

11th Grade Timeline

Fall

Meet with your guidance counselor and keep up with your academics

Work with your guidance counselor to make sure you're enrolled in the courses you need to prepare you for college. Move on to the next level of classes in the core subjects (English, math, science, history and foreign language). Check GPA and Class Rank. Now is the perfect time to start your "Upward Trend" to get grades as high as possible. Take Honors, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes for college credit. Keep taking a foreign language. Stay on track with your courses. Be prepared, be over-prepared, and study!

Take the PSAT in October

The PSAT qualifies you for the National Merit Scholarship program and/or the National Hispanic Recognition program. With scores from the PSAT, you can estimate how you might do on the SAT. Determine your testing strengths and weaknesses. Review admissions test requirements/guidelines of the colleges and universities on your college list. Colleges don't see your practice scores, so taking the test can only benefit you.

Start reviewing your College List

Continue researching colleges and universities. Add colleges to your list if they have majors that interest you. If it seems that you have a big college list, really try to start narrowing your choices down. Make a list of colleges you want to visit before the end of the year/summer and contact those colleges. Visit college fairs and college-prep presentations. Organize all this info to make it easy to compare schools side-by-side.

Stay involved!

Throughout the 11th grade—keep up with the extracurricular activities and take on leadership roles in these groups when possible.

Winter

Create a college application action plan!

Review the results of your PSAT/PLAN, and estimate how you may do on the SAT/ACT. Start doing more serious studying for the SAT and/or ACT. Review practice books and take practice exams. Did you prefer or do better on one test over the other? Figure out where your scores land among your peers and the colleges you may apply to. Look at the pros and cons of community colleges, in-state and out-of-state universities, and private colleges. Which colleges are well-within your reach? Which schools are a good-fit? Which are your dream/reach-schools?

Decide when you will take the SAT and/or ACT.

The best time to take either the SAT or ACT is after you have taken Algebra II and Geometry. Many students start taking entrance exams by the winter or spring of 11th grade. Start studying now! Check out SAT and/or ACT prep books from your local library. You can also find free online prep resources! Many students take the exam a second time, either in the summer after 11th grade or fall of 12th grade. Counselors can help you find Fee Waivers. You can take up to 2 ACTs and 2 SATs for free if you qualify for a fee waiver!

Start to identify teachers, administrators, and counselors who could write letters of recommendation for you. If this is a small list, start working on those relationships! Review your Four (4) Year Plan. What interests have changed? Reevaluate involvement in groups or clubs to suit your current interests or develop leadership plan within those organizations. Start really digging into information on colleges you like.

Keep looking into scholarship opportunities

Make sure to keep looking into scholarship opportunities, and keep track of future deadlines.

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Spring

Focus on classes

Keep focusing on your classes. Junior year grades are very important!

Prepare and register for college entrance exams

Register for SAT, ACT, and/or SAT Subject Tests. You can take them again later for higher scores, but taking them in the Spring will provide great practice while the information is fresh in your mind.

Keep track of test dates and deadlines.

Don't overwhelm yourself by scheduling test days when other important dates and events occur.

Create a finalized college list

Speak with your counselor about narrowing your college list.

Most advisors will recommend a student focus on applying to no less than 5 colleges, and no more than 8 -10.

Applying to more colleges can be stressful. Applying to fewer colleges may reduce your options.

Which schools will you definitely apply to? Why?

Narrow down your safety, match, and reach schools.

Prepare for summer programs, classes, jobs, or internships

Start preparing a resume consisting of your academics, volunteer and extracurricular activities, plus any jobs you have had.

This resume will be a good basis for college and scholarship applications in addition to future job and internship applications.

Look at listings of jobs and internship positions online. Keep track of requirements for positions you are interested in.

Look for and enroll in summer academic programs that will provide leadership opportunities or college credit.

Contact colleges or research information on summer programs online.

Ask your teachers or guidance counselor about summer opportunities for high school students.

Ask parents/guardians, family friends or neighborhood or community leaders if you can observe what they do at work.

Research places to volunteer – good places to start are at hospitals, non-profit organizations, local businesses, homeless shelters, animal shelters, museums, and libraries.

Summer

Keep busy and stay involved over the summer

Find a summer job, internship, or volunteer experience, or, better yet— go back to the one you had last year!

Sports, Music, Theater, and other camps are great ways to do something you love and get involved.

Continue finalizing your college list

Visit campuses you are interested in attending.

Finalize your college list now, so you don't have to stress about it in the fall of your senior year.

Make an organized list of the requirements for each college application.

Think about topics for college admissions essays

Prepare a few topics for your college admissions essays the summer before your senior year.

Research common college essay topics to get a general idea of what questions might come up.

Write about any challenging situations which changed your perspective on something.

Write about any world issues, historical or current events which impact you.

Write about why you would like to study something in particular, or at a particular college or university.

Read, read, read!

Keep reading! Check out books from the library.

If you can, start reading books about things you would potentially like to major in. Not only will this help you decide if you truly are interested in the subject, but it will also make you even more prepared for when you do start those classes!

Take notes about what you liked and disliked about the subject matter, or interesting things you have learned.