

College Admissions & Financial Aid Timeline

For High School Juniors (Spring – Summer Before Senior Year)

February – April (Junior Year)

- Begin researching colleges and building a list (reach, match, and safety schools)
- Register for spring SAT/ACT (if required)
- Take campus tours (virtual or in-person)
- Start a resume or activities list
- Request recommendation letters (especially from teachers who know you well)

May – June

- Take AP exams, if applicable
- Continue college visits
- Brainstorm college essay topics
- Sign up for summer enrichment, volunteering, or part-time work
- **Create an FSA ID** at studentaid.gov (you and a parent) in preparation for FAFSA

July – August

- Begin drafting personal statements and supplemental essays
- Finalize college list and note deadlines
- Research scholarships and create a tracking sheet
- Review your transcript for accuracy and request early recommendations

Senior Year Admissions Timeline

September

- Finalize essays and applications
- Confirm each college's **application type and deadline** (Early Action, Early Decision, Regular)
- Complete any **CSS Profile** if required by private colleges
- Attend local college fairs and info sessions
- Begin working on **scholarship applications**

October

- FAFSA opens (usually **October 1**) — **Submit early!** - many schools provide aid on a **first come/first serve basis**
- Submit **CSS Profile** (opens Oct 1) for participating schools
- Submit Early Action/Early Decision applications (some due as early as **Oct 15**)
- Take or retake SAT/ACT if needed
- Request transcripts be sent to colleges

November

- **Early Action/Early Decision deadlines typically Nov 1–15**
- Finalize scholarship applications with early deadlines
- Confirm FAFSA and CSS Profile submissions
- Continue working on essays for regular decision schools

December

- **Last chance for many scholarships deadlines**
- Some schools have **early December Regular Decision deadlines**
- Receive Early Action/Early Decision results
- Update colleges with new SAT/ACT scores (if applicable)

Financial Aid Key Deadlines

Item	Recommended Deadline	Absolute Deadline
FAFSA Opens	Oct 1	Varies by state/school
CSS Profile Opens	Oct 1	Varies (some as early as Nov)
State Aid (e.g., Cal Grant, NY TAP)	Oct–Mar	Check your state’s deadline
College-Specific Aid Forms	Oct – Jan	Based on individual schools
Scholarships (Private)	Rolling	Some due as early as Oct

Final Steps

January – February

- Submit all Regular Decision apps (most due **Jan 1–15**)

- Send updated transcripts if needed
- Check **college portals** regularly for missing documents

March – April

- Review **financial aid award letters**
- Compare aid packages and calculate net cost
- Appeal aid decisions if necessary

May 1: College Decision Day!

- Accept your offer and submit your **enrollment deposit**
- Decline other offers
- Notify recommenders and counselors

June – August

- Attend orientation
- Finalize housing, meal plans, and tuition payments
- Send **final transcript** to your chosen college
- Complete **loan counseling** if accepting federal loans