



APPLY YOURSELF FLORIDA

2019-2020 Student Guide



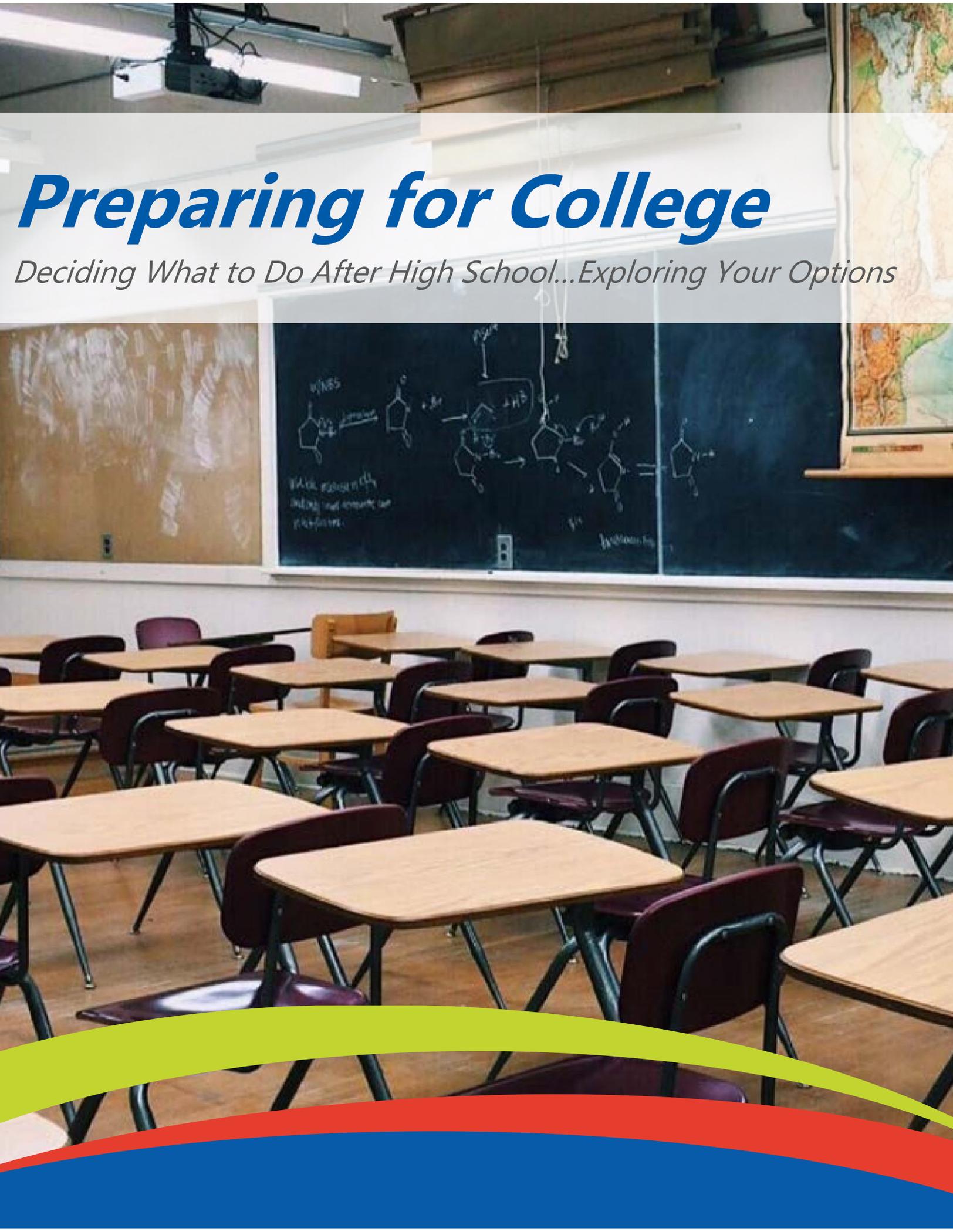
Table of Contents

You're starting an exciting new journey!

Soon, you'll be graduating high school and moving on to the next stage of your life.

If you plan to continue your education, the first step of this journey is applying to college. This guide will help you choose colleges that are right for you, take steps to apply to college, and identify the next steps after you've applied.

Category		Page number
Preparing for College	Choose Your Path!	3
	College Exploration Resources	4
Applying to College	Finding the Right Fit	6
	The Perfect Match	7
	Application Checklist	8
	Writing the Essay	9
	Application Fee Waivers	10
	Fee Waivers by School	11
	Application Deadlines	13
	You've Applied! Next Steps	14
Paying for College	What Will College Cost? It Depends!	16
	Residency	17
	Resources for Undocumented Students	18
	Resources for Foster Care Youth	18
	Applying for Financial Aid	19
	I've Filed the FAFSA. Now What?	22
Going to College	Summer Transition Checklist	24
Worksheets	What's My Ideal College?	26
	College Visit Profile	27
	My Top 4 Colleges	28
	College Application Worksheet	29
	Requesting a Recommendation Letter	32
	Writing Your Personal Statement	35
	Scholarship Organizer	37



Preparing for College

Deciding What to Do After High School...Exploring Your Options

Choose Your Path!

There are 3 main paths you can take after high school, depending on your future goals—education, service, or work.

EDUCATION

Career and technical education (CTE) programs help you learn skills to prepare for a specific career, such as paramedic, aircraft mechanics, digital design, veterinary assisting, culinary arts, etc. Local state colleges or technical colleges offer certificates for these types of jobs.

You can earn a **2-year associate's degree**, which can help build a body of knowledge that can prepare you for a career or further education. Associate's degrees in areas like healthcare or information technology/computer science can prepare you for work in specific fields.

In Florida, **state colleges have formal 2+2 agreements** with local universities. These relationships give you the option to complete the first two years of your bachelor's degree at a state college and the second two years at a university. This can help families save money on a four-year degree.

