

college admissions timeline

This is a general overview of the college admissions process. Don't forget to:

- visit www.vsacroadmaps.org for month-by-month checklists and tips
- visit www.vsac.org/events for a calendar of events and workshops throughout the state that will help you plan for college and understand the financial aid process
- contact your school counseling office

Junior year

College visits: Start your senior year knowing which schools you want to apply to.

- 1) Visit schools in fall and spring of junior year so you can sit in on campus classes.
- 2) Another option: Visit schools in early spring senior year, after you've been accepted but before you make your final decision.

Testing:

- 1) Register for the PSAT in September and take it in October.
- 2) January: Begin SAT and/or ACT test preparation for the spring testing dates.
- 3) Sign up for the May AP tests in any subject areas that you feel strong in and will not be studying further during your senior year.

VSAC's Paying for College financial aid presentations: Contact your guidance office or visit www.vsac.org/schedule for dates and times of presentations in your area.

Scholarships:

- 1) Start the scholarship search; obtain a copy of VSAC's scholarships booklet from your high school guidance office or by calling VSAC.
- 2) Begin your search at the local and state levels (where the odds are much better).
- 3) Ask your school counselor about local community scholarships.

Teacher recommendations:

- 1) Consider requesting recommendation letters spring of your junior year (teachers and school counselors aren't flooded with requests as they usually are in the fall).
- 2) Become familiar with your high school's procedures for requesting recommendations, as schools vary in their expectations and timelines.

Senior year

College applications: Obtain application materials from the schools that interest you, and keep a file on each school (make a copy of everything you send).

Keep a chart of admissions and financial aid deadlines for each school, as well. Find out about early action and early decision deadlines, which can be as early as November 1.



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Testing: Register for and take the SAT and/or ACT in the fall. If your colleges require SAT subject tests, register for these as well. Register in March for AP exams in May.

Teacher recommendations: Begin approaching teachers for recommendations in early September. Notify them of application deadlines, and send a thank-you note to anyone who writes you a recommendation.

Scholarships: VSAC-assisted scholarships have a common application and a deadline in early March, so be sure to obtain your scholarships booklet from VSAC when it's available in November. Submit all your required documents by March 3, 2017.

VSAC's Paying for College financial aid presentations: Contact your school's counseling office or visit www.vsac.org/schedule for dates and times of presentations in your area.

College selection: As you narrow your choice of schools, be sure your list includes a realistic combination of safety, target, and reach schools, as well as affordable schools.

Transcript requests: Find out about your high school counseling office's procedures for requesting transcripts and other supporting information for schools. Pay attention to timelines and deadlines for requests.

Financial aid: File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the VSAC grant application as soon as possible after October 1. The CSS Profile, required by many private schools, can be filed in December. Many schools also have their own financial aid forms that you must complete by specific deadlines.

Award letters and acceptance: All schools should respond by early April, and most require that your deposit be sent in by May 1. As financial aid award letters arrive, compare them carefully; contact the school's financial aid office if you have questions. Once you've made your decision, carefully follow the instructions for acceptance. You'll also need to decline offers from all other schools.

Be sure to respond to the financial aid award letter; failure to do so will result in the aid offer being withdrawn.

College admissions and financial aid application timeline (senior year) for traditional four-year colleges

October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
	College application deadlines						Deposits due		
	Scholarship preparation (application and all materials for VSAC-assisted scholarships are due March 3, 2017)				Continue searching for local, regional, and national scholarships				
FAFSA and VSAC grant application process									
					Look for college admission and financial aid awards letters				
			College financial aid deadlines			Students accept financial aid offers			
							Students complete loan promissory notes		