# College Admissions Countdown Calendar

This practical month-by-month calendar is designed to help you stay on top of the process of applying to college. For most students, the process begins in September of the junior year of high school and ends in June of the senior year. You may want to begin considering financial aid options, reviewing your academic schedule, and attending college fairs before your junior year.

## September
- Check with your counselor to make sure your course credits will meet college requirements.
- Be sure you are involved in one or two extracurricular activities.
- Begin building your personal list of colleges.

## October
- Register for and take the PSAT/NMSQT®.

## November
- Strive to get the best grades you can. A serious effort will provide you with the most options during the application process.

## December
- Get involved in a community service activity.
- Begin to read newspapers and a weekly news magazine.
- Buy *Peterson's® Master the New SAT®, or The ACT® Prep Guide* and begin to study for the tests.

## January
- With your school counselor, decide when to take the ACT®, SAT®, and SAT Subject Tests™ (and which Subject Tests to take). If English is not your primary language and you are planning on attending a college in North America, decide when to take the TOEFL®.
- Keep your grades up!

## February
- Plan a challenging schedule of classes for your senior year.
- Think about which teachers you will ask to write recommendations.
- Check [http://www.nacacnet.org/](http://www.nacacnet.org/) and click on “College Fairs” for up-to-date schedules and locations of college fairs.

## March
- Register for the tests you will take in the spring (ACT®, SAT®, SAT Subject Tests™, or the TOEFL®).
- Meet with your school counselor to discuss college choices.
- Review your transcript and test scores with your counselor to determine how competitive your range of choices should be.
- Develop a preliminary list of fifteen to twenty colleges and universities.
- Start scheduling campus visits. The best time is when school is in session (but never during final exams). Summers are OK but will not show you what the college is really like. If possible, save your top college choices for the fall. Be aware, however, that fall is the busiest visit season, and you will need advance planning. Don’t forget to write thank you letters to your interviewers.

## April
- Take any standardized tests for which you have registered.
- Create a list of your potential college choices and begin to record personal and academic information that can be transferred later to your college applications.

## May
- Plan college visits and make appointments.
- Structure your summer plans to include advanced academic work, travel, volunteer work, or a job.
- Confirm your academic schedule for the fall.

## Summer
- Write to any colleges on your list that do not accept the Common Application to request application forms.
- Begin working on your application essays.
## SENIOR YEAR

### September
- Register for the ACT®, SAT®, SAT Subject Tests™, or the TOEFL®, as necessary.
- Check with your school counselor for the fall visiting schedule of college reps.
- Ask appropriate teachers if they would write recommendations for you. Don’t forget to write thank you letters when they accept.
- Meet with your counselor to compile your final list of colleges.

### October
- Mail or send early applications electronically after carefully checking them to be sure they are completely filled out.
- Photocopy or print extra copies of your applications to use as a backup.
- Take the tests for which you have registered.
- Don’t be late! Keep track of all deadlines for transcripts, recommendations, financial aid, etc.

### November
- Be sure that you have requested your ACT® and SAT® scores be sent to your colleges of choice.
- Complete and submit all applications. Print or photocopy an extra copy for your records.

### December
- Take any necessary tests: ACT®, SAT®, SAT Subject Tests™, or the TOEFL®.
- Meet with your counselor to verify that all is in order and that transcripts were sent to colleges.

### January
- Prepare the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®), available at www.fafsa.ed.gov or through your school counseling office. An estimated income tax statement (which can be corrected later) can be used. The sooner you apply for financial aid, the better your chances.

### February
- Submit your FAFSA® either online or via U.S. mail.
- Be sure your midyear report has gone out to the colleges to which you’ve applied.
- Let colleges know of any new honors or accomplishments that were not in your original application.

### March
- Register for any Advanced Placement® (AP®) tests you might take.
- Be sure you have received a FAFSA® acknowledgment.

### April
- Review the acceptances and financial aid offers you receive.
- Go back to visit one or two of your top-choice colleges.
- Notify your college of choice that you have accepted its offer (and send in a deposit by May 1).
- Notify the colleges you have chosen not to attend of your decision.

### May
- Take AP® tests.

### June
- Graduate! Congratulations and best of luck.