You can complete a **4-year bachelor's degree** to prepare for work in fields like business, education, or engineering. You can also continue on to **graduate school** for careers in medicine, law or other fields. As part of earning a bachelor's degree, you will build a broader body of knowledge that can offer more flexibility to change careers over time.

SERVICE

Many students enlist in the **military**, where you can receive on-going training in specific jobs that can translate to civilian work. You will also have the option to return to school later using GI Bill benefits.

You may choose to do a **service program** that allows you to explore your interests. Organizations like AmeriCorps allow you to earn money for college through service. AmeriCorps members participate in service programs such as disaster cleanup, home building, and others.

WORK

After high school, you have the option to start **working**. To increase your earning potential, consider exploring **apprenticeship programs**, which provide on-the-job training and education while earning a wage. You can also look into free training opportunities online or through a local library.

College Exploration Resources

Use the following free resources to do more research and figure out what you might want to do after high school (and how you can pay for it!).

MyCareerShines

<https://mycareershines.kuder.com>

This site is free to all Florida high school students, and allows you to take assessments that help you figure out what you might like to do. MyCareerShines also has tools to help you find schools that offer the programs you need.

FloridaShines

<https://www.floridashines.org/find-a-career>

FloridaShines is similar to MyCareerShines, but it offers information that is specific to Florida colleges and universities.

ACTProfile

<https://www.actprofile.org/login>

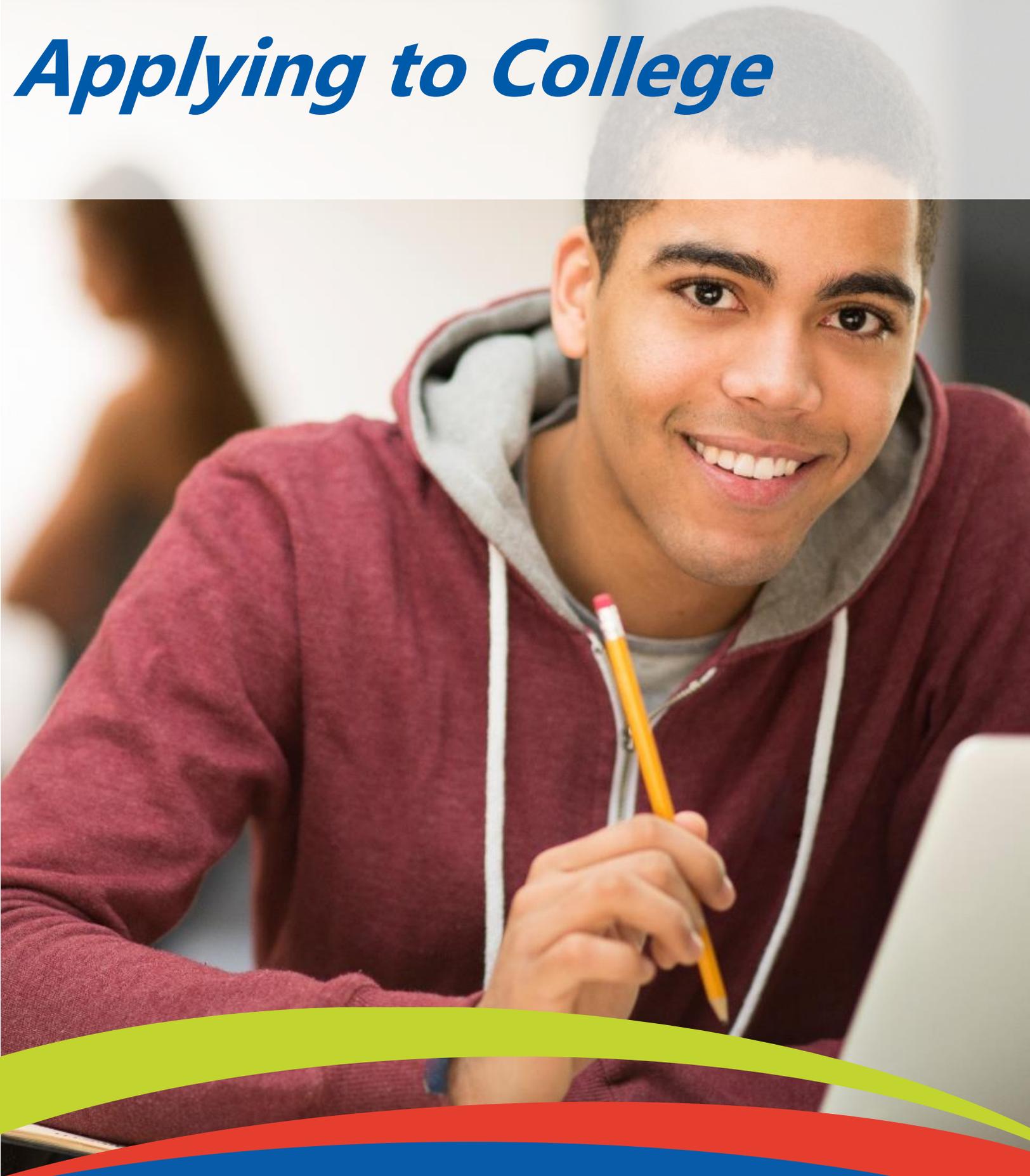
ACTProfile combines career planning with college planning. With this tool, you can take a series of assessments to find careers that might be a good fit for you, and then find education options based on these results.

GetSchooled

<https://getschooled.com>

GetSchooled offers a wide variety of test prep, financial aid, and college application resources.

Applying to College



Finding the Right Fit

When considering colleges, it is important to research your options. This will help you choose a school with features that fit your needs, interests, and talents.

Consider these factors when comparing schools:

Size

Colleges range in size. Some might be the size of your high school, while others are the size of a small town!

At a small school, you will likely take classes with 30 or fewer students. Classes at a big school could have as many as 500 students. Many classes at larger colleges are also taught by graduate students.

Big schools often have more services, programs, and activities available. By contrast, small schools may offer more specialized programs and personalized attention.

Location

Do you want to save money by living at home? Do you want to come home on weekends? Or do you want to be as far away as possible?

