 613-5226  
Financial Aid: (435) 613-5323

Approximate Enrollment	1,525
Tests Optional	ACT or SAT
Application Deadline	Open
Application Fee	\$50
Scholarship Deadline	April 1
Room and Board	\$3259 per semester
In-State Tuition/Fees	\$2408 per semester

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## Utah Valley University

[uvu.edu](http://uvu.edu)

800 West University Parkway  
Orem, Utah 84058  
Admissions: (801) 863-8706  
Financial Aid: (801) 863-8442

Approximate Enrollment	43,000
Tests Required	ACT or SAT
Application Deadline	August 1
Application Fee	\$35
Scholarship Deadline	February 1
Room and Board	Varies (no on campus housing)
In-State Tuition/Fees	\$3,135 per semester

### Student Support Services

**Jennie Hall**  
(801) 863-8426

[Jennie.hall@uvu.edu](mailto:Jennie.hall@uvu.edu)

# Weber State University

[weber.edu](http://weber.edu)

3848 Harrison Blvd  
Ogden, Utah 84408

Admissions: (801) 626-6050

Financial Aid: (801) 626-7569

Approximate Enrollment 29,734

Tests Required ACT or SAT

(for scholarships & placement only)

Application Deadline March 1

Application Fee \$30

Scholarship Deadline Dec. 1

Room and Board \$6448 per semester

In-State Tuition/Fees \$3114 per semester

## Student Support Services

Eddie Hoyle, Director

(801) 626-7349

[ehoyle@weber.edu](mailto:ehoyle@weber.edu)

## NOTICE

If you need to take or retake the ACT, register Online at [actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org). The latest you can take the test is in December if you wish to have your scores considered for admissions and scholarships. ACT test dates for the 2023 – 24 year are below.

Test Date	Registration Deadline
September 9, 2023	August 4, 2023
October 28, 2023	September 22, 2023
December 9, 2023	November 3, 2023
February 10, 2024	January 5, 2024
April 13, 2024	March 8, 2024
June 8, 2024	May 3, 2024
July 13, 2024	June 7, 2024

### What if I plan to serve a religious mission before attending college?

Most colleges in Utah will defer your admission and scholarships for religious or humanitarian missions, illness or military service. It is imperative that you apply **before** you leave, just as if you were planning to attend college the upcoming fall. Deferring your admissions will allow you to hold any scholarships you may be awarded, get priority registration upon your return, designate someone to register for your classes prior to your return and access financial aid or veteran's benefits.

\*Remember that you committed to obtaining a college degree within 6 years following high school graduation\*

# COLLEGE COURSE SELECTION:

Use this blank weekly calendar to help you create your college schedule! Your courses take first priority when scheduling. Remember to schedule in some study time. If you're planning on having a work-study or other job, plan about 10-20 hours a week for work.

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
7:30-8:20 AM					
8:30-9:20 AM					
9:30-10:20 AM					
10:30-11:20 AM					
11:30 AM-12:30 PM					
12:30-1:20 PM					
1:30-2:20 PM					
2:30-3:20 PM					
3:30-4:20 PM					
4:30-5:30 PM					

# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Don't ever think that you can't afford to attend college. There is a lot of financial aid available and there are a number of ways to cut college costs.

## There are four types of financial aid



**Grants**– money given, usually because of financial need

**Scholarships** – money awarded for academic achievement or outstanding talent

**Loans**– borrowed money that must be repaid

**Work-study** – money earned at a part-time job

Because grants and scholarships are “free money,” it's good to get as many of these as possible.

*In order to obtain most financial aid, you and your parents must complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). For information and instructions, go to [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov). (More on the FAFSA later.)*

## Here are some ways to cut college costs:

- ▶ go to a public four-year college in your home state
- ▶ get an associate's degree at a community college
- ▶ start at a community or technical college, and then transfer to a four-year college
- ▶ live at home instead of in a dorm or apartment
- ▶ go to school part-time and work your way through college

## A Short Financial Aid Quiz

Circle T or F to indicate if you think a statement is True or False.

1. **T** **F** Most financial aid is awarded based on your family's financial situation.
2. **T** **F** Every student who needs money to help pay for college should complete a FAFSA.
3. **T** **F** Regardless of which colleges you apply to, the financial aid you receive will be the same.
4. **T** **F** You can get a loan that you don't have to start paying back until you've left college.
5. **T** **F** Students must have a B average to complete a FAFSA.
6. **T** **F** If you have a financial need, the college's financial aid office will put together a financial aid package for you.

Answers are on the next page.



## Answers to the Financial Aid Quiz

1. **True.** Financial aid is generally awarded to students with financial need. A student has financial need when the cost of attending a college is more than the amount a family can afford to pay. When determining eligibility for need-based aid, a family's financial situation is the only thing that's considered. The student's academic record is not a factor.
2. **True.** In order to get any federal financial aid, students and parents must complete a FAFSA. Completing a FAFSA is very important!
3. **False.** Financial aid packages will vary from college to college. This is why it's so important to carefully compare packages. For example, one package may have mostly loans, while another may be offering more grant money.
4. **True.** College students can get a Direct Student Loan to help pay for college expenses. They don't have to start paying the money back until they've been out of college for six months.
5. **False.** There are no academic requirements. Any student who needs money to pay for college should complete a FAFSA in the winter/spring of their senior year.
6. **True.** If you complete a FAFSA and it shows that you have a financial need, the college will put a financial aid package together for you. Packages consist of grants, scholarships, loans, and/or work-study program.

Give yourself 1 point for each correct answer. **Your Score** \_\_\_\_\_

### Check off the things you've done.

- I have had a discussion with my parent(s) about how my college will be paid for.
  - I have completed my college's financial aid application.
  - My parents and I have completed a FAFSA.
  - I will try to cut college costs by doing the following : \_\_\_\_\_
- 



If you need money for college, it is very important that you complete a FAFSA! For information and instructions, go to [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov).

# GETTING MONEY FOR COLLEGE

**Financial aid is money that is given, earned, or lent to help students pay for their education. Financial aid makes it possible for millions of students to go to college.**

In the College Planning section of this book, you learned about the different types of financial aid. Here's a quick review.

## The four types of financial aid

- ▶ **Grants** – money given, usually because of financial need
- ▶ **Scholarships** – money awarded for academic achievement or outstanding talent
- ▶ **Loans** – borrowed money that must be repaid
- ▶ **Work-Study** – money earned at a part-time job

## Who is eligible for financial aid?

Financial aid is usually awarded on the basis of **financial need**. (Scholarships are the exception.) Financial need is the difference between the cost of attending a college (tuition, fees, books, room and board) and the amount a family can afford.

*For example, if a family can afford to pay \$7,000 and the cost of attending a college is \$22,000, the student has a financial need of \$15,000.*

Because financial aid is most often awarded to students whose families need help paying for college, having a fair and objective way to determine how much a family can afford is very important. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the federal form that's used to determine the amount a family should be able to pay for college the following year.

Because states and colleges use information from the FAFSA to determine a student's eligibility for financial aid, families who want help paying for college need to complete a FAFSA.

### FAFSA FACTS

- ▶ The FAFSA asks parents and students for information on income and assets.
- ▶ It can be completed free online at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov). This site provides step-by-step instructions.
- ▶ You can fill out the FAFSA on a computer, mobile device, or the myStudentAid mobile app.
- ▶ A FAFSA can be submitted as early as October 1 of a student's senior year.
- ▶ By completing the FAFSA, you are automatically applying for a Pell Grant (FREE MONEY).

*Any student who needs money to pay for education should complete a FAFSA!!!*

# UNDERSTANDING FINANCIAL AID

Imagine that you completed a FAFSA and the Student Aid Report you receive shows that your family should be able to afford \$7,000 for your education next year. This amount is called your EFC (Expected Family Contribution). In order to figure out your financial need at each of the three colleges you applied to, you've put together the following chart.

	Community College	State College	Private University
Cost of College	\$18,000	\$26,000	\$45,000
Minus EFC	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
Financial Need	\$11,000	\$19,000	\$38,000

You applied for financial aid at all three colleges and each college's financial aid office put a financial aid package together for you. Each package met your financial need for that college. These are their financial aid packages.

	Community College	State College	Private University
Scholarships	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$8,000
Grants	\$2,000	\$8,000	\$0,000
Loans	\$0	\$8,000	\$25,000
Work Study	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Total Aid	\$11,000	\$19,000	\$38,000

1. At which college do you have the most financial need? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which college is offering the most free money (grants and scholarships)? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which college's package includes the least amount of money you must pay back? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which college is offering the most total financial aid? \_\_\_\_\_

Answers are below.

