

Steps to Finding the Best College for You



Think about your priorities when selecting a college. You might want to begin with simple issues like size, location and academic program.

Talk to your counselor, teachers, parents, friends and alumni of various colleges to begin gathering information about the schools that interest you. Attend college fairs in your area to talk to college admission representatives. Be careful to form your own opinion about each college, especially if it seems to be a good fit for you.

Read any college materials that you can get your hands on! Start with general college guides, websites and CD's. Call or e-mail the colleges that interest you and ask for general information and brochures, along with information on your specific interests.

List the schools that most interest you. The schools you list should vary in terms of selectivity and should include at least one school where you know you will be accepted. Your guidance counselor may be especially helpful with this process. Take an unofficial copy of your transcript when you visit a college and ask an admission officer about your chances for admission.

Visit the colleges you have listed. Spend as much time as you can on campus and talk to students, faculty, admission officers and financial aid staff. If at all possible, stay overnight on campus to experience college life if it is a residential college. Ask current students candid questions about their feelings and experiences on the campus.

Apply to several colleges in the fall of your senior year. Check the admission and financial aid application deadlines to be sure you meet them. It is your responsibility to be sure all parts of the application arrive on time. Some colleges have an Early Decision, Early Action or Early Notification option. Talk with your guidance counselor about these early options.

Reevaluate your college selection criteria while you wait to receive the admission decisions.

Decide which college you will attend. Again, if time permits, make a return visit to the campus and consider the advice of others, but remember – IT'S YOUR DECISION!