Do you want to go to school in an urban area where you can use public transit? Or would you prefer a more quiet, rural setting?

These are all questions to consider when thinking about a school's location.

Culture

Big schools often offer opportunities for joining fraternities or sororities. These schools also may have nationally recognized sports teams and a culture of school pride.

A smaller school, however, may have a more tight-knit environment. You can check the school's list of student clubs and organizations to find your niche.

Programs

Large schools usually offer a wide variety of academic programs. This offers you flexibility if you're not yet sure what you want to study, or if you want to change your major.

If you're interested in something specific, a small school might offer a more specialized program. You also may have the opportunity to work closely with faculty earlier in your education.

The Perfect Match

What kinds of schools should I apply to?

Based on your academic record, you should apply to at least **one safety school**, **one reach school**, and **two match schools**. See page 11 to learn how to use fee waivers to cover the cost of your application.

Safety Schools

Schools you're confident you'll be accepted to

Safety schools may include schools with higher acceptance rates, schools with less selective admissions requirements, or schools where your academic record is stronger than the average admitted student.

Keep in mind, Florida state colleges are "open admission," meaning that they accept all students who apply.

Match Schools

Schools you will likely be accepted to

Match schools should be more selective than the safety schools you apply to. At a Match school, your academic record should be similar to that of the average admitted student's record.

Reach Schools

Schools you could be accepted to

Reach schools are institutions that tend to have lower acceptance rates than other schools. At these schools, your academic record may be on the lower end compared to the average admitted student.

What is my academic record?

There are several factors that impact your academic record, including your average high school **grade point average** (GPA), the **rigor** of the classes you've taken (Honors, AP, IB, dual enrollment, etc.), and your **standardized test scores** (ACT, SAT, etc.).

Application Checklist

There are many steps to applying for college. Use this checklist to make sure you are meeting all of the requirements along the way.

- ❖ Decide on at least four schools you want to apply to: 2 match schools, 1 safety school, and 1 reach school (see page 11 to learn how to use fee waivers to cover the cost of college applications).
- ❖ Make a note of all application deadlines, including priority scholarship deadlines.
- ❖ Send requests for your high school transcripts, midterm grade report, and standardized test scores (ACT/SAT/PERT) to be sent to each school (talk to your school counselor for help).
- ❖ Request recommendation letters from teachers or counselors.
- ❖ Write your personal essay and have someone proofread it.
- ❖ Submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- ❖ Fill out online application
- ❖ Print out confirmation page
- ❖ Pay application fee or send fee waiver. (Remember that your application is not considered complete until your application fee is paid or your fee waiver is received.)
- ❖ If you do not hear from the college in 2-3 weeks, contact the admissions office to ensure your materials were received.

Application Worksheet

There is a lot of information you will need to complete your college application.

To make sure you have everything you need for applying, use the [Application Worksheet](#) in the back of this guide.

You may need help from your school counselor or parents to answer all the questions on this sheet.

Letters of Recommendation

A good letter of recommendation can help highlight strengths that are not reflected on the rest of your application. To get a good letter, follow these tips:

- ❖ Request letters of recommendation from teachers or counselors you have a good relationship with.
- ❖ Request the letter at the beginning of the school year to give your recommender plenty of time to write it.
- ❖ Write thank you notes for each recommender!

Writing the Essay

Essays are your opportunity to tell the story your GPA and extracurricular activities don't tell. Admissions officers want to get to know you as a person, so make sure to let your personality shine!

Tip	Do's	Don'ts
Research essay requirements	Check early to see what each college on your short list requires. Take note of essay topics, word limits, and formatting requirements.	Do not wait until the last minute to find out if you need to write an essay.
Choose a topic that will highlight your strengths	Share your personal story and thoughts. Tell a specific story that highlights your best qualities.	Do not focus on the great aspects of the college, the amount of dedication it takes to be a doctor, or the number of extracurricular activities you have done.
Keep your focus narrow and personal	Focus on one aspect of yourself so the readers can learn more about who you are. Remember that readers must be able to understand your main idea and follow it from beginning to end. Ask a parent or teacher to read just your introduction and tell you what they think your essay is about.	Do not try to cover too many topics. This will make the essay sound like a laundry list that does not provide any details about you.
Show, don't tell	Include specific details, examples, stories, and reasons to develop your ideas. For the example to the right, describe a situation when various types of people surrounded you. What did you do? What did you take away from the experience?	Do not state something about yourself rather than sharing a story. For instance, saying, "I like to surround myself with people with a variety of backgrounds and interests," instead of describing a story that shows this to be true.
Use your own voice	Write about an experience that you had and how it made you take action or how it changed your thinking.	Do not rely on phrases or ideas that people have used many times before. These could include statements like, "There is so much suffering in the world that I feel I have to help people."
Ask a parent or teacher to proofread	Ask a teacher or parent to proofread your essay to catch mistakes. You should also ask the person who proofreads your essay if the writing sounds like you.	Do not turn your essay in without proofreading it or relying only on your computer's spell check to catch mistakes.

Remember to bring your essay with you to your school's Apply Yourself Florida College Application Campaign event! You can bring it on a USB drive, or email the essay to yourself.

Application Fee Waivers

Most colleges have an application fee of \$30-\$50. If you qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, you may be eligible for an application fee waiver to complete your college application. If you are not sure whether you qualify, talk to your school counselor.

ACT College Application Fee Waivers

Eligibility: Students who used a fee waiver to take the ACT exam.

Access: School counselors should print the necessary number of fee waivers and sign off on student eligibility. Students must also sign the form.

[Download the fee waiver here](#)

SAT College Application Fee Waivers

Eligibility: Students who used a fee waiver to take the SAT exam or SAT subject test.

Access: Students can access the fee waivers directly through their online College Board Account. Students may use up to four fee waivers. Counselor approval is not required.

