

# SENIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

## FALL

- Review your plans with your school counselor.**  
Discuss your grades and test results from junior year.
- Register for an FSA ID.**  
Go to [www.fsaaid.ed.gov](http://www.fsaaid.ed.gov). Your FSA ID serves as your e-signature for the online FAFSA. If you are a dependent student, your parent should also register for an FSA ID at this time.
- Start drafts of your college essays.**  
Identify a teacher or counselor who can provide you with feedback on your essays.
- Register to retake the SAT and/or ACT, if necessary.**  
You can take these tests as many times as you want through the April national testing date in the year you will graduate from high school. You should take these exams at least six weeks before your earliest college admissions or financial aid deadline.
- Visit colleges that most interest you.**  
Many colleges offer open houses and campus tours, and provide the opportunity to sit in on classes. At some colleges, you can arrange, in advance, a personal interview with an admissions counselor. If possible, stay overnight and talk to current students. If you cannot visit the campus, the college's website may contain an online tour or a link to request an informational DVD.
- Request high school transcripts.**  
You will need an official high school transcript for each application you plan to submit.
- Identify references.**  
Ask if they will provide letters of recommendation for you.
- Finalize portfolios, audition materials, or writing samples.**  
Complete these if they are required for admissions or scholarships.
- Follow up with your references.**  
Make sure they remembered to send in the forms if they are sent separately from your application.
- Complete revisions of all applications and essays.**  
Review them with a parent, teacher, or school counselor.
- Submit all admissions and college academic scholarship applications before holiday break.**  
Keep copies for your file. If you submit your applications online, verify that they were received.

- Apply for private scholarship and grant programs.**
- File your FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov), or complete and mail your PDF FAFSA or paper FAFSA.**  
Do this as soon as possible after October 1. Submit the FAFSA in time to meet each college's financial aid deadline. (These can vary and can be different than admissions deadlines.) Contact the financial aid offices at your colleges for more information.
- Look for your Student Aid Report (SAR) in the mail or via email, if address provided.**  
You should receive it within three to ten days after filing the online FAFSA, or two to three weeks after filing the paper FAFSA. Each college you included on your FAFSA will receive a copy of your SAR.
- Review the SAR.**  
Make any necessary changes and return the corrected form to Federal Student Aid as indicated on the SAR. If you filed electronically, make corrections online. Contact your college for more directions if necessary.

## WINTER

- Send your midyear grades to the colleges of your choice.**
- Continue researching and applying for scholarships that might be available to you.**
- Attend free financial aid workshops held at local high schools and colleges.**  
Many provide free hands-on FAFSA assistance.
- Confirm receipt of your information.**  
Check with your colleges to be sure they have received the information from your FAFSA and any revised SAT and/or ACT test scores.
- Tie up loose ends.**  
If required, send any additional information to the colleges to complete the admissions and/or financial aid process.

## SPRING

- Tie up loose ends.**  
If required, send any additional information to the colleges such as grades and new test scores. Be sure to adhere to each college's application deadlines.
- Congratulations! Your acceptance letters will start arriving.**  
These will start coming in the mail from your colleges.
- Take Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams.**  
Take AP exams if your college of choice requires them or will accept the results for college credit.
- Review your award letters.**  
You should receive financial aid award letters from the colleges that have accepted you for admission. Review them with your parents or a trusted advisor. Be sure you understand the terms and conditions for each type of aid.
- Weigh your options and make your decision.**  
Using the worksheet on page 24, compare and weigh your options.
- Notify the colleges of your final decision.**  
Each college that accepted you for enrollment needs to know whether you plan to accept or decline its offer. Follow the colleges' instructions to let them know your final decision.
- Send a deposit to your college of choice.**  
Many colleges require that you send a deposit to reserve your place and formalize your college acceptance. You may submit a deposit to only one college. The exception to this is if you are put on a wait list by a college and are later admitted to that college.
- Send in your financial aid forms.**  
Sign your financial aid award letter and any other items requiring your signature and return them. If you have questions, schedule an appointment with a financial aid officer. If you have decided to accept a loan, understand all your rights and responsibilities before you and/or your parents sign.
- Update the college on your financial aid situation.**  
Notify the financial aid office of any outside scholarships, grants, or other kinds of student aid from private sources that you have received since you submitted your aid application.
- Send letters of decline to financial aid offices.**  
If you have received financial aid award letters from colleges whose offers you have decided to decline, notify the financial aid office in writing because other students will need the aid you declined.
- Arrange for housing and meals at the college you will attend.**  
If necessary, arrange for housing and a meal plan for the fall.

## AFTER GRADUATION

- Send your final transcript.**  
Your college will need confirmation of your graduation.
- Work and save.**  
Make a plan for saving a portion of your summer earnings.
- Make a budget.**  
Find a Budget Worksheet online at [www.ecmc.org/FinancialLiteracy](http://www.ecmc.org/FinancialLiteracy).
- Attend orientation at your new college.** Make plans to attend required summer orientation sessions at the college.
- Males—register with the U.S. Selective Service.**  
If you are a male age 18-25, register with the U.S. Selective Service so you will be eligible for federal student aid. You can register at: [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov), your high school, or your post office.
- Plan to attend financial aid and college nights in your community.**  
There are meetings in many communities to help you understand the financial aid process and provide assistance with filing the FAFSA. Find out when these events are held by checking with your counselor or a local college.