

College Planning Checklist

for HS Seniors/Juniors Starting Their Off-to-College Plans

Task to be Completed		Month	Notes
COLLEGE PREP (during Junior year)			online guide: www.OfftoCollege.com/prep.html
<input type="checkbox"/>	Why Go to College	Jr Year Fall Semester	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a Personal Assessment	Jr Year Fall Semester	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decide What Kind of Major	Jr Year Fall Semester	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meet with Your Counselor	Jr Year Fall Semester	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review for Admission Tests	Jr Winter Semester	
COLLEGE SEARCH (during Junior year)			online guide: www.OfftoCollege.com/search.html
<input type="checkbox"/>	Search for Colleges	Jr Spring Semester	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit College Campus	Jr Spring Semester	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Collect college information	Junior - Senior Year	
COLLEGE ADMISSION (during Senior year)			online guide: www.OfftoCollege.com/admit.html
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare College Applications	September-October	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write Your Essays	September-October	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get Letters of Recommendations	September-October	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit College Applications	November-January	
COLLEGE FINANCING (during Senior year)			online guide: www.OfftoCollege.com/aid.html
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understand College Costs	November	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review Financial Aid Options	November-January	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Follow the Money Path	November-January	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit FAFSA and PROFILE	January	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply for Financial Aid	May-September	
COLLEGE MOVE (during Senior year)			online guide: www.OfftoCollege.com/move.html
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop Good College Skills	On-Going	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Find that Summer Job	March-May	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get Moving-to-College Checklist	March-September	

College Search

Finding the Right College and Program

UNDERSTAND TYPES OF SCHOOLS

online search: www.OfftoCollege.com/college-search.html

Colleges: generally smaller in size. They offer 4-year degree programs (BA and BS) and many 2-year Associate degrees.

Universities: larger institutions with specialized degrees in business, engineering, pre-med, etc. They offer 2-year, 4-year, and many graduate and professional degrees.

Community / Junior Colleges: a small college offering 2-year Associate degrees. Many students attend local community colleges with the intent to transfer to a larger institution to further their education.

Online Schools: programs and degrees that can be taken online. The advantage of these programs is that you can take classes from inside your home. These programs are great for part-time students and continuing education.

Vocational / Career Schools: specialized schools of training for specialized trade jobs such as mechanics, computer technicians, medical assistants, etc. Programs may vary requiring only a few weeks to complete while others may require a year or more. Upon completion, graduates will receive a license, certificate or an Associate Degree.

Link to Begin Your College Search: <http://www.OfftoCollege.com/college-search.html>

HOW TO BEGIN YOUR SEARCH

online search: www.OfftoCollege.com/college-search.html

Assemble a list of colleges or trade schools you'd like to attend. Meet with your school's guidance counselor to discuss your plans and to arrange important campus visits.

There are three categories of schools you should list:

2-3 schools that you could definitely get in

4-5 schools that you could probably get in

7-8 schools that you would like to get in

You should budget on how much you can afford for application submission. If the application submission costs for 16 or more schools may be too much, narrow your search to 3-3-3.

College Application Checklist

Record College Admission Tasks

list three schools that you can definitely get in

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

list three-six schools that you would like to get in

- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____

list three schools that you would probably get in

- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____

- 10) _____
- 11) _____
- 12) _____

Check each task completed by school

online guide: www.OfftoCollege.com/tools.html	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Application Materials Received												
Campus Review / Visit Completed												
Cost Comparison Against Other Colleges												
Entrance Requirements Analyzed												
Write Required Essays												
Request Counselor & Teacher Recommendations												
Send Transcripts and First Semester Grades												
Submit Financial Aid Forms												
Submit Scholarship Forms												
Arrange Housing:												
Other:												
Other:												
Other:												

College Comparison Worksheet (link to www.OfftoCollege.com for college search)

1. School and Location	2.	3.	4.
Public or Private (2- or 4-year)			
Size (student enrollment)			
City / State (distance from home)			
Setting: Urban or Rural - Co-Ed			
Academics			
Student-to-faculty ratio %			
% Classes under 20 students			
% Classes with 50+ students			
% Graduation			
Cost			
Private Tuition and Fees			
Public In-State Tuition and Fees			
Public Out-of-State Tuition and Fees			
Room / Board			
Financial Aid			
Type Financial Aid Package			
\$ Average Financial Aid Package			
\$ Scholarship Package			
\$ Work Study Package			
\$ Other Financial Aid Package			
Scholastic Strength			
Average High School GPA			
Average Entrance Test Scores			
National Ranking			

Student Financial Aid

WHAT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW

Financial Guide

SayStudent.com is part of our financial network supporting OfftoCollege and other life-event guides.

Apply Now

SayStudent.com/apply/

Financial Aid Charts

SayStudent.com/charts/

Calculators

SayStudent.com/calc/

Money Path

SayStudent.com/money/

Tools Set

SayStudent.com/sf/

- The cost of college attendance is increasing faster than most cost indices. Student and parents are now looking at other avenues to finance college other than the standard government student loan.

Your first step is to determine what amount of financing you will need.

Link to use our cost calculator: www.SayStudent.com/calc/

- Understand the financial aid process. This requires you to file federal forms that colleges use to estimate how much financial aid the student can receive:

Link and follow the money path: www.SayStudent.com/money/

- Types of Student Financial Aid that are available:

1: Scholarships

you want all of the FREE money you can get. True, most scholarships awards are for athletic and academic merits. But there are other scholarships for talents and affiliations. Use a national database to begin your search.

Link and click along the side nav: www.SayStudent.com/

2: Federal Student Loans

the most popular form of financial aid. Federal student loans are generally processed through your college. You don't have to repay these loans until after your leave or graduate from school.

View product features and terms: www.SayStudent.com/stafford.html

3: Federal PLUS Loans

federal loans for parents of undergraduate students. Parents can borrow up to the full cost of college attendance minus any financial aid awarded to the student.

View product features and terms: www.SayStudent.com/plus.html

4: Private Student Loans

sometimes loans, scholarships, grants, and other college aid do not cover the full cost of college, including personal expenses such as a computer. Many students are using private student loans to cover the gap.

View product features and terms: www.SayStudent.com/private.html

4: Home Equity Loans

using the security of your home, you can finance college without restrictions.

View our home equity site: www.YourEquity.com

Financial Aid Worksheet

Type Financial Aid	Filing Requirements	Amount Awarded
Government Grants	Determine your qualifications for government grants	
Government Loans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidized • Unsubsidized link to: www.SayStudent.com	Determine your expected family contribution (EFC) Complete and Submit the FAFSA Form Wait for your Financial Aid Eligibility Letter Complete and Submit the Educational Loan Application Pick up your Financial Aid Check	
Private Student Loans link to: www.SayStudent.com	Complete and Submit Private Student Loan Application	
Parent's Contribution link to: www.SayStudent.com	Parents Complete and Submit PLUS Loan Application Parents Complete Home Equity Line Application	
Work Study Programs	Review Available On-Campus Work Study Programs Complete and Submit Work Study Application Forms	
Off-Campus Work	Review Classified Ads for Off-Campus Jobs Complete and Submit Job Application Forms	
Gifts / Savings		