[Find more information here](#)

National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC) College Application Fee Waivers

Eligibility: Students are eligible for up to four fee waivers if they meet at least one of these criteria:

- The student used a fee waiver to take the SAT or ACT
- The student is enrolled in a free or reduced-price lunch program
- The student is enrolled in a program for low-income students (TRIO, Upward Bound)
- The student's family qualifies for public assistance
- The student is a ward of the state
- Other special circumstances outlined by the school counselor

Access: School counselors must print the form and sign off on student eligibility.

[Download the form here](#)

Don't Forget!

- ❖ The school will not consider your application complete until they receive your fee waiver.
- ❖ If you are not using a fee waiver, you will need a credit card to pay the application fee.

Fee Waivers by School

School Name	Waivers Accepted	How to Use the Waiver
Florida A&M University (FAMU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Apply online using the application for FL Fee Waiver applicants. Attach the fee waiver prior to submission.
Florida Atlantic University (FAU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Students should submit the application without payment, then submit their fee waiver with their FAU "Z" number included (from the application) either by email to admissions@fau.edu , or fax to 561-297-2758.
Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Complete online application and answer question about application fee waivers. After answering questions on application, wait for fee waiver code to be sent from admissions office. Then, email the fee waiver undergrad@fgcu.edu , or mail to: Florida Gulf Coast University Office of Undergraduate Admissions 10501 FGCU Blvd. S. Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565
Florida International University (FIU)	ACT, SAT	Upon reaching payment page, select "pay by check" option. Then, email the waiver to admiss@fiu.edu , or mail the waiver to: Florida International University Office of Undergraduate Admissions PO Box 659003 Miami, FL 33265
Florida Polytechnic University	ACT, SAT	On the payment page, select the "pay by fee" waiver option. Mail the fee waiver to the admissions officer, or email admissions@floridapoly.edu .
Florida State University (FSU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Submit part 1 of application. In part 2 of application, upload a copy of your signed fee waiver. The waiver may also be faxed to 850-644-0197, emailed to admissions@fsu.edu , or mailed to: FSU Admissions PO Box 3062400 Tallahassee, FL 32306
New College of Florida	ACT, SAT, NACAC, Common App	Submit fee waiver through the Common App website.

Fee Waivers by School Contd.

School Name	Waivers Accepted	How to Use the Waiver
University of Central Florida (UCF)	ACT, SAT, NACAC, Common App	Submit application without payment. Mail a written request and fee waiver to the address listed on application screen or submit via email to uaoperation@ucf.edu . Please include your name and date of birth. If a Social Security Number (SSN) appears on the waiver request, please black out all but the last four digits for security purposes. If using the Common App, submit the fee waiver through the Common App website.
University of Florida (UF)	ACT, SAT	On the payment screen, select the "mail payment" option. Mail the fee waiver to the address on the application screen.
University of North Florida (UNF)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Submit your application without payment. The waiver can be faxed to 904-620-2414, emailed to admissions@unf.edu , or mailed to: 1 UNF Drive Jacksonville, FL 32224.
University of South Florida (USF)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Submit application without payment. Mail fee waiver to address listed on application screen, email to admissions@usf.edu , or fax to 813-974-9689.
University of West Florida (UWF)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	Select mail in payment option. Then send waivers to UWF via email, or regular mail, or drop it off in person. Email: admissions@uwf.edu Mail to: UWF Undergraduate Admissions 11000 University Pkwy. Bldg. 18 Pensacola, FL 32514

Application Deadlines

School Name	General Deadline	Priority Deadline
Florida A&M University (FAMU)	June 15	November 1 (priority scholarship consideration)
Florida Atlantic University (FAU)	April 15	February 15 Students should submit the application without payment and mail the fee waiver to the address listed on the application screen.
Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)	March 1	November 1 Complete online application and answer question about application fee waivers. After answering questions on application, wait for fee waiver code to be sent from admissions office. Then, mail the fee waiver to the address below, or email to undergrad@fgcu.edu . Florida Gulf Coast University Office of Undergraduate Admissions 10501 FCU Blvd. S. Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565
Florida International University (FIU)	April 15	November 15 (merit scholarship deadline)
Florida Polytechnic University	Rolling Admissions after November deadline	November 1 (priority admissions consideration)
Florida State University (FSU)	March 1	November 1 (priority admissions consideration)
New College of Florida	July 1	Early decision (November 1) March 1 (priority admissions consideration)
University of Central Florida	May 1	
University of Florida	November 1	
University of North Florida	Rolling admissions	October 31 (priority admission consideration)
University of South Florida	June 1	November 1 (preferred admission consideration) January 1 (preferred financial aid deadline) January 15 (scholarship consideration deadline)
University of West Florida	June 1	December 1 (priority scholarship deadline) December 15 (priority financial aid deadline)

You've Applied! Next Steps

Applying to college is an important step in continuing your education, but it is not the last step! Here's what you'll need to do next:

Finalize your application

- Make sure your application fee has been paid
- Make sure your transcripts have been sent

Apply for financial aid

- Create your FSA ID, the login ID that you will need to use the Student Aid website
 - You and your parent will each need to create your own FSA ID
 - Go to fsaid.ed.gov to get started
- Complete the FAFSA
 - The FAFSA opens on October 1
 - The earlier you complete it, the more likely you are to qualify for financial aid
 - Go to studentaid.ed.gov to get started
- Complete the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA)
 - The FFAA opens October 1
 - It is necessary to complete this application to receive state-funded grants and scholarships, including Bright Futures
 - Complete the FFAA at www.floridastudentfinancialaids.org/ua/sawstua_uaform.asp
- Apply for grants and scholarships
 - Florida offers both need- and merit-based scholarships, including Bright Futures, First Generation Matching Grant, and Florida Student Assistance Grant
 - Some of these scholarships require that you complete the FFAA
 - Research local scholarships through your local education foundation, community foundation, or by talking to your school counselor.

Get ready to go!

- Accept an admissions offer by May 1
- Attend new student orientation
- Sign up for housing and a meal plan (if you plan to live on campus)
- Submit housing deposit by the deadline (check your college's website for more information)
- Get necessary supplies, like books, dorm room essentials, etc.
- Register for classes if you did not already do so at student orientation
- Have a great first semester!

