

# College Prep Checklist

## SENIOR

### Write Your College Essay

- Think about what you want your essay to say about you. Brainstorm topics.
- What have you done that conveys who you are? Start with a 3–4 sentence personal statement.
- Get feedback from a trusted teacher or family member and fine tune your final essay.

### Take or Retake Standardized Tests

- If you haven't already, take SAT/ACT tests.
- Consider taking them multiple times to improve your score.

### Complete Admission Applications

- Gather letters of recommendation, essays, transcripts, and everything you'll need for college applications. Most open in August.
- Revisit your list of colleges on [CollegeRaptor.com/college-search](https://CollegeRaptor.com/college-search).
- Know the application requirements/deadlines; mark them on your calendar.
- Submit applications for your preferred colleges.

### Complete Financial Aid and College Applications

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which opens October 1.
- Complete the CSS Profile, if required by colleges to which you're applying.
- Apply for grants and scholarships.

### Review Graduation Requirements

- Make sure you've taken all the required classes for your preferred colleges and in order to graduate.

### Decision Deadline

- Once you've received acceptance letters, compare offer letters to see which school is giving you the best deal.
- Choose the school that's best for you.
- If you've been deferred or waitlisted, provide colleges with any new info to help them make a decision.
- Send in your deposit, final transcript, and any other requirements for your school of choice.
- Celebrate! You made it!

### REMINDER

*Complete the FAFSA even if you don't think your family will qualify for financial aid. Institutional grants from colleges often depend on your FAFSA and many families are surprised to find they can qualify for more aid than expected.*