What plans do you have to further your education after high school? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What questions do you have about financial aid, or about how to pay for your education?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Step-by-Step Guide to Completing the FAFSA:

What to know before you get started:

1. Submit your FAFSA in October of your senior year. Use the tax information from 2 years prior to the year in which you will be enrolled in college (for the 2022-23 year enrolled in college, use 2020s tax information).
2. Pay attention to college deadlines for FAFSA submission. FAFSA's overall deadline for submission is typically June 30th, but your college/scholarship deadline has priority over FAFSA's deadline.
3. Before you start to work on the FAFSA, both you and your parent will need a Federal Student Aid ID. Go to <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm> and complete the fields under "Create An FSA."
4. You will get a Student Aid Report (SAR) sent to your email or home address. Review the SAR carefully; make any changes to your FAFSA online.

## Step 1: Questions about You

- ◇ Your last name, first name, and middle initial: enter exactly as it appears on your social security card.
- ◇ Your permanent mailing address
- ◇ Your social security number: you won't be able to complete the FAFSA without it. Only U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens are eligible for the FAFSA.
- ◇ Birthdate
- ◇ Your phone number
- ◇ Your driver's license and driver's license state
- ◇ Email: enter an email that you will check. Your SAR will be sent there, and you'll get it faster this way.
- ◇ Citizenship: your options are U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen.
- ◇ Marital Status
- ◇ State of legal residence: this is important when it comes to state-sponsored scholarships. If you have moved a lot, talk to the college(s) in which you are interested to see how that might affect you.
- ◇ Gender
- ◇ Male students over 18 years old: you must be registered for the Selective Service to complete the FAFSA.
- ◇ Question about conviction of possessing or selling illegal drugs: answer yes if this applies to you while you were receiving federal financial aid (unlikely for first-time applicants), the conviction is still on your record, or you were tried as an adult for the offense.
- ◇ Highest level of education completed by your parents
- ◇ Your education type and level
- ◇ Name and address of high school: use the FAFSA search tool or enter the name and address of your school.
- ◇ What grade level in college you will be in the following year and degree you're seeking
- ◇ Interested in work-study question: check yes!

## Step 2: Your Financial Information

This section asks if you've filed your tax returns or not for 2020. You will be asked which type of form you filed, your marital status, and information about all earnings.

## Step 3: Dependency Status

The FAFSA asks questions about your dependency status to determine if you need to report your parent information in addition to your own. Go to <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/dependency> if you have questions about your dependency.

## Step 4: Your Parents' Information

Who you consider your parent might not be who the FAFSA considers your parent. Go to <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/parent-info> to learn more. Below are the questions the FAFSA wants you to answer about your parents;

- ◇ Marital status: use their status at the time you're filling out the FAFSA
- ◇ Parents' social security numbers: for U.S. citizens, enter their SSNs. If they are not citizens, enter zeros.
- ◇ Parents' residency status and household occupants attending college
- ◇ Parental federal benefit status and WIC benefit status
- ◇ Parents income tax return information
- ◇ Dislocated worker status
- ◇ Income status, including balance of cash, investments, untaxed income

## Step 5: Student Household Information

Below is a list of the important questions that will be asked:

- ◇ How many people are in your household and how many will be in college
- ◇ If anyone in the household has received federal benefits
- ◇ Whether they are a dislocated worker

## Step 6: Selecting Colleges

You must list at least one college to receive your info from the FAFSA. The colleges you list will use your information to determine the types and amounts of aid you may receive. For the FAFSA, it doesn't matter in what order you list your colleges of choice. To be considered for some state-sponsored scholarship programs you might have to list your colleges of choice in order. Go to <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out/school-list> to find out if your state requires you to list your colleges in order.

## Step 7: Review Answers, Sign, and Submit

This part is important, so carefully review your answers. Use your FSA ID to sign; your parent will need to sign using their FSA ID.

## Step 8: Confirmation!

Finally, you've submitted the FAFSA! Breathe a sigh of relief. Print the confirmation page or write down the confirmation number. It's proof that your FAFSA was submitted.



# FIVE FAFSA CHANGES to know for 2024...

## **1** The FAFSA will be Shorter

The FAFSA is currently 108 questions long, which can be a barrier for some in completing the application.

New laws passed in 2021 will cut the maximum number of questions to an estimated total of 36 questions for most, cutting down the amount of time needed to complete the FAFSA.

Income information will be imported directly to the FAFSA from tax returns (currently, you must access the data yourself using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool). This change will reduce the number of questions required for families to self-report income.

Students will no longer have to answer whether they have had any drug-related convictions, meaning drug offenses will no longer keep students from getting federal financial aid like student loans and Pell Grants.

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## **2** EFC will be renamed SAI

The “Expected Family Contribution,” or EFC will be renamed “Student Aid Index,” or SAI to make clear the number a family sees after filing the FAFSA isn’t the amount of money they’re required to pay for college. Instead, it’s an indicator of financial need. The SAI can be a negative number, unlike the EFC, making it easier for a college to identify the students with the most financial need.

## **3** Eligibility & Unemployment

During times of a national emergency, such as the COVID-19 crisis, financial aid administrators are now allowed to use their judgment to adjust your reported income when determining eligibility for financial aid. If you show evidence of receiving unemployment benefits during a crisis, your income could be adjusted to zero, qualifying you for more financial aid.

## **4** Pell Eligibility Expanded

More students will now be eligible for federal Pell Grants. You will also be able to know sooner whether you qualify and how much of the grant you will receive (up to \$6,495 for the 2021-22 school year; this amount typically increases each year).

Under the new guidelines, student family size and adjusted gross income will determine Pell eligibility (not EFC, which is how Pell Grant eligibility is currently determined).

Also, the following students can now qualify for a Pell Grant in 2023-24: incarcerated students participating in prison education programs and students with drug convictions, among others.

## **5** Lifetime Limits Eliminated

You can now get subsidized loans for as long as it takes to complete your education. Before, you would have only been able to take out loans for 150% of the length of your education program (for a 4-year program, the maximum length of time you could take out loans was 6 years). Now you can take out loans for the full length that it takes to finish college.

# FAFSA

Need Money for College?  
Complete the FAFSA!

FAFSA.ED.GOV



All college-bound students and their parents should fill out the FAFSA.

The FAFSA is available October 1. Some aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Apply ASAP!



You can fill out the FAFSA on a computer, mobile device, or the myStudentAid mobile app.

Filling out the FAFSA is free. Never pay a company or service to process your FAFSA.



By completing the FAFSA, you are automatically applying for a Pell Grant (free money).

Don't let the FAFSA intimidate you, and don't assume that you won't be eligible for any aid.



## FAFSA CHECKLIST

A list of what you need to fill out the FAFSA

If the student is a dependent, the following are needed for both student and parent(s).

- FSA ID to log in** (do this first)  
Create logins at FSAID.ed.gov.
- Social Security Number** (if you're not a US citizen, your Alien Registration Number)
- Driver's License Number** (if you have one)
- Federal Income Tax Return, W-2s, and other records of money earned**  
The IRS Data Retrieval Tool can transfer your tax information into the FAFSA. If the "LINK TO IRS" button is available, click it.
- Bank statements** (checking and savings) **and records of investments** (stocks, bonds, and real estate other than the home you live in)
- Information on untaxed income** (e.g., child support)
- List of schools being considered**

If you have all the above items ready, it takes about an hour to complete the FAFSA online.

woodburnpress.com

# FAFSA

NECESITAS \$ PARA EL COLLEGE?  
¡COMPLETA LA FAFSA!

FAFSA.ED.GOV



Todos los estudiantes que van a ir al college, y sus padres, deben llenar la FAFSA (Solicitud Gratuita de Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes).

La FAFSA está disponible el 1º de octubre. Se otorga algo de ayuda por orden de llegada. ¡Haz tu solicitud lo antes posible!



Puedes completar la FAFSA en una computadora, en un dispositivo móvil o en la aplicación móvil myStudentAid.

Llenar la FAFSA es gratis. Nunca pagues a una empresa o servicio para procesar tu FAFSA.



Al completar la FAFSA, estás solicitando automáticamente una Beca Pell/Pell Grant (dinero gratuito).

No dejes que la FAFSA te intimide, y no asumas que no serás elegible para ninguna ayuda.



## LISTA DE VERIFICACIÓN DE LA FAFSA

Una lista de lo que necesitas para completar la FAFSA

Si el estudiante es un dependiente, se necesita lo que sigue tanto para el estudiante como para los padres.