Paying for College

How do I Pay for College?



What Will College Cost? It Depends!

Where You Go

- **Private schools** tend to cost more than **state schools**
- **State universities** tend to cost more than **state colleges** and **community colleges**
- If you qualify as a **Florida resident for tuition purposes**, you will be eligible to pay a lower in-state tuition rate at Florida schools

What You Get

- Many schools offer generous **school-based aid and scholarships** based on need and merit
- Be sure to check the schools' **priority application deadlines** so you can be considered for the most aid possible

Consider all the costs

- Yearly tuition/cost per credit hour
- Books, supplies, and lab fees
- Housing, meals, and transportation
- Summer courses (keep in mind that Florida state universities require on summer semester)

Florida's 2+2 Program

All Florida state colleges are open enrollment, meaning they guarantee admission to almost all students.

Students who complete an associate's degree at a state college are guaranteed acceptance to a state university to complete their bachelor's degree.

In other words, you can start the first two years of your bachelor's degree at a state college, and then complete the second two years at a state university. This could help you save money!

Where will the money come from?

Options for Paying

- Federal and state grant (these do not need to be repaid)
- Private, institutional, and state scholarships (Bright Futures)
- Federal and state loans (keep in mind that these must be repaid when you graduate)

File the FAFSA!

- Filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the best way to qualify for state and federal grants and loans
- You can file your FAFSA as early as October 1 by going to studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa

Residency

If you are applying to a Florida school, you are likely eligible for lower in-state tuition rates. Here's what you need to know about filling out the residency requirements:

Who is a “Florida Resident for Tuition Purposes”?

- If your parent has lived in Florida for at least 12 consecutive months, then you are likely a Florida resident for tuition purposes.
- To claim residency, you must complete a residency form or affidavit. College staff will review this form and related documentation to determine your eligibility.

Who is the “claimant,” or the person claiming residency?

- If you are a dependent, your parent is the claimant.
- Most recent high school graduates are dependents, but there are some exceptions.

If you think you might be an independent, talk to your school counselor for help.

What documents can verify Florida residency?

- A copy of a driver's license or Florida state identification card
- Voter's registration
- Florida vehicle registration

Talk to your admissions office for guidance regarding other acceptable documents.

Special residency cases

- Members of the armed services stationed in Florida, as well as their spouses and dependent children, may qualify as residents for tuition purposes.
- For a full list of students in special circumstances who may qualify as Florida residents for tuition purposes, please see the [Florida Department of Education's web page](#).

Resources for Undocumented Students

Students who are not citizens or whose parents are not citizens may be eligible for lower in-state tuition rates instead of the more expensive non-resident tuition rates.

To qualify for in-state tuition:

- ❖ You must have attended high school in Florida for 3 consecutive years immediately prior to graduation.
- ❖ You must apply to a Florida college or university within 24 months of high school graduation.
- ❖ You must submit an official Florida transcript to verify attendance and graduation.

After you have applied and are admitted to a school, you will need to submit an HB 851 Out-of-State Fee Waiver (ask an admissions officer where you can access this form).

Resources for Foster Care Youth

If you have been in foster care any time after age 13, there resources and financial aid available to help you go to college including vocational training, and 2- and 4-year options for most Florida schools.

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) hosts a Postsecondary Education Services and Support (PESS) program that provides a \$1,256 stipend for living expenses to students attending a Florida Bright Futures-eligible institution including vocational training. You are eligible for this program until your 23rd birthday.

Many colleges and universities provide campus coaches for on-campus support for current and former foster youth. You can find a list of foster care student advisors at https://www.floridacollegesystem.com/students/foster_care_students.aspx

In some cases, you may also qualify for waived tuition and fees. Check with your institution on what financial resources are available to you as a foster youth.

Applying for financial aid

To qualify for financial aid, you must apply. The most important application is the FAFSA. All federal financial aid programs and many programs offered by colleges require you to complete and submit the FAFSA. If you do not have a Social Security Number or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status, you should complete the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA). Complete the FAFSA and FFAA as close to October 1st as possible because financial aid dollars are limited and often are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Types of Aid

Very few students get all of their financial aid for college from one source. When you are searching for financial aid, consider a wide variety of options and apply to as many programs as possible.

- **Grants:** Grants do not have to be repaid if you successfully complete the courses in which you were enrolled. They are given to the students who have a high financial need. Most grants come from the federal and state governments.
- **Scholarships:** Scholarships do not have to be repaid if you successfully complete your coursework. They are awarded for good grades, cultural or religious background, sports and special talents. Most scholarships come from organizations and colleges.
- **Work-study:** Work-study helps you to earn money to pay for your education by working a part-time job offered through the college.
- **Loans:** Loans for students have lower interest rates than most other types of loans. Unlike grants or scholarships, loans must be repaid with interest when you finish college, even if you do not graduate. Student loans are offered through banks, colleges, and other institutions.

You can complete, submit, and track your FAFSA application at studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa. However, if you do not have access to the Internet, you can request a paper copy by calling 1-800-4-FED-AID (433-3243). There is also an online chat function to answer any questions students or parents might have.

You should file the FAFSA every year you attend school.

What Do You Need to File the FAFSA?

- ❖ Student and parent(s)' driver's license number(s)
- ❖ Student and parent(s)' social security number(s)
- ❖ (Alien registration number if you are not a U.S. citizen)
- ❖ Parent(s)' date(s) of birth
- ❖ Parent(s) Federal Income Tax Return from 2 years ago (if filed)
- ❖ Student's Federal Income Tax Return from 2 years ago (if filed)
- ❖ Parent/student income information (if tax return was not filed)
- ❖ Your current bank statements
- ❖ Student & parent FSA ID (username & password). If you've lost your information, visit fsaid.ed.gov

Your Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID)

Creating an FSA ID is the first step to completing your FAFSA. Your FSA ID serves as your legal signature when completing the FAFSA. Create an FSA ID using your own personal information and for your own use.

