



# College Application Checklist

Having a list of important tasks to complete for each college application will make the application process go smoothly and help you meet deadlines. Opting in to the College Board Opportunity Scholarships at [cb.org/opportunity](https://collegeboard.org/opportunity) can also give you chances at earning scholarships for completing some of these steps.

## PLAN

To fill in all the blanks on the application form itself, you may have to dig up documents or get answers from your parents or guardians. Most students use online applications, but paper applications are usually available too. There are also services that let you complete one application online and submit it to several colleges like the Coalition Application, Common Application, and Universal College Application.

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4
Get information/application forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a note about regular application deadline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make a note about early application deadline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## GRADES

The record of the classes you've taken and your grades are important parts of your application. Your high school should send your transcript, along with a school profile, directly to the colleges you're applying to. Ask your school counselor or principal how to arrange for this. And be sure to check the transcript for errors before it's sent.

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4
Request high school transcript sent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Request midyear grade reports sent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## TEST SCORES

Most colleges require or recommend that you send scores from tests such as the SAT®. Colleges accept scores only from the testing organizations themselves. Visit [bigfuture.org](http://bigfuture.org) for more information and to learn more about the role of testing in college admission.

	<i>College 1</i>	<i>College 2</i>	<i>College 3</i>	<i>College 4</i>
<b>Send SAT scores</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Send SAT Subject Test scores</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Send AP® scores</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

Many colleges require letters of recommendation from teachers or other adults who know you well. Ask your references well in advance of the deadlines to write you a recommendation. You may want to give them a short written summary of your achievements to help them write about you.

	<i>College 1</i>	<i>College 2</i>	<i>College 3</i>	<i>College 4</i>
<b>Request recommendation letters</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Send thank-you notes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## ESSAYS

Your essays are a chance for you to give admission officers a better idea of your character and strengths. Remember to proofread your essays carefully before you send them in.

	<i>College 1</i>	<i>College 2</i>	<i>College 3</i>	<i>College 4</i>
<b>Draft initial essay(s)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Proofread essay(s) for spelling and grammar</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Have two people read essay(s)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Revise your essay(s)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Proofread your revision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## APPLICATIONS

Applying to college is a big job, but you can make it easier by breaking it down into a series of small steps.

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4
<b>Complete college applications*</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Use exact same name on all of your forms</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Carefully review entire application</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Have a family member or teacher review application</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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\*Visit [cb.org/opportunity](https://www.collegeboard.org/opportunity) to check if you're eligible for the \$1,000 Apply to Colleges scholarship.

## INTERVIEWS

It's a good idea to ask for an interview, even if it's not required. It shows you're serious and gives you a chance to connect with someone in the admission office. Even if a college is far away, you may be able to interview with a local alumnus. Read [What to Do Before and After Your College Interview](#) to prepare.

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4
<b>Interview at college</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Look into an alumnus interview</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Send thank-you note(s) to interviewer(s)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## SEND AND TRACK YOUR APPLICATION

Once you've completed your application, follow these tips to make sure all the parts get to where they're going.

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4
<b>Make copies of all application materials</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Apply online</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Include application fee</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sign application</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Confirm receipt of application materials</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Send supplemental material, if needed</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Mail your institutional aid form, if needed</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Mail state aid form, if needed</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## FINANCIAL AID

College is usually more affordable than many families think, thanks to financial aid. Below are key steps to navigating the financial aid process:

	<i>College 1</i>	<i>College 2</i>	<i>College 3</i>	<i>College 4</i>
<b>Make a note of priority financial aid deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Make a note of regular financial aid deadline</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Submit FAFSA (Opens October 1)*</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Submit CSS Profile™, if needed (Opens October 1)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Submit college aid form, if needed</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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\*Visit [cb.org/opportunity](https://bigfuture.org/opportunity) to check if you're eligible for the \$1,000 Complete the FAFSA scholarship.

## DECISION

You've received several college admission offers. Now comes the hard part: Which one do you choose? Find out how to make the best decision for you.

	<i>College 1</i>	<i>College 2</i>	<i>College 3</i>	<i>College 4</i>
<b>Receive admission letter</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Receive financial aid award letter</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Get more information about each college</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Ask questions about student resources and services</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Compare college features and things you want</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Compare financial aid awards side by side</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Make a decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Respond to college you're attending</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Respond to colleges whose offers you're declining</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Send deposit</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Send final high school transcript</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Visit [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org) for more information.