- Identificación (ID) de FSA (Ayuda Federal para Estudiantes) para iniciar sesión** (haz esto primero). Crea claves de acceso (*logins*) en FSAID.ed.gov.
- Número de Seguridad Social** (si no eres un ciudadano estadounidense, tu Número de Registro de Extranjero)
- Número de licencia de conducir** (si cuentas con uno)
- Declaración Federal de Impuestos (Federal Income Tax Return), W-2 y otros registros de dinero ganado**  
La Herramienta de *IRS Data Retrieval Tool* puede transferir tu información fiscal a la FAFSA. Si el botón "Enlace al IRS" ("*Link to IRS*") está disponible, haz clic en él.
- Estados de cuenta bancarios** (cuentas de cheques y ahorros), **y registros de inversiones** (acciones, bonos y bienes inmuebles que no sean la casa en la que vives)
- Información sobre ingresos libres de impuestos** (p. ej., manutención infantil)
- Lista de las escuelas que estás considerando**

Si tienes listo todo lo anterior, se requiere alrededor de una hora para completar la FAFSA.

woodburnpress.com

Item 901-S



# Financial Aid Comparison Table

Name of Colleges:			
<b>What is the cost of attendance?</b>			
Tuition and Fees:			
Room and Board:	+	+	+
Books, Supplies, and Transportation Costs:	+	+	+
<b>TOTAL COST OF ATTENDANCE (COA):</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>
<b>What is your financial need?</b>			
Total Cost of Attendance (COA):			
Expected Family Contribution (EFC):	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL FINANCIAL NEED:</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>
<b>How will your financial aid be met?</b>			
Federal Pell Grant:			
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant:	+	+	+
Federal Work-Study:	+	+	+
Federal Student Loans (Subsidized and/or Unsubsidized):	+	+	+
State Sponsored Scholarship/Grant Program:	+	+	+
College Scholarships and Grants:	+	+	+
Other Scholarships and Grants:	+	+	+
<b>TOTAL FINANCIAL AID OFFER:</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>
What is your out-of-pocket cost? How will you cover the remaining balance? <i>Cost of Attendance – Total Financial Aid Offer =</i>	\$	\$	\$

# Don't LOSE your SCHOLARSHIP!



*Congrats!!* You applied for and received scholarships to help pay for college. Understand the terms of your scholarships so you won't lose that hard earned cash!

## FIRST:

Determine if any of your scholarships are **renewable**, meaning they will be automatically awarded if you meet or exceed the predetermined requirements. Answer these questions about your award: *How often is scholarship eligibility reviewed? When does the review occur? Do I need to reapply for renewal? How often? What info do I need to submit?*

## NEXT:

Make sure you meet or exceed the requirements to keep your scholarships. Keep track of your eligibility semester-to-semester. Understand the repercussions of the decisions you make in college and the effect on your scholarships.

### Meet or Exceed the GPA Requirement:

Many scholarships **require a minimum GPA** to be awarded and renewed (the required GPA may differ to be renewed). If you're falling below the minimum GPA, meet with your instructors and academic advisor to see what you can do about your grades. If possible, take extra classes in the summer or the following semester to pull your grade up in time.

### Consider How Changing Your Major Changes Eligibility:

If you were awarded a scholarship from a specific academic department, area of study, or for a major of a certain field, **changing your major may put that scholarship at risk**. It's okay to want to study something else, just make sure you'll be okay without that scholarship if lost due to the change.

### Consider How Changing Colleges Changes Eligibility:

You may have received scholarships that are specific to the college you are attending. **If you leave that college to go to another college, the scholarships don't get to tag along, too**. However, the college you will be attending might have awards for transfer students or other categories including field of study and having financial need.

### Take Enough Credit Hours:

Some scholarships require recipients to be **full-time students or take a certain number of credit hours per academic year**. If you must drop a class, be sure to either replace it immediately (if possible) or retake it later. Discuss the number of credit hours required for your scholarships with your academic advisor when signing up for courses each semester to stay on track.

### Think Before You Act:

If you get in trouble on a college campus for cheating, plagiarism, stealing, underage drinking, drugs, etc., **your scholarship could be at risk**. Also, think before you post on social media. Even outside scholarship providers could find out about your actions and revoke your awards.

### Spend the Scholarship Money Wisely:

Scholarship providers might state exactly how they want you to use the money. Some examples would be **an award to be used for tuition only or a scholarship just for books**. If you spend the money on something other than what is specified, it could be revoked. Make sure you know the terms before spending the scholarship money.

## Other Factors to Consider:

If you take **time off from school** due to an illness, to work or save money, for study-abroad, or other reasons, find out the implications on your financial aid. Ensure you're **acquiring the community service hours** (if required) for your scholarship. Send academic, athletic, or philanthropic **progress reports** to the provider, if needed. Fulfill **post-baccalaureate service requirements** (teaching or military service).

## What to Do If You Lose a Scholarship:

**Try not to panic**. If you lost a scholarship due to not meeting eligibility requirements, **there is often an appeals process**. Find out the process and follow it to the letter. **Document any extenuating circumstances** (illness, lost job, family emergency, etc.). If your award runs out, you can **appeal for an extension or apply again for a possible second round of funding**. Even if you do lose eligibility for one scholarship, it doesn't mean you're ineligible for other opportunities. **Search for other scholarships and apply**.



# FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES

For updated information on scholarships, please contact your high school counseling/career centers, or use the Internet addresses provided below.

## **Regents' Scholarship**

Information on the state scholarship awarded to those students who take the Utah Scholar's Core Course of Study. [regentsscholarship.org](http://regentsscholarship.org)

## **New Century Scholarship**

Information on the state scholarship awarded to those students who complete an associate degree while in high school. [newcenturyscholarship.org](http://newcenturyscholarship.org)

## **Federal Department of Education**

Find detailed information on all forms of federal aid, including Pell Grants, work-study and loans. [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov)

## **Free Application for Federal Student Aid Get**

access to grants, loans and work-study. [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov)

## **fastWEB**

Financial Aid search through the Web, one of the best-know scholarship search pages. [fastweb.com](http://fastweb.com)

## **College Board**

Check out their college search tool if you are still undecided or use the scholarship search to find awards that you qualify for.

[bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org)

## **Daniels Fund Scholarship**

Four-year scholarships awarded to students with financial need who demonstrate character, leadership and service.

[danielsfund.org/scholarships](http://danielsfund.org/scholarships)

## **The Gates Millennium Scholar Program**

Four-year scholarships for ethnic minorities who demonstrate leadership and community service.

[gmsp.org](http://gmsp.org)

## **Dell Scholars Program**

Scholarships for students enrolled in an approved college readiness program (such as Upward Bound/Educational Talent Search) and GEAR UP.

[dellscholars.org](http://dellscholars.org)

## **UVU TRiO Upward Bound/Educational Talent Search**

Apply online through the UVU scholarships webpage. This is a half tuition scholarship awarded to incoming UVU Freshmen. Apply under the needs base section.

[www.uvu.edu/scholarships](http://www.uvu.edu/scholarships)

## **Student Access Scholarship**

Focuses on a student's needs, not their grades. It's an exciting opportunity available to students currently receiving services from a TRIO program with no restrictions on how funds are used.

[www.studentaccess.com/community/scholarship.aspx](http://www.studentaccess.com/community/scholarship.aspx)

## **DreamCatcher Curriculum Scholarship**

DreamCatcher Curriculum was founded on the principle that every student deserves a chance to receive a college education in pursuit of their dreams. Scholarship committee will prioritize applicants who need assistance the very most.

[www.dreamcatchercurriculum.com/scholarships](http://www.dreamcatchercurriculum.com/scholarships)

# SAMPLE MONTHLY BUDGET

Create your own customized monthly budget using the sample budget below. Notice negative amounts are (in parentheses).

Category	Monthly Budget	Actual Amount	Difference
<b>INCOME:</b>	Estimate Your Income	Your Actual Income	
Wages/Income Paycheck/Allowance/Birthday, etc.	\$185	\$203	\$18
Interest Income From savings account	\$6	\$4	(\$2)
<b>INCOME SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$191</b>	<b>\$207</b>	<b>\$16</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	Estimate Your Expenses	Your Actual Expenses	
Savings			
Savings Account	\$20	\$20	\$0
Bills			
Rent/Mortgage	\$0 (live with parents)	\$0	\$0
Utilities (Electric, Cell Phone, etc.)	\$42 (cell phone bill)	\$42	\$0
Food/Snacks	\$15	\$22	(\$7)
Car			
Car Payment	\$0 (parents pay, for now)	\$0	\$0
Car Insurance	\$0 (parents pay, for now)	\$0	\$0
Gasoline	\$20	\$17	\$3
Shopping			
Clothing	\$40	\$35	\$5
Other Shopping	\$10	\$20	(\$10)
Fun Stuff			
Entertainment & Other Discretionary "Fun" Spending (movies, concerts, dining out with friends, coffee runs, etc.)	\$30	\$40	(\$10)
Guitar Lessons	\$10	\$10	\$0
<b>EXPENSES SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$187</b>	<b>\$206</b>	<b>(\$19)</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b> (Income Minus Expenses)	<b>\$4</b>	<b>\$1</b>	<b>\$3!</b>



# MY MONTHLY BUDGET

Budget for the Month of: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative amounts are (in parentheses).

