

Grade 11

Keep Rising

What Does My Ideal College Look Like?

By now, you may be certain that you want to attend college. But how do you learn more about different colleges? There are many factors to consider when choosing a college. Read through the factors listed in the box below and take some time to think about which ones are important to you, and in what way.

If you decide a certain factor is important to you, write it down in the center box. You may even think of some factors that aren't listed on this page. When you are finished, you will have a picture of your IDEAL COLLEGE!

LOCATION

- In your hometown, your home state, or out of state?
- In the city, the country, or the suburbs?
- Living at home, on campus in the dormitories, or in an off-campus apartment?

STUDENT BODY

- Men only, women only, or coeducational?
- Large (greater than 10,000 students), medium (4,000-10,000) or small (fewer than 4,000 students) number of students?
- Ethnic or religious breakdown of student body?
- Relatives, friends, or people from your school or community attend the college?

ACADEMICS

- Majors or programs of study offered?
- The college's reputation for teaching?
- Teaching style (hands-on, lecture, seminar)?
- Classes taught directly by professors?
- Average class size?
- Evening, weekend or part-time study?

TYPE

- Technical/trade school, two-year, or four-year college?
- Public (state) or private college?
- Liberal arts or technical college?

My Ideal College

QUALIFICATIONS

- Average high school GPA (grade point average) required?
- Average SAT or ACT scores of accepted students?
- Average high school class rank of accepted students?

SUPPORT

- Counseling and tutoring services?
- Support for physical challenges & learning disabilities?
- Student groups for women, students of color, international students, non-traditional students.
- Career, internship and employment assistance?

ENRICHMENT

- Sports (collegiate and intramural), music, fine arts, performing arts?
- Journalism, debate, student government?
- Fraternities, sororities, social clubs?
- Internships, community service, study abroad?

COST

- Total tuition and cost of attendance?
- "Needs-blind" admission?
- Percentage of students receiving financial aid?
- Opportunity to renew financial aid after first year?



How Do I Learn About Colleges?

Talk to people.

Talk to friends, family members, clergy, your teachers and guidance counselor. Ask them if they know of any colleges that will meet your needs. Talk to students you know who are now in college. Also, ask people in careers that interest you what education or training they needed to achieve their career, and where they received their education or training.

Explore free guidance opportunities.

Meet with your guidance counselor at school or go to a college planning center (locations listed on back cover).

Attend college fairs.

Take a strong shopping bag or book bag with you and pick up brochures about colleges that interest you. Fill out the inquiry cards so you can get more information sent to you from those schools. Ask the admission representatives the questions you have about their colleges.

Use the Internet.

Explore college websites. Visit sites that provide information about college, such as www.tericollegeplanning.org or the College Board® at www.collegeboard.com.

Use your school or library.

Visit your high school guidance office or local library. We suggest using the *Index of Majors or College Handbook* (College Board® publications) or other guides to research admission requirements and program offerings. The Internet is a valuable resource. Refer to the sites listed on pages 42-43.

Visit colleges.

Most colleges offer campus tours. Call the college admission office to ask if they offer open houses or tours, and if you can visit any classes. Also, some schools and community organizations sponsor multi-state campus tours. Find out how you can participate. Try not to schedule more than two tours in one day.

Send away for college catalogs.

If you call or write to a college, they will put you on their mailing list and send you an informational catalog and an application. Review the application requirements and the essay questions.

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Read about colleges that interest you. Ask questions.

Once you obtain information using the ideas listed previously, the best way to find out if a particular college meets your needs is to read the information and ask lots of questions!

Here are some questions you can ask:

- What qualifications does a student need to be accepted to this college?
- What percentage of students return each year?
- What are the best programs at this college?
- What percentage of students receive financial aid? What scholarships are available?
- Do you have a major or program in (name the subject or field you want to study)?
If so, can you describe the program to me?
- What percentage of students live on campus? Is on-campus housing guaranteed?
- What is the campus culture like?
- What kinds of extracurricular activities and student groups are on campus?
- What percentage of students receive financial aid? Does applying for financial aid affect a student's chances of being admitted? Does the school meet 100% of a student's financial need?
- What kind of on-campus employment is available? Do you have a cooperative education program or offer help for students to locate internships?
- What kind of support is available for students? How do you help students pick a major? How do you help students who are struggling academically? Are there computers available on campus for student use?
Can students access the schools computer system from off campus?
- How do you help students plan for a career or find a job after college?
- Is it possible to visit a class?