To create your FSA ID, go to fsaid.ed.gov. This information should be kept confidential and stored in a safe place; you will need this every year when you file your FAFSA.

FSA ID Reference Sheet: fsaid.ed.gov

Username: _____

Password: _____

Email address: _____

Cellphone number: _____

Answers to challenge questions:

Answer #1: _____

Answer #2: _____

Answer #3: _____

Answer #4: _____

FAFSA Save Key: _____

For your records only—keep in a safe place!

I've filed the FAFSA. Now What?

Once you've submitted your FAFSA, you'll receive a confirmation page to your email. It will list the school(s) you've requested your FAFSA be sent to for financial aid. It also lists what happens next in the FAFSA process:

- In 3-5 business days, you will receive an email notifying you that your FAFSA was processed.
- Your FAFSA information will be made available to your school(s), and they will use it to determine the aid you may be eligible to receive.
- Your school(s) will contact you if they need more information or when they are ready to discuss your financial aid award.

Student Aid Report (SAR)

When your FAFSA has been processed, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR). **This is a summary of all the information you submitted on the FAFSA.** Check it for any mistakes, especially if you entered incorrect information or estimated your tax information. Your SAR will include estimated Pell grant eligibility and your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). You can access your SAR at studentaid.ed.gov using your FSA ID.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

Your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is part of your SAR. **The EFC is the estimated amount your family is expected to contribute toward your college education based on the information submitted in your FAFSA.** It is also used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid. Variables that determine your EFC include income and net worth for you and your parents, family size, age of older parent, state and federal taxes, and number of family members attending college.

Financial Need

Each college or university that you list on your FAFSA and that accepts you will determine your financial need: **the cost of attendance (COA) at that school minus your EFC.** While cost of attendance varies by school, your EFC will remain the same in a given year (unless an unusual family situation arises) regardless of which college or university you attend. The amount of aid you receive cannot exceed the total cost of attendance.

Verification

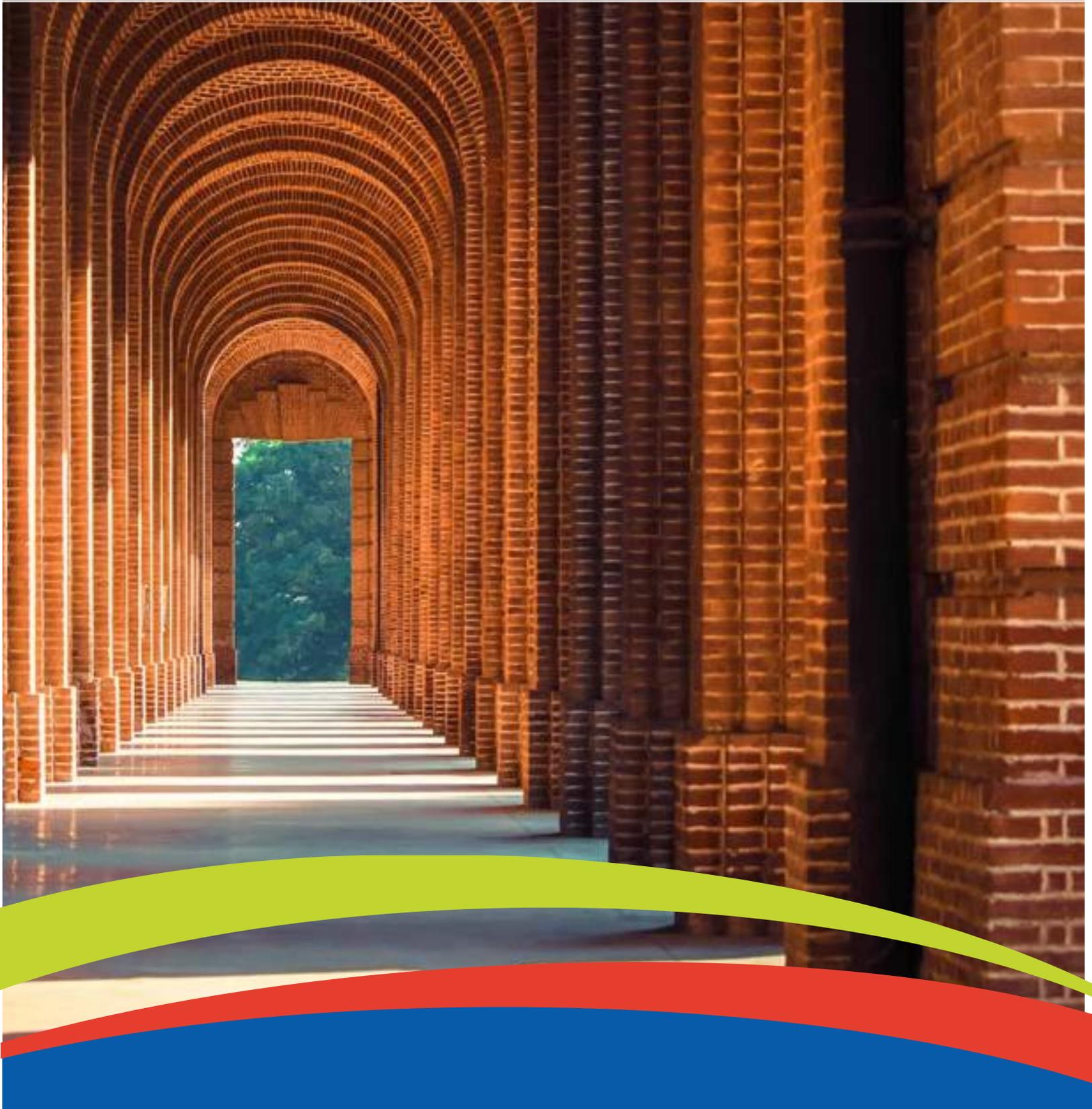
Schools may require you to verify the information submitted on your FAFSA. This is called verification. If this happens, your school will tell you what information they need and what you need to do. This process must be completed before financial aid can be awarded.

