

High School Timeline for College

FRESHMEN SHOULD PLAN TO:

- Take challenging classes in core academic courses.
- Work with their school counselor to create a yearly schedule for meeting graduation requirements.
- Talk to an advisor or school counselor about taking AP and honors courses.
- Get involved with community-based and leadership-oriented activities.
- Explore and identify career fields of interest through online research and by attending career fairs and other events.
- Explore *The Four Steps to College*.
- Keep a running list of accomplishments, awards, and recognition to use in preparing a resume and college applications. Update frequently.

Keep in mind that many of these freshman-year activities *should continue through all four years of high school*. Career planning, in particular, will merit careful, ongoing research; students may need help refining their goals as they learn new information.

SOPHOMORES SHOULD:

- 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.
- Update running list of accomplishments that was started in freshman year.
- Make plans to attend summer school if you have failed classes or want to improve grades (if applicable).

HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR CHECKLIST

In fall semester, juniors need to:

- Take the PSAT. Students must take the test in 11th grade to qualify for National Merit scholarships and programs.
- Attend in-person or online college fairs and college-prep presentations.
- Explore careers and their earning potentials in your Scoir profile
- Work hard at maintaining or improving GPA. Many colleges look closely at transcripts at end of junior year.

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Attend Tri-University and/or Private University events

In spring semester, juniors should:

Register for and take college admission exams such as the SAT and ACT; take practice tests to prepare before the big day.

Prepare for and take AP and IB exams.

Research ways to pay for college. Check out FAFSA4caster for an estimate of possible federal student aid

Check out these scholarship opportunities on JPII website. Also check with parents' or student's employers for financial assistance; note deadlines on calendar.

Attend in-person or virtual college fairs. Contact colleges to request information and applications.

Explore summer programs or job opportunities that can boost your college and scholarship applications.

Plan college visits.

If you are an athlete and are considering participating in athletics in college, register for NCAA and NAIA eligibility centers.

Update running list of accomplishments that was started in freshman year.

Meet with counselors to check that you are on track to graduate.

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.

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.

Student and one parent need to register for FSA ID

Meet with a counselor to verify that graduation requirements will be met on schedule.

Update running list of accomplishments that was started in freshman year.

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During the winter months, seniors should:

Starting on October 1st, work with parents to complete and submit the FAFSA.
Review and make any necessary changes/corrections to the FAFSA Report (also called verification).
Finish submitting scholarship applications.

In spring semester, seniors will need to:

Visit college on “short list.”
Sign up for community college information sessions and application workshops.
Consider college acceptances; compare financial aid packages offered.
Contact college financial aid representatives with questions regarding FAFSA or financial aid packages.
Decide on the college to attend and contact its offices - typically by May 1st.
Submit your scholarship offers to the counseling office to be recognized at annual awards ceremony.

Although the temptation to goof off during the last year of high school may be strong, students should be made aware that college admissions officers will expect to see that they've worked hard to keep grades up and continued their involvement in school and community activities. Reassure your aspiring college student that he or she can still enjoy life and time with friends while remaining focused on larger goals.