

Here's When You Can Expect Early Admissions Results—And What You Should Be Doing In The Meantime

[Christopher Rim](#) [Forbes](#) Nov 19, 2025

With the November 1st deadline for early applications in the rearview mirror, many students find themselves in one of the most stressful stages of the process: awaiting their admissions results.

In the last ten years, the number of students applying early has steadily increased—in 2022-2023, approximately [58%](#) of students nationwide applied through Early Action or Early Decision pathways. (It's even higher at School One, particularly Early Action – C.) This upward trend in applicants is consistent with a greater emphasis on early admissions at top schools. The number of schools offering early application options has risen to around [450](#), with many accepting a significant portion of their incoming class from the smaller pool of early applicants. **Brown University, for instance, had an early admissions rate of [18%](#) in the last cycle, accepting roughly [37.5%](#) of its incoming class before the Regular Decision round. (With a 5% overall acceptance rate, that means Brown's regular decision acceptance rate was around 2% of the excellent applicants who apply, almost all of whom deserve to be accepted. This is similar at other highly competitive schools, so odds are super low if you're applying to them other than Early Decision. – C)**

As applying early becomes an increasingly desirable strategic choice, more students spend their November refreshing admissions webpages and preparing themselves for the inevitable admissions decisions to come. But there are plenty of productive action steps that students can—and should—take as they await their early application results. Rather than wringing your hands and stressing about admissions decisions, here's what you can do this November:

When will Early Decision and Early Action decisions be released?

First and foremost, knowing when to anticipate admissions decisions can reduce stress and allow students to use the intervening weeks effectively and strategically. Below are early results decision dates for Ivy League and select top schools:

What should I do while I wait for early application results?

1. Focus on Grades and Extracurriculars

Students should remember that their admissions profile is still developing, even after they have submitted their early applications. This means that maintaining top grades, participating in extracurricular activities, and cultivating a dynamic passion project remain critically important.

Although falling into the trap of senioritis can be tempting, students should do their best to resist the temptation and stay diligent in studying, pursuing leadership roles, and scaling their passion projects. **Any new accolades, positive changes in GPA, academic or community awards, or developments and recognition for passion projects can be reflected on RD applications. For deferred applicants, these updates can also be included in Letters of Continued Interest, making it all the more important for students to invest their time in continuing to build a standout profile.**

Finally, it is important to note that while positive changes can impact RD applications and even boost a student's chances of admission after deferral, the opposite is also true: **significant decreases in GPA can thwart a student's chances after deferral and even jeopardize an early acceptance. Staying committed to academic excellence is essential for one's overall strategy, even after you press "submit."**

2. Level Up Your Regular Decision Applications

While finishing early applications is a significant accomplishment, admissions season isn't over yet. Rather than putting all of your eggs in the EA/ED basket, you should use the months between the early and regular decision rounds to ensure that you are putting your best foot forward on your RD applications. **Students should prepare their RD applications as though they have already faced rejection at their early school, putting just as much care, consideration, effort, and attention to detail into these applications as they did in the early round.**

The benefit of applying early lies in the additional time it affords students to course-correct, make changes, and address issues before the RD deadlines approach—is there something you would have added, expanded, or tweaked in your essays if you had more time? Have you taken on new responsibilities, earned achievements, or made progress on a project since November 1st? Can you make your Activities List more specific or compelling? Are there additional supplemental essays that you can begin drafting before the December deadlines creep up? Treat the early applications as a learning opportunity and consider how you might add or perfect your other applications with the benefit of time.

3. Prepare for All Possible Outcomes

There are three possible outcomes students can expect in the Early Action and Early Decision rounds: acceptance, rejection, and deferral. At top schools, the vast majority of students are rejected or deferred. In the first case, students should allow themselves to feel disappointment while also staying positive about the other schools on their list and being proactive as they re-strategize for the RD round. Preparing emotionally and strategically for a rejection can make the sting far less powerful—students should go into early decision season with a clear and tactical Plan B that truly excites them so that they are not floundering if they receive a rejection. In the case of deferral, students' applications progress to the regular decision pool, meaning that they have another shot at earning admission to their EA/ED school. In addition to recalibrating their expectations and assessing their other options, deferred students can write a [Letter of Continued Interest](#) to let their dream school know they still want to attend if admitted. Researching and conceptualizing this letter in advance of admissions results will help students compose thoughtful and compelling letters and send them in a timely manner. Finally, students who receive an acceptance should take the time to celebrate their accomplishment and be glad that all of their hard work and preparation paid off.

Waiting for early admissions results can feel agonizing, but the time does not have to be unproductive. Using the time between early and regular application rounds to strengthen RD applications, polish one's admissions profile, and prepare mentally and strategically for decision season will ensure that students are in the best possible position come December decision dates.

(This article makes the odds of early acceptance sound low because it is focusing on the 100 most competitive schools, and that's definitely true for those. To balance the article, most of our students were accepted at most or all of their Early Action schools last year, which weren't among those 100 schools. The few rejections, however, were all among those schools. C)