

Looking Ahead to College Admissions

Top 10 Admissions Tips

- 1. Take a rigorous academic course load.** The variety and difficulty of your courses in high school matters. Challenge yourself by taking honors or advanced placement (AP) courses.
- 2. Research financial aid options.** Attend free financial aid seminars offered through your high school or in your community. Create a profile at www.fastweb.com and start searching for scholarships.
- 3. Prepare for the SAT or ACT exams.** Familiarize yourself with the SAT and ACT by taking sample versions beforehand. Check out test prep materials (books, prep courses) and online resources.
- 4. Develop your ideal college profile.** Write down the criteria you want in a college (size, location, majors offered). Use FastWeb's College Search at www.fastweb.com to research possible colleges.
- 5. Review application essay questions.** Check out sample college applications (usually available in your counseling office) to become familiar with the kinds of questions you may encounter.
- 6. Do community service and volunteer work.** Take an active role in the organization and work towards fulfilling that organization's needs.
- 7. Attend college fairs.** They can help you figure out what kind of college you're looking for and that college's admissions requirements. Ask your guidance counselor when a college fair will be in your area.
- 8. Keep your grades strong.** Schools pay attention to the grades you earn throughout high school. However, don't take a course simply to improve your GPA.
- 9. Maintain relationships with teachers who can write your letters of recommendation.** Remember the teachers, coaches and leaders with whom you've had a good relationship or taken a course in which you were successful.
- 10. Explore your interests through your classes.** Taking a wide variety of high school classes can help you figure out what you enjoy.

Help Your Guidance Counselor Help You

Visit early and often. Get to know your counselor during your high school freshman year. Check back with him or her at least once a year to discuss courses, activities, college plans and career aspirations.

Let your counselor get to know you. Greet them and remind them of your name as often as you can. The better your counselor knows you, the more he or she will be able to offer advice specific to your situation.

Thank them. Be sure to thank your counselors for their help. Send a written thank-you note after your counselor writes a letter of recommendation.

Prepare for meetings. Know the issues you want help with and compile a list of questions you want answered.

Pay attention. Even if you don't agree with what he or she says, listen closely and make your own decision.

Provide materials well before the due date.

Give your counselor all forms (report cards, recommendation, etc.) early and all at once, if possible. Be sure to include information about deadlines. Include stamped envelopes to mail your forms.

Notify your counselor about your progress. Let them know if you are accepted by your prospective college. If you don't get in, they may be able to advise you about your next step.

**Customized search of over
600,000 scholarships and
over 4,000 colleges
www.fastweb.com**



Financial Aid: Quick Reference Guide

Sources of Aid

FastWeb Scholarship Search.....	www.fastweb.com
FAFSA (Free App. for Federal Student Aid).....	www.fafsa.ed.gov
Pell Grants.....	www.pellgrantsonline.ed.gov
Direct Loans.....	www.ed.gov/DirectLoan
Hope/Lifetime Learning Credit.....	www.ed.gov/inits/hope
JobCorps.....	www.jobcorps.org
AmeriCorps.....	www.americorps.org
City Year.....	www.cityyear.org
Resources by State.....	www.ed.gov/Programs/easistate.html

College Admissions

FastWeb College Search.....	www.fastweb.com
FastWeb College Prep Information.....	www.fastweb.com

College prep calendars, helpful articles, etc.

Information about Financial Aid

U.S. Department of Education.....	www.ed.gov
FAFSA (Free App. for Federal Student Aid).....	www.fafsa.ed.gov
FinAid.....	www.finaid.org
Mapping Your Future.....	www.mapping-your-future.org
Office of Postsecondary Ed.....	www.ed.gov/offices/ope
Project Scholarship Scam.....	www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/edcams/scholarship
Student Guide to Federal Aid.....	www.ed.gov/prog_info/SFA/StudentGuide

General Information

Access America for Students.....	www.students.gov
Adventures in Education.....	adventuresineducation.org
Campus Safety.....	www.campussafety.org
College is Possible.....	www.collegeispossible.org
U.S. Department of Education.....	www.ed.gov
Think College.....	www.ed.gov/thinkcollege
Trio Programs.....	www.trioprograms.org

Calculators

College Cost Projector.....	www.fastweb.com
Loan Calculators.....	www.fastweb.com
Savings Calculators.....	www.finaid.org/calculators

Choosing a Major/Career

Career Planning.....	www.fastweb.com
Monster(Job Search.....	www.monster.com
America's Career Infonet.....	www.acinet.org
Bureau of Labor Statistics.....	stats.bls.gov
Occupational Outlook Handbk.....	http://www.bls.gov/oco

Standardized Test Dates

August:

Aug. 23: ACT registration deadline for Sept. 28 test

September:

Sept. 10: SAT registration deadline for Oct. 12 test

Sept. 20: ACT registration deadline for Oct. 26 test

Sept. 27: SAT registration deadline for Nov. 2 test

Sept. 28: ACT test date

October:

Oct. 12: SAT test

Oct. 15: PSAT test

Oct. 19: PSAT test

Oct. 26: ACT test

**Search over
600,000 scholarships
and over
4,000 colleges
www.fastweb.com**

Fall Tips for Juniors and Seniors

- Register with www.fastweb.com to find scholarships.
- Create a calendar that includes all deadline dates for tests, applications and financial aid.
- Ask your guidance counselor for help on college application and admissions tips.
- Create files for your target schools. Keep a list of application requirements (essays, transcripts, etc.) and deadlines in the file, including when to send your transcripts.
- Request letters of recommendation from teachers, advisors and employers who know you well. Ask for recommendations early.