

College Application Checklist

Steps	Description
Step 1: Select Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check if the colleges you want to apply to accept the Common Application. • If you are applying to HBCs, consider using The Common Black College Application. • If your college does not accept the Common Application, use their specific online application.
Step 2: Request Recommendation Letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask at least two of your junior or senior teachers for a letter of recommendation. • Give them at least two weeks' notice before the deadline. • Select teachers who know you well and have seen you excel and/or improve. • Let them know which schools (and scholarships) you are applying to and provide them with the deadline. • If you have not yet built a relationship with your guidance counselor or college counselor, schedule an appointment to introduce yourself and share your college plans. Your counselor completes this form (or one similar to it), and you want to be sure they are well-prepared to evaluate you.
Step 3: Request Supplemental Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcripts: Be sure to notify your counselor's office or the registrar of your application deadlines so your transcripts arrive before the deadline. • SAT/ACT Scores: Be sure you request that your SAT or ACT scores are sent to your colleges.
Step 4: Write Personal Statement and/or College Essays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your specific college application requirements to see if you are required to submit a personal statement, a college essay(s), or both. • The Common Application requires you to write one essay, although individual colleges you are applying to may request a supplemental essay(s) and/or short answer questions. • Be sure to begin early and allow plenty of time for your English teacher, parents, guidance college, and/or mentors to read your essay and provide feedback. • If you are struggling to begin, try some brainstorming exercises that can help get you started.
Step 5: Complete Your Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure you are aware of the deadline (early action, early decision, regular) you are applying to and begin on your application as early as possible. Regular deadlines are usually between January 1 and February 15, but make sure you double-check the deadline of each application. • Be sure to read the directions thoroughly and carefully. • Model integrity and provide truthful responses. While you certainly should highlight your accomplishments, remember that colleges can easily verify your responses, so be honest. • Be sure to use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization throughout the application. • When listing your extracurricular activities, consider everything you have participated in at school, in your community, and during your summers since 9th grade. Include the position if you had a leadership role in any of these activities. • When listing your awards and honors, don't be modest. Record any school or community recognition you received since 9th grade. • If your college has short-answer questions, answer them completely. Because you will have a strict word count, do not repeat the question in your response and, if necessary, delete any unnecessary information.

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Step 6: Submit Your Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triple-check your application to ensure every question is answered. Be on the lookout for blank fields or incomplete responses. • Before you submit your application, be sure to read the entire application carefully out loud as you look and listen for any mistakes. • Before you submit your application, be sure it has been proofread by your English teacher, guidance counselor, parents, or mentors. • Use the 17 POINT CHECKLIST BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION to triple-check that your application is complete and ready to send. • After you hit send, take a few minutes to celebrate all your hard work that resulted in completing an application.
Step 6: Confirm Your Application Materials Arrived	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the status of your application to ensure that it and all supporting materials have arrived. • If you need to contact the college, call or email the admissions office to ensure every part of your application has arrived. • If necessary, follow up about your recommendation letters, ACT or SAT scores, and/or high school transcripts. • After submitting your application, consider scheduling an interview so the admissions team can get to know you better. Keep in mind that some colleges do require an interview.