Category	Monthly Budget	Actual Amount	Difference
<b>INCOME:</b>	Estimated Income	Actual Income	
Wages/Income Paycheck/Allowance/Birthday, etc.	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Interest Income From savings account	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>INCOME SUBTOTAL</b>	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	Estimated Expenses	Actual Expenses	
Savings Savings Account	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Bills Fixed Bills (Cell Phone, etc.)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Food/Snacks	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other Bills/Miscellaneous	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Car Car Payment	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Car Insurance	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Gasoline & Maintenance	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Shopping Clothing	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other Shopping	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Fun Stuff Entertainment (movies, concerts, dining out with friends, coffee runs, etc.)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other Discretionary "Fun" Spending	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>EXPENSES SUBTOTAL</b>	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
<b>NET INCOME</b> (Income Minus Expenses)	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

# YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

There are many factors that will determine what kinds of opportunities will come your way. The biggest factor, however, will be your education. *The better your education, the more choices and opportunities you will have in life!*

## Let others help and support you.

Think about the people you know who can help and support you as you plan and prepare for college. Consider your counselor, TRIO teacher, coaches, family members, relatives, and anyone else you feel you could turn to for support and advice.

List the people you might include in your support network below. Put a check in the box if you've had a conversation with this person about your college goals.

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____



*Be sure to thank anyone who has helped you with your college planning and the application process. Thank them verbally, or better yet, write them a short thank you note. It will be much appreciated.*

## Make college your goal

Keep your goal in mind as you go to class, do your homework, and study for tests. And remember, you aren't working hard for your parents or for anyone else. You are working hard in your classes for yourself—and for your future.

**Student Support Services is a TRIO program for college students. Students participating in this program are twice as likely to remain in college as students from similar backgrounds not participating in a Student Support Services program.**





# WHO?

## Who needs a resume?

**YOU!** You'll need to develop your resume (or leadership transcript) for prospective colleges, internships, and jobs. If you already have a resume, go you! If not, start thinking about all the great things you've done during high school that will impress a college, win you a scholarship, or help you get a job/internship. Make sure you keep it up-to-date as you progress through high school.

## What is a resume?

It is an organized list of all the things that set you apart from other students. List your extracurricular involvement, accomplishments, volunteer activities, contact information, awards, references, and any involvement in your past that colleges, employers, or supervisors might want to know. This isn't the time to hold back any info. Make your resume stand apart.

# WHAT?

# RESUMES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



# WHERE?

## Where should you send your resume?

Many colleges require student resumes or leadership transcripts as part of the admissions and/or scholarship application. However, don't let your resume replace any section on the application. For example: don't say "Please See Resume" as a response to any application question; just answer the question! Also, you almost always need to include a resume as part of an application for an internship or job. Follow the instructions on where to send your resume; it's either an individual or a screening system.

# WHEN?

## When should you start tracking your accomplishments?

Start in 9th grade. If you're older and have not started a resume yet, try to remember and list all the accomplishments you've earned, sports played, the clubs you've been in, and any leadership roles. List your grade point average if above a 2.5. Describe any special awards and skills, like if you're bilingual or possess computer knowledge.

# WHY?

## Why should you worry about this now?

You'll need a resume in college as well as after college. During college, you will need a resume for work-study jobs, internships, and to obtain references. After college, you'll need a resume for jobs, networking, and promotions. Learning to keep track of your activities now will make you better at keeping track later.

# HOW?

## How do you get started?

And how do you keep your current resume up-to-date? Keep reading to find out more!



YOUR FULL NAME

YOUR ADDRESS

PHONE NUMBER

EMAIL ADDRESS

Profile: \_\_\_\_\_

Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Leadership: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Honors and Awards: \_\_\_\_\_

Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

References: \_\_\_\_\_

No relevant experience yet? No sweat! Just leave this portion out for now. If you've worked in the past or currently, list the place, dates, and your title. Include job duties and any special recognition, awards, or accomplishments.

Fill in the sections of this example resume. Do you have areas that seem lacking or missing information entirely? Take note of those areas so you can start to build up those sections!  
See the explanations for each section below:

A "Profile" or "Summary" section has taken the place of an "Objective" on a resume. Use this section to tell the organization what you have to offer that's unique and will benefit the college or workplace.

**EDUCATION:**  
List your current school by its full name first. Then, note the month and year of your expected graduation. Last, include grade point average (GPA) and class rank by number rank or where you are in the top percentage of your class (for an academic resume).

Short on volunteer experience? Check out a local animal shelter, food pantry, or nursing home to find opportunities to help. Make sure to search online for more options and organizations.

Honors include awards or special recognition that set you apart. Skills are things you can do well, like speaking another language, proficiency with computer software, or other skills.

Thinking of including a picture on your resume? Think again! Including one isn't needed and can unintentionally convey unprofessionalism.

**REFERENCES:** LIST 3 PEOPLE WITH CONTACT INFO  
Include coaches, teachers, principals, advisors, supervisors, etc. No family members or friends should be listed. References should be listed on a separate page, but are shown here on the same page as an example. Make sure to let the person know they are your reference so they can prepare.

**Extracurricular Activities=Leadership**  
Include activities in which you have participated since the 9th grade. Your list could include band/music, sports, choir, college-prep programs, and any group or organization to which you belong. List leadership roles such as class representative, secretary, treasurer, vice-president, president-elect, chair, president, etc. Be sure to note how many years you were in each organization. Colleges are more impressed by the depth of your involvement, not the sheer number of clubs you were in.



# MEANINGFUL EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT

Choose wisely. Select activities that complement your personality and abilities. The club, sport, etc. should challenge you, but you shouldn't have to force it.

Moving on? If the club/sport/etc. isn't working out, don't just ghost. Let the coach or sponsor know before you quit. They should be understanding and not take it personally.

Eventually you'll need resume that is less of a leadership transcript/academic resume and more professional. You'll use your professional resume for all kinds of things in college and beyond like awards, promotions, and even networking (meeting new people in your field).

Don't forget about sites like LinkedIn, a website that can help you network and promote yourself for future jobs.

CHECK OUT THIS EXAMPLE RESUME!

## A FEW MORE RESUME TIPS:

- Use fonts that are easy to read, simple, and professional. Some common fonts are Helvetica, Arial, Cambria, & Calibri. Make sure to match fonts on your cover letter!
- Organization is KEY! If your sections are hard to find, the reviewer might not even put your resume or application in the category to be considered. Don't get disqualified over something you control.
- Connect the dots for the reviewer. If it's not clear from your experience why you are applying for a job, the reader won't make the connection.
- Ensure your contact information is always up-to-date. If you can't be contacted, you won't get an interview, much less the job.


## ASPIRE TO DEPTH NOT BREADTH

This means participating in extracurricular activities in high school that mean something to you personally (*depth*), not simply joining *everything* (*breadth*). When you start participating in clubs, sports, music, or theater in high school, your intention should be to **stick with it**. Extracurricular activities give you opportunities to broaden your social skills, work on time management, and be responsible for yourself. When you apply to a college/scholarship after participating in co-curriculars for 4 years (holding leadership roles and gaining experience to show for it), the reviewer can tell that you have the capability to see something through to completion—an important trait when it comes to earning a degree or job.

## RESUMES FOR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

**Wendy**

12 California Dr  
Sacramento, CA



**Ramos**

202-555-0411  
wendy@me.com

---

**PROFILE:**

I have had extensive experience in news reporting, and I will be an integral part of the team at the *Daily Reporter* in Sacramento because of my ability to acquire sources and my do-anything attitude.

**EDUCATION:**

University of Southern California, Master of Arts in Journalism, 2011  
Willamette College, Bachelor of Arts in Public Management, 2007

**EXPERIENCE:**

Junior Reporter, 2011-2016, *Sacramento Eyewitness*  
--Assisted in story-writing, established leads on stories  
Intern, 2005-2007, *Los Angeles Tide*  
--Shadowed veteran reporters, assisted in recruiting new interns

**LEADERSHIP:**

--ADP Sorority Historian  
--Journalism Club President  
--Co-Editor of the USC *Daily News*  
--Master's Student of the Year

**VOLUNTEERING:**

--The Children's House  
--*Sacramento Eyewitness* annual fundraiser  
--The California Food Pantry

**SKILLS:**

--Speaking to the public (group or individual setting)  
--Word Processing  
--Adaptability & Organization

**INTERESTS:**

--Reading news magazines  
--Blogging about news stories  
--Volunteering in the community  
--Collecting vintage newspapers

**REFERENCES:**

Dr. Harvey Smithers  
hsmithers@me.com  
Ms. Annie Sancheval  
annie@me.com  
Professor William Burr  
wburr@college.edu



# WHAT'S A COVER LETTER, ANYWAY?

A cover letter, or letter of application, is your chance to make a first impression before you even walk through the door to an interview.

