

Junior year checklist

Fall–Winter

College planning

- Meet with your college counselor about your coursework and college plans
- Become or stay involved in extracurricular activities
- Check college websites for admission requirements
- Create a professional email address to use when applying for scholarships, registering for college entrance exams, and completing college applications
- Attend college fairs and/or college information events
- Meet with college and university admissions recruiters when they visit your high school

College search

- Tour local campuses and visit non-local colleges during winter and spring breaks; consider campus size, location and academic programs
- Try online college fairs and virtual campus tours (www.collegeweeklive.com, <https://campustours.com>)
- Use college search sites to explore your college options (www.cappex.com)
- Prepare your college list, and sort by reach, match and safety schools

Career exploration

- Attend a local career fair and/or a career technical education fair
- Take an online career inventory to help connect your interests and skills with a career (<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/explore-careers>)
- Make a list of careers that may interest you and research the education level required for each profession
- Talk with professionals in careers you are curious about and ask about their work
- Enhance skills that would be useful in a career of interest through your extracurricular activities

Spring

College entrance exams

- Register and take your first college entrance exam during spring semester so you can take it again fall of senior year, if you want
 - SAT, with essay option SAT (www.collegeboard.com); free SAT test prep help (www.khanacademy.org)
 - ACT, with essay option ACT (www.actstudent.org); free ACT test prep help (<https://academy.act.org>)
 - Subject tests, recommended by some colleges for certain majors (<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat-subject-tests>)

Academics

- Prepare for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams
- Plan your senior year schedule with your counselor
- Review your college preparation coursework and GPA with a college advisor
- Create a list of teachers, coaches and other mentors who will be able to write personalized letters of recommendation

Prepare for summer

- Apply for summer jobs or internships
- Seek volunteer opportunities in your field of interest
- Register for community college courses and earn college credit while in high school, also referred to as concurrent/dual enrollment
- Review your SAT/ACT test scores to determine if retesting is needed
- Plan a test preparation schedule if you plan to retake the exams (www.khanacademy.org, <https://academy.act.org>)



The **Junior Year Checklist** is part of the 2019-2020 *Opportunities Preparing for College Guide and Workbook*. This free college planning publication provides students and families with important information and tools to guide their pursuit of postsecondary education. These books are available in English and Spanish. Full PDFs of each *Opportunities* booklet can be downloaded at www.ecmc.org/opportunities.

Summer

College application season begins

- Check websites of colleges on your list, review admissions application process and timeline
- Draft your application essays and/or personal statement; work with a college advisor for feedback
- Prepare a scholarship resume and/or a “brag sheet” that includes all your non-academic activities and honors
- Study for summer/fall college entrance exams (SAT or ACT) if you plan to retake them
- Communicate with college admission representatives for questions you may have

College finances

- Learn about the types of financial aid (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types>)
- Use a FAFSA4caster to see how financial aid can help pay for your education (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/estimate>)
- Search and apply for scholarships (www.fastweb.com, <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>)
- Learn how money works; take a financial literacy course (www.fdic.gov/moneysmart)
- Use the College Scorecard to compare costs, degree programs and outcomes for the schools you are interested in (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov>)
- Open a bank account and save money