

P A R E N T A L

A D V I S O R Y

B E N E F I C I A L C O N T E N T

Checklist for College Planning

Freshmen should plan to:

- Get good grades. Your freshman year grade point average sets the tone for the rest of high school. It's much harder to bring up a GPA than it is to bring it down. If you want to be accepted into college and get scholarships, good grades are essential.
- Work with your school counselor and CAP advisor to create a schedule each year for meeting graduation requirements.
- Get involved with extra-curricular and volunteer activities.
- Keep a running list of accomplishments, awards, and recognitions to use in preparing a resume and college applications.

High School Sophomore Checklist

Sophomores should:

- Keep your grades up! During the first three years of high school, GPA matters more than you think.
- Attend college and career information events.
- Research [funding for college](#), including scholarships, grants, loans, etc.
- Reach out to mentors in the fields of interest.
- Continue exploring college and career options.
- Consider taking a [practice test](#) to prepare for the PSAT.

High School Junior Checklist

In fall semester, juniors need to:

- Take the ACT or PSAT. Students must take the PSAT test in 11th grade to qualify for National Merit scholarships and programs.
- Boost your GPA!
- Narrow down college choices
- Attend in-person or [online college fairs](#) and college-prep presentations.
- Explore careers and their earning potentials in the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#).

High School Junior Checklist

In spring semester, juniors should:

- Register for college admission exams such as the [SAT](#) and [ACT](#); take practice tests to prepare before the big day.
- Research ways to [pay for college](#).
- Identify [scholarship opportunities](#) to pursue; note deadlines on calendar.
- Contact colleges to request information and applications.

High School Senior Checklist

During the summer, soon-to-be seniors should:

- Start college visits.
- Narrow down the colleges being considered.
- Make decisions regarding early decision or early action programs.
- Enter and/or update information in the [FAFSA4caster](#).

High School Senior Checklist



In fall semester, seniors will need to:

- Register for and take (or retake) the [SAT](#) and/or [ACT](#), if not already done.
- Complete and submit college applications *prior to deadlines*.
- Complete and submit scholarship applications *prior to deadlines*.
- Request transcripts and letters of recommendation.
- Register for a [Federal Student Aid PIN](#).
- Meet with your counselor to verify that graduation requirements will be met on schedule.

High School Senior Checklist

In spring semester, seniors will need to:

Submit your FAFSA no later than Feb. 15!

Be sure to keep a copy for your records.

Review deadlines and start applying to college!

Have first-term transcripts sent to your target schools.

If you completed the FAFSA, review the Student Aid Report (SAR) you'll receive in March.

In April, make your final decision on a college!

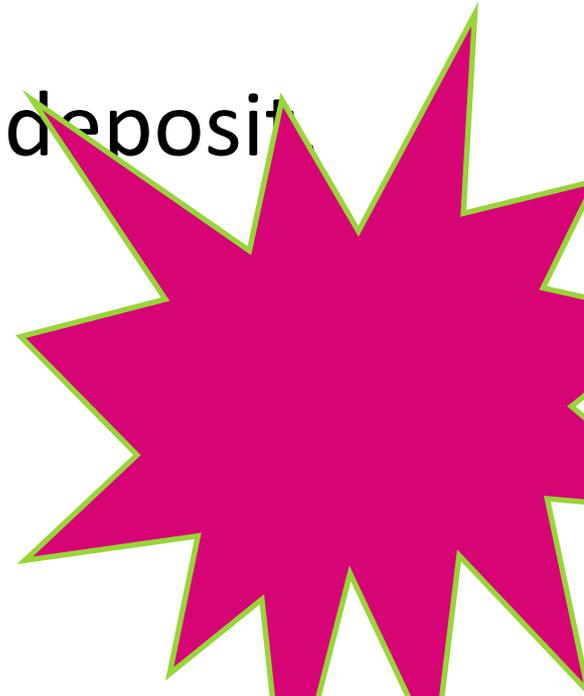
Review the financial aid package from your selected college, and pay required deposit(s).

Take any recommended AP exams.



Making a Decision

- Try to visit colleges where you've been accepted.
- Compare financial aid packages.
- Reply ON TIME and send your deposit.
- Get ready to graduate!



Testing 101

The **PSAT** is a rehearsal for the SAT and is used to select students for the National Merit and National Achievement scholarships.

The **SAT Reasoning Test** is a standard way of measuring a student's ability to do college-level work.

SAT II Subject Tests measure your skills in specific subjects such as math, history, or science.

For more information, including dates, fees, and free practice tests, visit www.collegeboard.com

Testing 101

The **ACT** is a national college admission exam that allows students to prepare for the test. For more information, visit www.actstudent.org.

Check with your preferred college to see if you are required to take the SAT or the ACT.

The **Compass Test** helps college personnel place you in courses appropriate for your skill level. Community Colleges use this test. For tips and sample questions, visit www.act.org/compass/student/index.html.

Why Go to College?

1. College graduates earn about \$20,000 more per year than high school grads.
2. A high school dropout will earn \$1 million less than a college graduate over their lifetime.
3. A college degree increases your chances of employment by almost half.
4. The fastest-growing careers require a college degree.
5. There are more jobs for educated workers than there are qualified people to fill them.
6. Jobs for college graduates typically offer perks like health insurance and retirement plans.
7. Higher level of education = Better standard of living
8. If you go to college, your children and grandchildren are more likely to go too.

Avoiding Scholarship Scams

A key component of college preparation is financial aid. While no scholarship or grant opportunities should be overlooked, college financing does have its share of scammers.

According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), you should look for the following signs of scam in scholarship offers:

- Any suggestion that you must pay in exchange for a scholarship.
- Your scholarship will be held only if you provide credit card or bank account numbers.
- Information about funding sources not available anywhere else.
- Any indication that you've been selected as a finalist for a contest you did not enter.

Any questions or comments?





Dumas New Tech High School
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