Take this opportunity to link your experience to the requirements of the position, discuss why you deserve the scholarship more, discuss your unique qualifications, or what you are willing or able to contribute to the college or company. Every cover letter should be unique.



Wendy Ramos  
987 California Dr  
Sacramento, CA  
202-555-0111  
wendy@me.com

July 17, 2020  
Daily Reporter  
90 H Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA

To whom it may concern:

My name is Wendy Ramos, and I am writing in regards to the position of Reporter for the *Daily Reporter* in Sacramento, California. I believe you will find my qualifications to be fitting of your needs of this position, and I hope I am the unique candidate you are looking for.

I have been a Junior Reporter for the *Sacramento Eyewitness* newspaper for over 4 years. In this time, I have taken on co-writing many stories ranging from politics to environmental issues. I even took the lead on a story about the drought in California that was featured on the front page. I have learned so much about reporting, and I am ready to translate the skills I've acquired to the *Daily Reporter*. I am a self-starter and I'm independent when it comes to following leads and protecting sources. I am also looking forward to fostering new relationships with fellow reporters and to be an exemplary example to junior reporters and interns.

I was an intern at the *Los Angeles Tide* for two years prior to graduating with my Master's in journalism. There I learned the inner-workings of how a newsroom bustles with reporters functions. I learned how reporters were given assignments and how breaking news was reported to the public. This experience supplemented my Master's experience in a way that a textbook or a class never could. I gained invaluable knowledge and skills that will serve me well if I'm selected for the Reporter position at the *Daily Reporter*.

Please feel free to contact me at the email address or phone number above. I would very much like to discuss my qualifications in person to see if I'm the best fit for this position.

Thank you

Wendy Ramos

Wendy Ramos

Also...



Both should convey *exactly* how you meet the qualifications and requirements. Each job application might require you to change your resume if needed, such as highlighting a certain honor or expounding on a job highlight. Make adjustments as necessary. The adjustments you make to each resume might be minor, but it could mean the difference between landing an interview versus not getting a call-back.

The cover letter, on the other hand, will need a complete rewrite almost every time. You can leave the general structure the same, but make sure to **customize each cover letter** to the job description specifications. Take a look at this example of tailoring one portion of a cover letter to the required skill:

## EXAMPLE:

Bookstore Assistant job posting: knowledge, skills, & abilities required



"This position requires an attitude and work ethic that demonstrates a willingness to serve your fellow students and mirror the Campus Bookstore's commitment to the campus and community."

HOW YOU CAN RESPOND ON YOUR COVER LETTER:

I have an unwavering work ethic; I held a 20-hour per week job and maintained a 3.8 GPA in high school. Even with a busy class and sports schedule, I served customers with a positive attitude.



# Resume Blueprint

Creating a Strong Resume

By the Numbers

Powerful Action Verbs

Dos and Don'ts

Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills

Filler Words to Avoid

## Creating a Strong Resume

You need a strong resume when applying for jobs, internships, and graduate schools. Keeping track of all your accomplishments after high school is very important. The more complete your resume, the higher your chances of being selected for hire or a post-graduate degree program. How do you accomplish this?

**Formatting:** modern professional look, clean fonts, 1-2 pages, effective titles, unique layout, appropriate use of color

**Summary:** stands out, exudes confidence, lists precise career goals, keywords describe you perfectly

**Experience:** relevant, chronological, highlight impressive experience, achievements, influential projects you completed

**Editing:** no typos, good grammar, easy to follow, proofread

## Powerful Action Verbs

Use these verbs\* to add a powerful punch to your resume:

Strengthened	Increased
Negotiated	Influenced
Assessed	Planned
Promoted	Introduced
Conceptualized	Improved
Created	Achieved
Directed	Trained
Resolved	Forecasted
Oversaw	Projected
Managed	Adapted

\*Include statistics/figures for attract extra attention!

## Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills

Hard skills are specific and quantifiable, meaning they can be defined by numbers, teachable abilities, certifications, and years of experience. Hard skills can get you an interview, and are often evaluated before soft skills. Hard skills include: speaking a foreign language, degree(s)/certificate(s), skill in a computer program(s), scientific results, specialization, etc. Outline your hard skills in your resume and cover letter.

Soft skills are interpersonal skills, and are defined by how you relate to and interact with other people. You can demonstrate your soft skills during an interview; employers are now listing soft skills as requirements on some job descriptions. Soft skills include: communication, creating/maintaining working relationships, flexibility, time management, problem solving, leadership abilities, and critical/creative thinking.

## Dos and Don'ts

### DO:

Use job description keywords  
Proofread and review  
Be quantifiable  
Include a personal statement  
Make it short and neat  
List most recent job first  
List a professional email  
Use professional network link  
Use web-standard fonts  
Use 10-12 point font  
Use 1-inch borders  
Leave out pictures

### DON'T:

Generic resume  
Spelling/grammar typos  
Vague language/results  
Objectives  
Long and wordy  
Irrelevant job information  
Novelty emails  
Social media links  
Funky/hard to read fonts  
Too large/too small fonts  
Weird margins  
Pictures or graphics

## Resumes By the Numbers:

The average recruiter spends about 5-6 seconds on your resume.

70% of employers prefer a traditional resume.

80% of employers say soft skills are more important than hard skills.

The top skill that 51% of employers will hire for is being team-oriented.

59% of employers are willing to train candidates who have potential.

98% of large companies use applicant filtering/tracking systems.

The average corporate job opening receives over 250 applications.

Of those candidates, between 4 and 6 will get an interview.

Only 1 person gets the job.

## Filler Words to Avoid

Avoid the following filler words, or words that are overused, nonspecific, generic, or generally outdated:

"References available upon request..."

"Detail oriented..."

"I am seeking a job/career/position..."

"Team player..."

"Hit benchmarks..."

"Strong work ethic..."

"Experienced..."

"Written communication skills..."

"Duties..."

"Results-driven..."

Instead...SHOW that you have these skills. For example, if you are "results-driven," discuss actual results with numbers in your resume or cover letter.

# Engineer a better Resume

Your resume is your personal marketing tool. To get an interview, stand out with subtle modern touches, while applying tried-and-true methods to get your resume noticed, land an interview, and get the job!

Be sure to save your resume as your full name and perhaps the title of the position for which you're applying. For example, Wendy (resume below) is applying for a Senior Office Manager position at a prominent design firm. She's going to save her resume as WendySaddlemire-SrOfficeManager.pdf. Save as a PDF to maintain formatting and fonts.

Minimal use of color can provide a noticeable personal touch to resumes

Mixing fonts can be a great way to make your resume eye-catching. Use in minimal amounts for the biggest impact.

A Professional Summary or Profile is used now instead of an Objective. It gives a more clear description of your background, what you can offer your potential employer, and provides an opportunity to show the hiring entity exactly who you are. It's meant to be read at-a-glance, so keep it short and sweet!

Professional experience should include any relevant experience you have related to the job to which you are applying. You may have those odd jobs worked during high school and college; don't feel like you have to include those, unless that's all the experience you have. Which is okay, too! List your position first, then the place of employment and dates worked. Use bullet points to list the duties, responsibilities, innovations, accomplishments, and any other pertinent information at your job.

For this resume example, the job duties are very short. Depending on the field you may be entering and how long you've been at a particular job, your job duty list could be much longer. Don't be shy about listing all the great things you did for a former employer! Your new employer is looking for just those abilities and talents. Use powerful action verbs to start each statement.

Contact info should include address, phone number, email, and a professional social networking link.

List your degree(s), college/university, and graduation year.

Skills are anything relevant that you can do well. Do not exaggerate here! You can include anything from speaking a language other than English to technology proficiencies.

Awards can include anything professional or extracurricular that you have done before, during, and after college.

Include references with titles, place of work, email, and phone number. Let your references know you listed them. (Typically, references are listed on a separate page, but references are listed here so you can see the formatting.)

**WS**

**WENDY**  
*Saddlemire*

555 W 1st St  
Jacksonville, FL  
123-456-7890  
wendy@email.com  
ws.LinkedIn.com

**EDUCATION:**  
Bachelor's Degree  
Human Resources  
University of Florida  
Graduated May 2007

**SKILLS:**  
Social Media Marketing  
Project Management  
MS Office 365 Suite  
Adobe Illustrator  
Website Management

**AWARDS:**  
2008 Best New Employee  
2010 A&N Alumni Award  
2013 FL Volunteer of the Year

**REFERENCES:**  
Tom Jones,  
Architect/Partner of Jones Studio  
987-654-3210  
tom@email.com

Stacy Mitchell,  
Designer/Former Owner of Studio  
Stacy  
555-555-0000  
stacy@email.com

Dan Lucigo  
Attorney at Law, Lucigo and  
Lucigo  
dan@email.com  
123-555-5555

**PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY:**  
Administrative office manager with over 8 years of experience. Adaptable and efficient with capability and dependability in fast-paced environments ranging from architectural to legal offices. Skills in creating and maintaining client relations, staffing, project completion, and administrative support.

