

The Road to College: 13 Steps for Students and Parents



Recommendation: *If you do not already have a computer in your home with internet access – make this a priority and GET IT NOW! It will save time and money later. Most of the college research, admissions, and financial aid processes are best managed online.*

6th, 7th and 8th Grades

- ▶1. Think about [career](#) possibilities, and [explore](#) different [occupations](#).
- ▶2. Find out which courses to take in high school to prepare [academically](#) for college.
- ▶3. Study, work hard, and do your best to earn good grades. Your performance in high school can play an important part in gaining you [admission](#) to college.
- ▶4. Save money now to pay for school if you haven't already done so.

9th and 10th Grades

- ▶5. Think about [selecting a school](#). Find out about the different [types of schools](#), and decide which [characteristics of schools](#) are most important to you.
- ▶6. Prepare for school entrance exams ([standardized tests](#)). Take the PSAT now in preparation for next year.
- ▶7. [Gather information](#) from schools. E-Mail or write for [brochures and catalogs](#), attend college fairs, and begin college visits.
- ▶8. Take the [standardized tests](#). Retake the PSAT for a shot at a National Merit Scholarship, and take the SAT and ACT in the spring.

11th Grade

- ▶9. Retake the SAT and ACT if you aren't satisfied with your first results.
- ▶10. Select four to six colleges that you like best (include at least one public 2-year college and one public 4-year college) and request/download copies of their applications.
- ▶11. Write your college essays.

12th Grade

- ▶12. Finish [gathering information](#) on schools, and [apply for admission](#) starting in September.
- ▶13. Apply for [financial aid](#) by filling out the [Free Application for Federal Student Assistance](#). Consider all of your [options for paying for school](#). Find out about [scholarships and grants](#) before taking out a [student loan](#).