

# 11<sup>th</sup> Grade College Planning Timeline

## **Fall: Take the PSAT and start a list of colleges**

**Stay on track with your classes and grades.** Meet with your counselor to see what you still need to take. Check on your class rank and your GPA. Even if your grades haven't been that good so far, it's never too late to improve. Colleges like to see an upward trend.

**Evaluate your education options.** Think about if you want to go into the work field, attend vocational-technical school, community college, four-year College or pursue a military career.

**Make a college list.** Your list of colleges should include schools that meet your most important criteria (**for example, size, location, cost, academic majors, or special programs**). Weigh each of the factors according to their importance to you and develop a rank of the schools on your list.

**Continue gathering college information.** Go to college fairs, attend college nights, and speak with college representatives who visit your high school; use CCGI to search top colleges on your lists. You may be able to narrow your choices or add a school to your list.

**Create a testing plan.** Figure out when you'll be taking important tests like the SAT, ACT, and AP exams. Mark the dates on your calendar. **Be proactive! Be prepared. FREE SAT PREPARATION!! VISIT <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>**

**Make sure you're meeting any special requirements.** If you want to play Division I or II sports in college, talk to your coach to get a fair assessment of your chances. Also, register with the NCAA eligibility center to start the certification process. Check with your counselor to make sure you're taking a core curriculum that meets NCAA requirements.

**Stay involved with extracurricular activities.** Colleges look for consistency and depth in the non-academic activities you pursue. Taking on leadership roles and making a commitment to the same groups are more important than trying out tons of new activities each year.

**Talk to your family.** Have a discussion about the colleges you're interested in. Your family can learn about what you want to pursue and you can hear any concerns or suggestions they might have.

## **Spring: Search for scholarships and gather recommendations**

**Prepare for senior year.** You will meet with your counselor to determine what classes you'll take next year and to make sure you're on track for graduation.

**Contact your recommendation writers.** Teachers and guidance counselors are often asked to write recommendations for lots of students. Consider whom you want to ask now and let them know so they'll have time to prepare before getting tons of requests in the fall. Ask teachers who know you well and who will have positive things to say.

**Apply for a summer job or internship.** Summer employment and internships in fields you're interested in will look appealing on a college application or resume. The money you earn can also be used to help pay application and testing fees in the fall.

**Take a test!** Register for the March SAT or the April ACT plus Writing, or both. Also, Register for the AP Exams if you are taking any AP classes.

## **Summer: Visit colleges and prepare for SAT & ACT**

**Visit colleges.** Visit the campuses of your top college choices. Take a tour and speak with the admissions and financial aid staff. You may also be able to talk to students if some classes are in session. If you have an interview, be sure to send a thank-you letter to the interviewer once you return home.

**Get advice from other college students.** If you have friends or relatives in college, talk to them about what college life is like, especially if they attend a school you're interested in. Although it's important to hear what the admissions staff has to say about a school, it's also important to get the students' perspective.

**Organize your financial aid information.** Develop a plan that includes a list of the aid sources, requirements for each application, and a timetable for meeting the filing deadlines. Getting organized will make the process of applying a lot easier because you'll know where to find important information.

**Prepare for testing.** Study for the SAT and/or ACT if you plan on retaking them. **FREE SAT PREPARATION!! VISIT <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>**