**EXPERIENCE:**

Office Manager  
Jones Studio, 2012-present

- Successfully executed merger with Studio Stacy, including managing of assets, accounts, and property
- Supervises and oversees a team of administrative assistants, accountants, design assistants, and interns
- Manages all office activities, including annual retreats, special events, and volunteer opportunities

Assistant Office Manager  
Studio Stacy, 2009-2012

- Assisted a team of 6 designers, including but not limited to scheduling with clients, budgeting for projects, and property acquisition.
- Strengthened team morale by implementing new office structure and work flow
- Planned for merger with Jones Studio, including preparation with new studio team and planning of initiatives to ensure smooth transition

Primary Legal Aid  
Lucigo and Lucigo Law Associates, 2007-2009

- Oversaw all legal proceedings, scheduling, and operation of a micro-law firm specializing in adoption and family law
- Scheduled court hearings, partnered with court reporter to obtain transcripts of verdicts and hearings, and assisted attorneys as necessary
- Worked with families seeking adoption, including planning and scheduling of meetings with attorneys, completion of required paperwork, and contact with social workers

Intern  
University of Florida Human Resources Department, 2005-2007

- Performed the duties of an intern, including maintaining student advising log, answering phone calls, and general errands and tasks

Other tips: Don't use the words "I," "we," or "us" on your resume. Use web standard or word processing standard fonts. Don't use standard templates, but instead mix templates to find your own style that stands out. Tailor your resume to each job to which you will apply. Use numeric information (if applicable) to show how many people you supervised or how many projects completed. Remember that no two resumes are alike! Use your resume as your best first impression.

This is an example of a simple one-page resume of someone with 15 years of experience. There are other sections you may include (especially in/after college), such as volunteer experience, published papers/articles, extracurricular involvement, research, conference presentations, and leadership positions held. Don't worry if your resume exceeds one page. Just remember to keep the formatting simple, uniform, and organized so a hiring entity can easily navigate your resume.





**WENDY**  
Saddlemire

555 W 1st St  
Jacksonville, FL  
123-456-7890  
wendy@email.com

Andrea Cheshire, Assistant Lead Designer  
Pinnacle Studios and Design  
123 North Street  
Orlando, Florida

June 19, 2020

Dear Ms. Cheshire,

Please accept this cover letter and resume as my formal application for the position of Senior Office Manager at Pinnacle Studios and Design. I believe that you will find my unique experience and passion for office workflow management make me an excellent candidate. I am excited by the high level of design and quality that is the cornerstone of Pinnacle Studios and Design, and I have the creativity and leadership to be able to support the team of designers to do their best work. I have experience with human resources that spans over 10 years in legal, architectural, and design studios. I have honed my skills over the years, and I'm ready to take my career to the next level, while bringing a fierce work ethic to Pinnacle Studios and Design.

I have been working at the Jones Studio for the last four years. In this role, I have overseen a merger between two studios, which took intense collaboration, creative solutions for unforeseen problems, and the management and consolidation of sets of office furniture and assets. During this stressful time, I found creative solutions in order to make this a smooth process for everyone involved. An example is when the building lease ended before we moved; I was able to negotiate an extension that came at no cost to the studio by noting our history as tenants and working out a new move-out date with the building. I also worked with the incoming tenants on a new move-in date. I did this in order to keep studio operations moving smoothly so that the needs of the clients could be met. I am tenacious when it comes to the needs of the studio and I am willing to work as hard as possible for the good of the team. The merger was completed in a smooth, orderly fashion and I learned and sharpened many skills such as time management, conflict resolution, and asset management that I could translate to Pinnacle Studios and Design.

At Jones Studio and Studio Slacy, I have been the supervisor of a team of administrative professionals. Together, we have ensured the seamless operation of the studio, as well as securing new clients and ensuring the repeat business of existing clients. I conceptualized a new workflow structure while at Studio Slacy in which a certain administrative professional was assigned to a group of designers, worked with them exclusively to secure permits, purchase required materials, and confirm that the project budget was followed, as well as followed up with clients. This method worked for our studio, and the flexibility of the team was to be admired. I am willing to use my problem-solving skills to mediate any situation and change it for the better. I enjoy flexibility in the workplace, and hope that is something I am able to bring to Pinnacle Studios and Design.

I also have experience in a legal environment. I worked for a micro-law firm right out of college, and was able to work on a very small team independently. I believe this is where I learned my professional working style, and this experience shaped me into the administrative professional I am today. I learned a responsible decision-making process that I hope to utilize further if selected as Senior Office Manager at Pinnacle Studios and Design.

In conclusion, I hope that you find my experience, innovative critical thinking skills, and willingness to learn more professionally as assets. I am willing to take on new challenges and learn from new colleagues; I am also willing to share my knowledge with the team. I look forward to discussing my qualifications in person, and I'm eager to hear back from you. Thank you for your time and attention to my application.

Sincerely,

Wendy Saddlemire

Use a letterhead format that matches your resume. Include your name, address, phone number, email address. Use the address of the hiring agency or search coordinator who is doing the hiring of the position in which you are interested.

It doesn't have to be fancy, but it needs to be obvious whose cover letter it is, and if it corresponds with the theme of your resume, even better.

Tailor your cover letter for each specific position to which you are applying.

Example: "Please accept my resume and cover letter for the position of Research Assistant at the American Institutes for Research."

Your cover letter shouldn't heavily repeat your resume. It should be an introduction to who you are, an explanation of why you would be an asset, and a discussion of any soft skills you would like to highlight.

Use the structure above, and inject some of your own style into your cover letter. Remember, you are trying to stand out from the crowd. Only about 20% of applicants for a given job posting are selected for an interview, and usually only 1 person is selected for a job.

To follow up or to not follow up.

If you apply for a job through an online human resources or screening service, you might be able to monitor the status of your application. In this case, there is probably no need to follow up. If you submitted your materials directly to a recruitment coordinator, director, or administrative individual, and it's been more than two weeks since you've heard about the status of your application, perhaps a follow-up call or email would be in your best interest. It will at least show that you are still interested in the position and show that you're still available for hire.



# Build the perfect Cover Letter

## Before You Start Writing...

### Dissect the Job Description

Print the job description, reread it, and highlight key points that you may want to highlight in your cover letter. Make note of anything that resonates with you, and make sure to include in your cover letter.

### Gather Information

Do your homework on the position and the employer/company. Make a personal connection with the organization's work, culture, and goals. Read up on or ask around about the organization, visit their website/blog, and scope out their social media. You'll get a good sense of what this organization is all about.

### Identify the Recruitment Contact Information

If it's not listed on the job posting, do some further digging. Go to the website, departmental page, professional social media page, or simply call and find out who the recruitment contact is.

### Salutation Set-Up

Using "Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. {LAST NAME}" works every time. Avoid salutations that are marital-specific for women (Mrs.). If you're still unsure, use the full name with no prefix.

## Start Strong...

Answer these questions in the introduction of your cover letter:

*What position are you applying for and why?*

*How does this position/experience fit into your goals?*

*How would you fit into the organization's culture/mission/brand?*

*What will be your overview statement to give the reader a synopsis of what you will be discussing in your cover letter toward the end of your introduction?*

## Highlight How You Fit the Position Requirements...

In the body of your cover letter, clearly express how you meet the job description.

Select a few common themes from the job description (common requirements, experience, or skills) and use these to build the body of your cover letter and highlight your corresponding experiences or expertise.

Use narrative to expound upon your resume, but don't duplicate what you already listed in your resume. Keep it focused.

Point out how you can meet the organization's needs.

Are you a not-quite-perfect fit for the job? That's okay! Address that by answering these questions in your cover letter:

*What do I have that is similar to what this organization needs in a candidate?*

*What knowledge, hard and/or soft skills do I have that are transferrable?*

*What have I learned through past experiences that would prove I can learn new skills and knowledge quickly?*

*What can I translate to this potential new workplace?*

## Finish Strong...

Write a synopsis of your qualifications.

"To summarize..." is a good cue that you are wrapping it up. However, don't end abruptly. Leave your reader with what you think are your strongest qualities/qualifications for the job.

Emphasize your enthusiasm for the position while tactfully asking for an interview.

"I am eager to potentially take on this new challenge, and I hope you will find me to be the best candidate for this important work, and I look forward to discussing my qualifications in person." This is a simple, powerful way to display excitement AND ask for an interview (without straight up asking, that is).

Use a simple signature line.

Close with "sincerely." Use your signature and full name. You can scan a signed version of your cover letter, or use an image of your scanned signature.

