

TIMELINE & CHECKLIST FOR COLLEGE

SENIOR YEAR

Fall

- Narrow your list of colleges to between five and 10.
- If you cannot afford the application fees that many colleges charge, ask your counselor to help you request a fee waiver.
- Retake the [ACT](#) or [SAT](#) if wanting to boost test scores.
- Finalize your college essay. Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
- Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers. Request transcripts online or via paper request form, depending on your school.
- Research possibilities of scholarships. Ask your counselor, your colleges, and your religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. You should *never* pay for scholarship information. Most scholarships come directly from the schools you are applying to.
- Attend a scholarship resume workshop with [Missoula Job Service](#)
- Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications. Have a parent, teacher, counselor, or other adult review the application before it is submitted.
- Some colleges will require a copy of your transcript from your high school. [Montana University Systems](#) schools only require a final transcript.
- Make sure testing companies have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#). This is the form you will complete to find out what financial aid you are eligible to receive from the government. Oct. 1 is the first day you can file the FAFSA. Visit [FAFSA](#) for more information.
- Participate in the [Montana College Application Week](#) activities at your high school: during this week most schools in Montana will either waive or defer the cost of ONE application.

Winter

- Ask your guidance office in January to send first semester transcripts to schools where you applied. At the end of the school year, they will need to send final transcripts to the college you will attend.
- Make sure that you have requested your final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.
- If you are “waitlisted” by a college you really want to attend, visit, call and write the admission office to make your interest clear. Ask how you can strengthen your application.

Spring

- While most of your applications will be complete and you are waiting to receive admission decisions, don't slack in the classroom. The college that you do attend will want to see your second semester transcript. No Senioritis!
- Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive. Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.
- May 1, is the date when the college you plan to attend requires a commitment and deposit. When you've made your college decision, notify your counselor and the colleges. Send in your deposit by the postmark date of May 1. If you've been offered financial aid, accept the offer and follow the instructions given. Also notify schools you will not attend of your decision.

