



College Preparation

11th Grade



You're now a high school junior! It's time to step up your college planning game and make sure you're on track for applying to colleges.

**Adapted from the College Board's College Planning Resources.*

College planning tasks you can do before winter break (September–December):

- Make a list of what you're interested in studying and explore [career ideas](#)
- Learn about [colleges](#) and save schools you're interested in to a College Board account
- [Make an appointment with your counselor](#) to ask about upcoming college fairs and which college representatives are visiting your high school
 - Browse the college brochures and catalogs in your counselor's office—you might find a college you haven't thought of
 - Ask your counselor about taking the PSAT/NMSQT scheduled in October.
 - You may be eligible for scholarship opportunities after taking the PSAT/NMSQT
 - If you plan to ask for testing accommodations because of a disability, make sure you learn about the request process and start early



- If you're looking at visual and performing arts majors, some colleges require a portfolio or audition, so look into the [Major and Career Search](#) tool and find out how you need to prepare.
- Estimate how much college might cost and how much financial aid you may need with our free [Tools & Calculators](#)
- Register to take the [ACT](#).
- Complete college planning steps on Big Future for a chance to win [Big Future Scholarships](#) for \$500 or \$40,000

College planning tasks you can do before the school year ends (January–May):

- If you're considering military academies or [ROTC scholarships](#), you should begin the application process the summer before your senior year
- Continue to build your college list and explore schools by type, housing options, majors, sports, student organizations, cost, and more
- Take the ACT or consider retaking the ACT.
- Learn [3 different ways](#) of getting financial aid and get a copy of your family's tax returns.
- If you're considering playing sports in college as a student-athlete, make sure the NCAA® gets your SAT score and ask your counselor to upload your official transcript to the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#)
- Check out our [College Planning Checklist for Student-Athletes](#) for more information



College planning tasks you can do in the summer and before beginning your senior year (June–August):

- Find a full-time job, part-time job, or internship to gain work experience
- If you can, [visit college campuses](#), attend an information session or a campus tour, and make sure you talk to current students or professors while you're there
- [Create a résumé](#) so you have a record of your academic accomplishments, extracurricular activities, and work experience
 - Brag about your achievements!

Visit bigfuture.org for more free, comprehensive college planning resources.