## APPLY!

Follow the instructions on how to apply to the position.

You may be required to submit your materials to a screening agency or human resources department first, either online or by mail. If a job asks for a certain number of references, use exactly that many. Any deterrence from the instructions will most likely result in not receiving an interview.



# Mechanics of the Interview

## Scheduling and Showing Up

If selected, you will be contacted and given a date, time, and location in which to interview. Feel free to ask questions about what to bring, what to expect, where to park, etc. Show up about 10 minutes early. Bring an extra copy or two of your resume, and a notepad and pen to take any notes.

### What to Wear

What you decide to wear depends on what type of job you are being interviewed for, so do some research before. First impressions are very important; do your best to dress and appear neatly.

#### General Rules:

Clothes should be well-fitting, in good condition, and free of wrinkles.

Shoes should be clean and in good condition.

Keep jewelry simple.

Shoes and belt should match. Socks and pants should be the same color.

Fingernails should be of uniform appearance. Hair should be out of your eyes.

Makeup should look natural. Avoid perfume/cologne.

Front pockets should be empty. Turn off your cellphone.

Bring only essentials (keys, notebook and pen to take notes, extra resume/cover letter).

Appropriately greet your interviewer.

Make eye contact. Speak with authority.

Don't hesitate to ask questions.

Neat hair and simple or natural makeup.

Blazer/cardigan is recommended worn with lighter shirt underneath.

Skirts and dresses should hit at or just above the knee. Thighs should be covered when you sit down.

Closed-toe shoes are recommended, whether you choose high heels or flats (heels should be 1-2 inches).

### Business Dress Basics



Neat facial hair. No facial jewelry.

Ties are recommended and should touch top of belt.

Jackets and pants should be the same color, and a simple pattern or stripe.

Jacket sleeves should land above the wrist.

Wear dress shoes or simple loafers that match.

These guidelines apply for gender-neutral individuals. Find a combination that works for you! Dark colors with a few contrasting light colors will always be in style.

## Interview Questions and How to Answer

Below are some general example interview questions, and how to formulate your response. You'll want to practice being interviewed to get the hang of it and to ward off any anxiety you may have.

Tell me/us about yourself?

Keep your answer work-related. Start with your most recent work experience and work your way backward. Stick to the info that is relevant to the position.

Do you prefer working on a team or individually, and what role do you take when working with a team?

Be up front with your answer and create the feeling that you are flexible. If you typically take the lead, discuss past experiences. If you prefer to take direction from others, explain why in a positive light. Even if you prefer working alone, discuss past teamwork experiences.

How do you deal with conflict in the workplace?

This is another chance to use past experiences to your advantage. Explain, in an up-beat way, how you may have handled conflict in the past. Don't lie, but leave the interviewer with a positive impression of the resolution to the conflict. Discuss what you learned from that experience.

What qualities do you look for in a supervisor?

Highlight a few aspects like "competent," "fair," and "encouraging." Describe your workstyle, willingness to be flexible, and openness to criticism.

Where/how do you see yourself in 5 years?

Your response should have something to do with the job you are interviewing for in relationship to your short and long-term goals.

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Again, describe both in positive light, but also keep your ego in check. Give your answer in terms of what you're continuing to learn about yourself and the benefit you can provide the organization.

## Questions You Should Ask Your Interviewer

Prepare some questions to ask your interviewer about the organization, duties, schedule, or anything else that you might be wondering about.

How would you describe the office culture?

Ask about the team, schedules, dress code, atmosphere, etc.

What training opportunities are there for me?

Ask about professional training, continuing education, etc.

How are employees evaluated?

Understanding what metrics a company uses to evaluate employees is important to know before starting a new job.

Are there opportunities for advancement within the company?

There should be chances for growth like learning new info through courses, webinars, certifications, and promotions.

What is the timeline for making the hiring decision?

Knowing this will help you plan your job search.

## Next Steps...

Follow up with a thank-you note or email to leave a lasting impression. Thank the interviewer or search committee for their time. If you forgot to mention something important, include it in the note or email.



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# FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE

## A Guide to Keeping It in Perspective

The secret of success in college is all about having perspective. Look beyond yourself and see that you are not the only freshman on campus who may feel insecure, confused, lost, awkward, and/or homesick from time to time. That's normal! And those feelings diminish the longer you stay in college. Try to put anxieties aside and take it one thing at a time.

Familiarize yourself with how college differs from life as you know it in high school. This knowledge will do wonders for how you feel about college when you get there. Remember: you aren't alone on campus - help and support are all around you - so simply ask for assistance from advisors, professors, student support staff, and even other students.

After adjusting to just how different college is, you can make it the best experience of your life. Open your eyes to new experiences and fresh ideas. Accept the fact that it won't always be perfect and mistakes will be made, but that is all part of learning and growing as an adult. Think of college as a fresh slate from high school; make new friends and define yourself. This is the ideal opportunity to discover who you are and what truly makes you happy.

### WHAT ARE YOU *most* LOOKING FORWARD TO IN COLLEGE?

SHADE-IN THE GLASSES BELOW IF IT'S SOMETHING YOU'RE EXCITED ABOUT FOR YOUR FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE!

- |   |  |
|---|--|
|  A new sense of independence                           |  Involvement in organizations, clubs, and/or Greek Life |
|  The rigor/challenge of college coursework             |  Studying abroad  |
|  Living in the residence hall                          |  A clean slate/fresh start from high school             |
|  Gaining new experiences                               |  Campus traditions                                      |
|  Eating in the dining hall with plenty of food options |  The college vs. high school schedule/free time         |
|  Making new friends/social life                        |  Being away from home                                   |
|  School spirit/attending sporting events on campus     |  Other _____  |

Focus on these topics inside!



Your dreams are **BIGGER** than your fears.



KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR TERMS IN **ALL-CAPS**.  
GIVE THEM A **CIRCLE** AS YOU READ THROUGH.

## FRESHMAN YEAR STRATEGIES

The best way to start your freshman year off right: go to **FRESHMAN ORIENTATION**! Every college does orientation a bit differently, but the goal of the event is to connect you to campus. You can learn plenty of helpful info, tour campus, meet other new students (perhaps some who share your **MAJOR**), register for classes, etc.

Some colleges offer pre-orientation programming just for fun, like wilderness retreats, camping trips, white water rafting, etc. You can meet other freshmen in a non-academic setting before college starts. Note: these events often cost money, and space is limited.

If you qualify for **WORK-STUDY**, stop by the financial aid and/or **JOB PLACEMENT OFFICE** on campus to see what jobs are available. If you weren't awarded work-study, there still may be campus jobs open. The benefits include flexible work hours around your class schedule, close proximity to your residence hall/class, and no need to move your car (parking is scarce on most campuses).

Get involved with clubs/organizations on campus, even if you're shy. Making social connections can enhance your college experience and help you make friends. Enjoy sports? Consider joining an **INTRAMURALS** team.

## WHAT TO EXPECT ON CAMPUS

Campus life will vary, depending on what college you choose. In general, college campuses are buzzing with students and faculty during the semester, only slowing down around finals week. Some colleges give students a week or day before finals (when no classes take place) to allow for study; this is called **DEAD WEEK** (or **DEAD DAY**).

Most colleges have school pride surrounding athletic events. You can pay student rates for discounted (or even get free) tickets to sporting events where you'll sit in the student section. Even if you're not a huge sports fan, it's worth experiencing.

Part of your bill for college will include a **STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE** to pay for events/entertainment happening on campus. These events often are free or discounted for students. You helped pay for it, so why not take advantage of your contribution? Plus, some professors offer extra credit for attendance (you may have to write a synopsis, of course).

## HIGH SCHOOL VS. COLLEGE

35-40 Hours Class Time (per week)	15-ish Hours Class Time (per week)
Weekly/Frequent Assignments	Fewer Assignments, If Any*
Grade Based on Assignments & Tests	Grade Based on <b>MID-TERM &amp; FINAL</b> *
Time in Class to Work on Homework	No Time in Class for Homework
Some Lecture Teaching	Mostly Lecture Teaching
Teacher Helps You in Class	Professor Helps You in Office Hours
Science Labs Part of Class Time	Science Labs Are Separate Class
Less Material Covered for Test	Extensive Material Covered for Test
Class Size About 30	Class Size Could Be 10-100+/-*
Textbooks Are Provided	Textbooks Must Be Purchased (or rented)
Attendance Mandatory	Attendance Expected
Same Class Every Day (if not block schedule)	Same Class 2-3 Times Per Week (or less)
Instruction from Teacher	Instruction from Professor and/or <b>TEACHING ASSISTANT (TA)</b>

\*Varies from college-to-college and/or type of class

## GENERAL COLLEGE TIPS & ADVICE

Repeat this sentence: *I will go to class*. You spend good money on college courses, so skipping is wasteful! Check the syllabus to confirm your professor's **ATTENDANCE POLICY**. Some professors consider attendance and/or participation part of your grade. Also know that one class lecture covers an incredible amount of material that could be on a test (but not covered in your textbook).