Focus on at least five colleges.

As you do your research, choose at least five colleges or universities that meet many of your needs. Be sure to select at least one school that you are sure you can get into (a "safety school"), one school that might be a long shot for you, and several that fall between these two extremes. You should also include one in-state college or university. Because they are publicly supported, they are usually the most affordable.

Plan it out.

Make a chart listing the admission and financial aid requirements and deadlines so that you will have that information in one location. Post it somewhere where you will see it often, to remind yourself what you need to do.

You're on the ball!

By doing your research early, you can reduce your workload considerably and concentrate on your schoolwork and activities during your senior year.





College Matching Chart

In the charts below, list the name of the college you are researching in the top row. In each row below, write a brief description of the college, according to the categories on the left. In the column on the right, rank how closely the college matches the Ideal College that you wrote about on page 14.

Rank: 1 (doesn't match my ideal college at all) 2 (matches somewhat) 3 (matches exactly)

Name of College:		Rank
Type		
Location		
Student Body		
Academics		
Support		
Enrichment		
Cost		
Qualifications		
TOTAL (add all the points in the ranking column)		

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TOTAL (add all the points in the ranking column)		

When you're done with your rankings, add up the total for each college. The highest score is 24 points; the closer to 24 points a college gets, the closer it matches your ideal college. You can make additional copies of this page, if needed.

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What Are All These Tests?

Junior year is the year that many students start taking the various standardized tests for admission to college. Here are the major tests required or recommended for college admission. See websites listed below to find out the cost of taking the tests. Fee waivers are available from guidance counselors for students who meet income guidelines.

PSAT/NMQST® PSAT—Preliminary SAT® NMQST—National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test

What Is It? A shorter version of the SAT.

Why Take It? It's good practice for the SAT, and may enable you to qualify for several scholarships, including the National Merit Scholarship, the National Achievement Scholarship (for Black American students), and the National Hispanic Scholar Award.

When to Take It: The PSAT is offered in October. You can take it in 10th grade for practice, and in 11th grade to qualify for scholarships.

www.collegeboard.com

ACT®—ACT Assessment

What Is It? A test to assess your general educational development and ability to complete college-level work, covering four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The writing test, which is optional, entails writing a short essay and measures writing skill and planning ability.

Why Take It? In some regions of the U.S. (especially the Midwestern states), the ACT is required instead of the SAT I for college admission.

When to Take It: The ACT is offered in October, December, February, April, and June (and in September in some states). You may take it in 11th or 12th grade (or both).

www.actstudent.org

AP®—Advanced Placement Tests

What Is It? A test to measure your mastery of skills and course materials in Advanced Placement (AP) courses—high school courses taught on the level of a college course.

Why Take It? An AP course helps prepare you for college courses. At some colleges, a good AP score can provide you with college credit or immediate placement into a higher level (rather than entry-level) college course.

When to Take It: AP exams are offered in May of the year you take the AP course.

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/Controller.jspf>

SAT—Reasoning Test

What Is It? A three-hour-and-45-minute test of your critical reading, writing, and math skills. College admission committees consider these scores when they evaluate your application.

Why Take It? Many colleges require it. Your SAT score helps admission officers compare your high school transcripts and courses to those of other students.

When to Take It: The SAT is offered from October to January and in March, May, and June. You may take it in 11th or 12th grades (or both).

www.collegeboard.com

SAT Subject Tests

What Is It? One-hour, primarily multiple-choice tests that measure your knowledge or skills in a particular subject.

Why Take It? Many colleges require or recommend subject tests for admission, course placement, or both.

When to Take It: Students can take up to three SAT Subject Tests tests on a single test date. It's best to take a subject test right after you complete a course in that subject. Tests are offered from October to January and in May and June (different subjects are offered on different dates).

www.collegeboard.com

TOEFL—Test of English as a Foreign Language

What Is It? A test that evaluates your English proficiency if your native language is not English.

Why Take It? It is required for many students whose native language is not English and who plan to study at colleges and universities in the United States and Canada.