Award Letter

Once you've been accepted to a college or university, you'll get an award letter from the school's financial aid office outlining the federal, state and institutional aid being offered to you. If you've applied to more than one school, compare your award letters from each school. This financial aid package is designed to cover your financial need by bridging the gap between the cost of attendance and your EFC. Your financial aid package may include grants, scholarships and loans you are eligible for.

To accept the financial aid package, follow all instructions. This might involve entering aid amounts you intend to accept in an online form or signing and returning a paper award letter by a specified deadline—usually May 1. Talk to the financial aid office at the college or university if an unusual circumstance delays your response.

Going to College



Summer Transition Checklist

- Have you filed your FAFSA?**
 - Completing the FAFSA is the first step to get financial aid. If you haven't, you can still file at www.studentaid.ed.gov!

- Have you completed any additional financial aid forms required?**
 - FAFSA, or your college, may ask you for income verification; promptly provide the information, or you may be denied financial aid.

- Have you received your financial aid award letter?**
 - Check to see what your "bottom line" number is to know your net cost for college. How are you planning to make up the difference?

- Have you logged on to your college's web portal?**
 - Every school has a student portal where you will log into your student account. Check it often as most schools send information with deadlines to you through this system.

- Have you completed your required placement test?**
 - If you will be pursuing an Associate of Arts (AA), Applied Science (AS), or Associate of Professional Studies (APS) degree from a community college, you must schedule and take a placement test. You can either call the testing center or schedule your appointment online. Check with your institution to determine any costs for placement tests.

- Have you confirmed your enrollment?**
 - You must confirm that you will be attending the school of your choice and pay a deposit by the school's deadline. Depending on your school, it can cost anywhere from \$0 to \$1,000! Check with your institution to determine the enrollment deposit fee and the deadline.

- Have you submitted all housing forms and deposits (if you are going to live on campus)?**
 - Housing fills up fast, so you don't want to delay. Usually, you are required to pay the confirmation deposit before you are allowed to submit your housing application. Housing deposits are required to secure your spot. Be prepared to pay the cost of first and last month's rent plus a security deposit—this adds up fast!

- Have you registered for or attended a new student orientation?**
 - All schools have a required Freshman Orientation that you must attend in order before you will be allowed to register for classes. This can be another cost; check with your institution to determine any costs to attend new student orientation.

Worksheets



What's My Ideal College?

Directions	Scoring
Rate schools based on how well they fit your criteria. Total the scores. (Place a ★ next to the criteria most important to you.)	4 – 5: Perfect fit. 2 – 3: Kind of meets my criteria. 0 – 1: Doesn't fit.

SCHOOL 1: **SCHOOL 2:** **SCHOOL 3:**

	★			
I want a school that is located:				
a. Close to home				
b. As far away as possible				
c. Somewhere in between				
I prefer a campus size that is:				
a. Small (under 5,000)				
b. Medium (5,000 – 15,000)				
c. Large (15,000+)				
I want the school to be in the:				
a. City				
b. Suburbs				
c. Country				
I want to be able to live:				
a. On campus, in a dorm or apartment				
b. Off campus, in an apartment or house				
c. At home				
I would prefer a college that is:				
a. Private (not a public or state school)				
b. Single-sex				
c. Religiously affiliated				
d. Known for serving ethnic or racial minorities				
e. None of these are important to me				
I want to complete my degree in:				
a. 2 years or less (apprenticeship, CTE, associate's degree)				
b. 4 years (bachelor's degree)				
I want to participate in the following activities:				
a. Sports (intramural, Division I, Division II, Division III)				
b. Student government				
c. Community service				
d. Greek life (sororities and fraternities)				
e. Other clubs and activities:				
I want to use the following student services:				
a. Tutoring/academic support				
b. Counseling and health services				
c. Study abroad				
d. Disability access				
e. Other:				
Total				

College Visit Profile

	SCHOOL 1		SCHOOL 2		SCHOOL 3	
School name						
School website						
School type (2-year, 4-year, etc.; public, private)						
School setting (city, suburb, country)						
Student body size						
Location (in-state, out-of-state)						
Distance from home						
Degree types offered						
Majors I'm interested in	1. 2. 3.		1. 2. 3.		1. 2. 3.	
Admissions contact	Name: Phone: Email:		Name: Phone: Email:		Name: Phone: Email:	
Admissions requirements	ACT/SAT: GPA:		ACT/SAT: GPA:		ACT/SAT: GPA:	
On-campus housing	Available	Not available	Available	Not available	Available	Not available
Deposit amount						
Deposit due date						
Estimated Cost of Attendance						
Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)	School code: Deadline:		School code: Deadline:		School code: Deadline:	
Available financial aid (grants, work-study, loans)						
Available scholarships (institutional and private)	Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:	
	Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:	
	Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:		Name: Deadline:	

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS						
	Available	Not available	Available	Not available	Available	Not available
Career Center
Computer labs
Free tutoring
Math center
On-campus health center
Summer Orientation
Writing center
Other:
Other:
Other:

My Top 4 Colleges

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ESSAY OR PERSONAL STATEMENT REQUIRED? <i>TOPIC/REQUIREMENTS</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO _____ _____ _____ _____ _____			
RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRED? <i>HOW MANY?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO _____			
SAT/ACT REQUIRED?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO			
APPLICATION COST <i>PAYMENT DEADLINE</i>	\$ _____ _____	\$ _____ _____	\$ _____ _____	\$ _____ _____
APPLICATION FEE WAIVER ACCEPTED? <i>WHICH ONES?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO _____			
APPLICATION DEADLINE	_____	_____	_____	_____
FAFSA DEADLINE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS/ FINANCIAL AID	_____	_____	_____	_____
ACCEPTANCE OF ADMISSION DEADLINE	_____	_____	_____	_____

College Application Worksheet

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Legal Name: _____

Any Other Names Used: (for transcripts, etc.): _____

Social Security Number: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Place of Birth: _____ Are you a US citizen? YES NO

If you are not a citizen, do you hold a Visa? Are you applying for a Visa? What kind? _____

If you are a permanent resident, what is your alien registration number? _____

**If you are a permanent resident, you will need to attach a photocopy of your alien registration card to the application.