Go meet with your professor during **OFFICE HOURS**. Introduce yourself and be open to asking for clarification about assignments or other questions. Remember this is part of their job, so there's no reason to feel shy about meeting with professors. Letting them see you're interested in the material and invested in doing your best can only help you in the eyes of a prof.

Be aware of your college's policy and deadlines for **ADD/DROP**. That is when you can drop one class and/or add another before it's too late in the semester, which could result in getting charged the full amount for the class. Also note deadlines for **WITHDRAWAL** from a class (to get a 'W' on your transcript as opposed to a letter grade so it doesn't impact your GPA).





## WELCOME TO ADULTHOOD

No more parents or teachers to help keep you in line, but that means the person responsible for you is *you*. Oversleep for class? That's on you. Bomb a test or forget an assignment? That's all you, too. The best advice is don't make excuses; hold yourself accountable.

It helps to stay organized. Professors will give you a **SYLLABUS** at the beginning of the semester which outlines test dates and assignment due dates. You are expected to turn in work on time without getting reminders. You may not get a heads-up on a test coming up within the week because you're supposed to keep up with that on your own. Use a day-planner or digital calendar app to keep track of important dates during the semester. Set priorities to accomplish everything.

Another time you'll need to step it up as an adult? Asking for help. If you need assistance or clarification, it's up to you to ask. Then ask again if you don't get an answer. Sometimes it takes persistence to get what you need. Be polite, yet firm. This is great practice for being a grown-up. Resist the temptation to call a parent for help (at least until you've tried to resolve issues on your own first).

When it comes to your health, try to make wise choices. If you get sick, visit the **HEALTH CENTER** on campus for medical care. Email your professors if you have to miss class.



## FINDING SUPPORT AT COLLEGE

Perhaps the best place to start when you need assistance is your **ACADEMIC ADVISOR**. They can help with scheduling classes, changing your schedule, changing your major, picking **ELECTIVES**, or other academic assistance. It might be recommended that you visit a writing/math lab for free help with writing papers or math homework. Or perhaps you could benefit from a study group with classmates? Campuses often have tutoring/academic assistance available. If you find yourself struggling with the material in class, however, first meet with your professor for help.

Student Support Services is a federally-funded program designed to assist college students. Not all campuses have this program, but if yours does, be sure to stop by and ask if you qualify (let them know if you were involved in Talent Search or Upward Bound as a high school student).

For issues related to living on campus or roommates, see your designated **RESIDENT ASSISTANT (RA)** for advice/mediation. Also, colleges have trained professionals available to help with personal counseling, if needed. Adjusting to college can seem overwhelming, but support is readily available.



CAREFUL OF THESE  
FRESHMAN PITFALLS  
AT COLLEGE

BUT DON'T WORRY...  
YOU GOT THIS

Perhaps the biggest mistake college students make is not seeking help when needed. Adjusting to college can be a challenge, but there's no need to feel overwhelmed or miserable when help is available. Take steps to seek support before giving up on college. Even transferring to another institution is preferable to dropping out entirely. Also, in extenuating circumstances, like serious illness or family emergencies, be sure to let your advisor, professors, and even the Dean of Students know as soon as possible. There may be steps they can take to help.

Colleges and universities work hard to prevent students from dropping out of school before graduation. Being able to keep students enrolled is what colleges call **RETENTION**. A higher rate of retention likely indicates the level of satisfaction among students on campus (this should be a serious factor of consideration when choosing a college, by the way). Colleges want their students to be successful and eventually graduate, which is why many institutions implement college orientation classes called **FRESHMEN SEMINAR** for your first semester. This type of class is usually for college credit and can provide a wealth of knowledge about how your campus operates.

## COLLEGE ROOKIE MISTAKES TO AVOID

### Getting behind on lectures and/or assignments.

This can happen when you skip class, so try not to miss. It can be impossible to catch up, given that so much material is covered in a short amount of time.

### Not seeking help when you don't understand the material.

See your professor for help during office hours or take advantage of tutoring on campus. Do not waste time in getting assistance, because classes move forward rapidly, building on your previous understanding of the material.

### Failing an assignment, test, or (gasp!) a class.

It happens. Don't panic, your college career isn't over. First, try to avoid failing by seeking assistance before the point of no return. If you still fail the course, most campuses have a **GRADE FORGIVENESS POLICY** that will allow you to retake the same class (the new grade replacing the D or F on your transcript). Note that you can only do that once or twice in your college career, or as determined by your college's policy.

### Cheating or breaking the rules.

Read your college's **STUDENT HANDBOOK** to know what constitutes cheating. Many new students to college don't realize what they are doing is considered cheating (which is not a viable excuse). Also see the handbook for policies on other violations such as drugs or alcohol on campus. College sanctions could include suspension or expulsion, which would likely impact your ability to transfer to another college in good standing.







# Headed to College? PACK THIS...



## LAUNDRY ITEMS

- Sheets & Pillowcases\*
- Mattress Pad\*/Egg Crate Topper
- Comforter/Blankets
- Pillows
- Towels (several bath towels, hand towels and washcloths)
- Bed Risers or Lofting Equipment
- Clothes Hangers
- Laundry Hamper and/or Basket
- Laundry Detergent/Dryer Sheets
- Sewing Kit
- Static Spray
- Lint Roller
- Iron/Mini-Ironing Board or Mat
- Quarters
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

\* Some college beds are extra-long; check what your dorm has before buying

## FOOD PREP ITEMS

- Cups/Coffee Mug
- Plastic or Silverware
- Bowls (1 or 2)
- Refillable Water Bottle
- Can Opener
- Coffee Maker or Electric Kettle
- Microwave\*
- Small Refrigerator\*
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*Check with roommate(s) about sharing these items

## ELECTRONICS/MISC ITEMS

- Computer/Laptop/Printer\*
- Extension Cords/Power Strip
- Phone/Phone Charger
- Headphones/Ear Buds
- Camera
- TV/DVD Player/Game System
- Audio Equipment
- Electric Fan
- Removable Wall Hooks
- Area Rug
- Bike/Bike Lock (if desired)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

\* Colleges have computer labs to use, if you don't have a computer

## CLOTHING ITEMS\*

- Coat & Light/Heavy Jacket
- Waterproof Jacket/Raincoat
- Pajamas/Robe
- Gloves/Hat/Scarf
- Socks/Underwear
- Jeans/Pants
- Shirts/Sweaters/Sweatshirts
- Dress Clothes (1 set)
- Business Casual Clothes (1 set)
- Sneakers/Comfy Shoes/Boots
- Flip Flops (to wear in the shower)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

\* No need to overpack—switch out

## NECESSARY ITEMS

- Tissues
- Paper Towels
- Dish Soap/All-Purpose Cleaner
- Disinfectant Wipes/Spray
- Trash Bags/Zippy Storage Bags
- Food Storage Containers
- Framed Photos From Home
- Other Sentimental Items
- Posters/Wall Art/Decorations
- Umbrella
- Shower Caddy
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## TOILETRY ITEMS

- Prescription Meds/Pain Meds
- Upset Stomach Medicine
- Adhesive Bandages/First Aid Kit
- Cold Medicine/Cough Drops
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Hair Styling Products & Tools
- Razors/Electric Shaver
- Nail Clippers/Tweezers
- Cotton Swabs
- Soap/Face Soap/Shower Gel
- Lotion (body & face)/Lip Balm
- Make-Up/Misc. Beauty Products
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste/Floss
- Glasses/Contacts & Cleaner
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## DESK/STUDY ITEMS

- Desk Lamp
- Alarm Clock (as a back up to phone)
- Trashcan/Wastepaper Basket
- Pens/Pencils/Highlighters
- Scissors
- Ruler/Protractor
- Paper Clips/Rubber Bands
- Sticky Notes/Notecards
- Pencil Sharpener
- Printer Paper
- Notebooks & Other Paper
- Hanging Files/Folders/Labels
- Flashdrive/Memory Stick
- Stapler/Staples
- Dayplanner/Calendar
- Pocket Folders/Organizers
- Envelopes & Stamps
- Bulletin Board/Thumbtacks
- Dry Erase Board/Markers
- Storage Trays/Boxes/Bins
- Blue Book Testing Booklets
- Scantron Sheets
- Calculator
- Backpack
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT NOT TO PACK

- Weapons (of ANY kind, including knives/swords/guns, etc.), Candles, Space Heaters, Tobacco/Alcohol/Illegal Substances, Cooking Appliances (toasters, grills, etc.), Lava Lamps, Pets (fish may be allowed)

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