

Where are you on the path to college?

Making yourself competitive for college admissions can seem a little daunting. But if you plan ahead, you can make the process more manageable—and successful. Here's a timeline to help you get started.

Sophomore Year

- **Take the PSAT.**
The October PSAT is a great way to introduce yourself to the test before it really counts.
- **Be a leader.**
Aim for leadership roles in your extracurricular activities.
- **Ready for more tests?**
Take the AP or SAT Subject Tests as you complete the relevant coursework.
- **Prep for the next PSAT.**
Take advantage of the slower summer months to prepare.

Freshman Year

- **Get involved.**
Discover your interests and talents by taking part in extracurricular activities.
- **Challenge yourself.**
Take prerequisite academic courses that you'll need for future AP and honors courses.

Junior Year

- **Take the PSAT.**
This time it counts—and a high score can mean a National Merit Scholarship.
- **Stay focused.**
Colleges pay close attention to your grades in junior year.
- **Build your college list.**
Make a list of target schools and find out their application requirements.
- **Prep for the SAT & ACT.**
Analyze your PSAT performance and start your prep for the high-stakes SAT and/or ACT.
- **Take the SAT & ACT.**
The main event—get the high score you need now and get the tests out of the way.
- **Hit the road.**
Use the summer to visit your target schools and complete applications.

Senior Year

- **Need a re-take?**
Take the SAT or ACT again if you don't have the scores you need.
- **Prep for Subject Tests.**
Take any Subject Tests that are required for your college applications.
- **Line up recommenders.**
Request letters of recommendation from people you trust.
- **Complete applications.**
Complete and send any remaining college applications.
- **Complete the FAFSA.**
This form determines your eligibility for government financial aid.
- **Finish campus visits.**
Visit the rest of your target schools.
- **Sit by the mailbox.**
Relax, you're going to get accepted to a great school.
- **Make your decision.**
Review your responses and decide which school best fits your goals, personality, and lifestyle.
- **Celebrate.**
You worked hard; you deserve it!