If you have DACA status, what is your workforce authorization number? _____

**If you do not have a social security number, Visa, or DACA status, use 000000000 as your Social Security Number

Gender: M F Race/Ethnicity: _____

Are you an active duty service member? YES NO Are you a veteran? YES NO

Are you a dependent who is eligible for military/veterans benefits? YES NO

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Type of Application: _____ Term: _____

Planned Major: _____

HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Expected Graduation Date: _____

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

ACT Date(s) Taken: _____ Scores: _____

SAT Date(s) Taken: _____ Scores: _____

SAT Subject tests: Subject: _____ Date(s) Taken: _____ Scores: _____

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Are you currently or have you ever been charged with or subject to disciplinary action for scholastic or any other type of misconduct at any educational institution? YES NO

Have you ever been charged with a violation of the law which resulted in, or, if still pending, could result in probation, community service, a jail sentence, the revocation or suspension of your driver's license (including traffic violations which resulted in a fine of \$200 or more)? YES NO

If your answer to either of the above questions is yes, you must submit a full statement of relevant facts, and may be required to supply the institution with copies of all official documentation explaining the final disposition of the proceedings.

If your records have been expunged pursuant to applicant law, you are not required to answer yes to these questions. If you are unsure whether to answer yes to either question, it is strongly suggested that you answer yes and fully disclose all incidents. By doing so, you can avoid any risk of disciplinary action or revocation of an offer of admission.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Have you participated in any programs or activities to help you prepare for higher education (University Outreach, Talent Search, Upward Bound, etc.)? _____

Do you have any special talents or skills? Have you received any awards? _____

Do you participate in any sports or clubs? _____

Do you do community service? _____

Are you employed? _____

CURRENT & EXPECTED COURSEWORK

Courses you are currently enrolled in (FALL): _____

Courses you expect to complete before entering college (SPRING/SUMMER): _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Parent/Legal Guardian 1

Name (First and Last): _____

Relationship: _____ Email address: _____

Occupation: _____ Highest Level of Education Completed: _____

Mailing Address (if different from yours): _____

Parent/Legal Guardian 2

Name (First and Last): _____

Relationship: _____ Email address: _____

Occupation: _____ Highest Level of Education Completed: _____

Mailing Address (if different from yours): _____

Are you living in a single-parent household? YES NO

How many people, including yourself, live in your household? _____

Please indicate your family's gross income for the most recent tax year, including both taxed and untaxed income. _____

Do you have family obligations that prevent you from participating in extracurricular activities? Please describe. _____

ACTIVITIES RÉSUMÉ

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

School Activities (clubs, sports, etc.):

Activity	Grade(s) in which you participated in the activity	# of hours per week	# of weeks per year
	__9 __10 __11 __12		
	__9 __10 __11 __12		
	__9 __10 __11 __12		
	__9 __10 __11 __12		

Awards & Honors:

Name of Award	Type of Award	Year(s) Awarded
	__Athletic __Academic	__9 __10 __11 __12
	__Athletic __Academic	__9 __10 __11 __12
	__Athletic __Academic	__9 __10 __11 __12

Leadership Positions:

Position	Grade(s)
	__9 __10 __11 __12
	__9 __10 __11 __12

Community Service:

Activity	Grade(s) in which you participated in the activity	# of hours per week	# of weeks per year
	__9 __10 __11 __12		
	__9 __10 __11 __12		
	__9 __10 __11 __12		
	__9 __10 __11 __12		

Work Experience:

Job	Dates

Hobbies and Interests:

Noteworthy Assignments:

Other:

Writing Your Personal Statement

Writing the Essay

Step 1: Review the list of questions below. This will help you come up with topics to write about.

HOME AND FAMILY

- Have you ever lived outside the United States/in another country?
- Are you the first person in your family to go to college?
- Does your family speak any language(s) other than English?
- Do you live in a non-traditional family?
- Do your parents have unusual jobs?
- Did you move a lot growing up?
- Do you live in a town with a unique setting?
- Do you look up to anyone in your family?
- Has your family faced any hardships?

EDUCATION

- Have you won any awards and/or recognitions?
- Have you worked on a special class project?
- Do you have a favorite class that relates to your intended college major?
- Have you had any hard classes that you were determined to do well in?
- Do you have someone at school you look up to?
- Has your school gone through any hard times lately?
- Are you part of a special college-going or gifted program?

ACTIVITIES

- Do you play a sport?
- Are you part of a school organization?
- Are you a leader of a team or club?
- Were you an underdog?
- Do you perform community service outside of school?
- Have you made any contributions to your community?

HOBBIES

- Do you play an instrument?
- Do you do anything creative?
- Do you have a favorite book?
- Do you have a role model?
- Do you have a favorite quote?

EVERYTHING ELSE – UNIQUENESS!

- Do you have anything about you that makes you different?
- Have you ever been outside the United States?

Step 2: Write down a paragraph about yourself as it relates to your answers above. It doesn't have to be perfect; it's just an exercise to help you get started.

Step 3: Search essay prompts for the college(s) you will apply to. Jot down the answers below.

Name of college/university: _____

Prompt/topic: _____

Word/page count: _____

Any additional instructions: _____

Name of college/university: _____

Prompt/topic: _____

Word/page count: _____

Any additional instructions: _____

Name of college/university: _____

Prompt/topic: _____

Word/page count: _____

Any additional instructions: _____

Name of college/university: _____

Prompt/topic: _____

Word/page count: _____

Any additional instructions: _____

Name of college/university: _____

Prompt/topic: _____

Word/page count: _____

Any additional instructions: _____

Step 4: Refer back to your Brainstorming Worksheet to see which answers best fit the essay prompt(s) of your chosen college(s). Start outlining what you will discuss in each paragraph of your essay:

Paragraph 1: _____

Paragraph 2: _____

Paragraph 3: _____

Paragraph 4: _____

Paragraph 5: _____

Step 5: Begin the first draft of your essay.