When to Take It: The TOEFL exam is administered in August, October, January, and May. It's best to take the TOEFL exam before you apply to college.

www.toefl.org





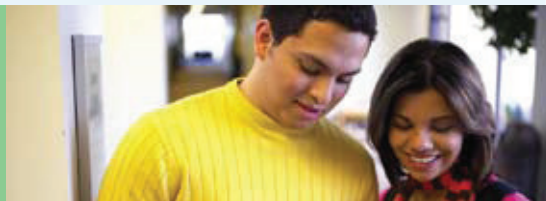
How do I learn more?

- Visit the website of the College Board®, www.collegeboard.com, for information about the SAT, SAT Subject Tests, PSAT, and AP exams; visit www.act.org for information on the ACT; and visit www.toefl.org for information about the TOEFL.
- Talk to your guidance counselor, teachers, or advisors about when and how to register for these exams.
- Visit the College Board website to register online.
- Explore your test preparation options. There are many test preparation programs that help you practice for these exams, but most are very expensive. For a less expensive way to prepare, purchase a practice book at your local bookstore or check out a copy at your local library. Also, find out if your school offers a test preparation program.



What if I can't afford to take these tests?

It may be possible to waive or reduce your fees. Check with your school guidance office or a college planning center for more information.



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11th Grade Check List

Check each item as you go.

- ☐ Make sure you're taking college preparatory courses. Don't drop these courses if they seem too hard. Colleges look for students who challenge themselves. Talk to your teacher and guidance counselor if you are having a hard time.
- ☐ Take the PSAT in your junior year. This may qualify you for several scholarships and is great practice for the SAT.
- ☐ Prepare for the SAT or the ACT, and take it in May or June. You can retake the tests in your senior year if you would like to improve your scores. Check the test requirements for each school you want to apply to. Your counselor can provide you with test dates and information about fee waivers. Check the deadlines. You must register six weeks before the date of the examination.
- ☐ Attend college fairs and presentations by college representatives. Listen to your school's announcements for information about dates for these events. Fill out inquiry cards from colleges so they can mail you a catalog and an application.
- ☐ Update your college file at the end of each marking period. (See page 8 for a list of what should go in the file.) Create files on each college or university that appeals to you, and include the catalogs you pick up at college fairs and campus visits or receive by mail.
- ☐ Continue saving for college. Colleges will expect you to save a portion of your summer earnings to help pay for your education.
- ☐ Make a file for information about scholarships, eligibility requirements, and deadlines. Here are some ways to find out this information:
 - Ask your counselor about possible scholarships available to students from your high school or school system.
 - Look for newspaper announcements of scholarship recipients and write down information about the scholarship.
 - Ask family members to find out if there are scholarships offered by their employers or by organizations to which they belong. If you have a job, ask your employer about scholarship opportunities available to you through your company. Ask for scholarship availability through community organizations (YMCA, Boy/Girl Scouts, etc.).
 - Talk to high school seniors about scholarships they have received.
 - Check your local library for scholarship postings.
 - You may be able to do a computerized scholarship search. Check with your counselor about the availability of scholarship search software. It's usually quick, easy to use, and free. Most college planning centers have these software programs. Remember, however, that local scholarships may be easier to win than national competitions.
 - The Internet is an excellent way to find private scholarships and fellowships. Most of these services are provided free of charge. See pages 42-43 in the Resource section of this booklet for a list of websites. Visit the TERI website at www.tericollegeplanning.org.



Please be very careful of financial aid scams on the Internet.
DO NOT pay for financial aid applications, information, or assistance!
For further information, visit www.tericollegeplanning.org.



11th Grade Glossary

Liberal arts—Describes a college or educational program designed to provide students with broad-based knowledge and skills, rather than preparing students for a particular career.

Coeducational—Describes colleges and educational programs that include both male and female students.

Seminar—A type of course involving a small number of students and a large amount of class discussion.

“Needs blind” admission—When admission to a college is based solely on the student’s qualifications, regardless of the student’s and the student’s family’s ability to pay for college.

College credit—A successfully completed part of a college program. For example, students might earn three college credits when they successfully finish a one-semester class. Each college requires students to earn a specific number of credits in order to graduate. High school students can sometimes earn college credits while in high school by taking courses at local colleges or by successfully passing Advanced Placement exams.

