



Senior Year Timeline for College Applications

Summer before senior year:

- Brainstorm ideas for common app essay
- Create a preliminary list of about 20-25 safety, target, and reach schools

August:

- Create a common app account
- Finish all logistical sections of the common app
- Start (and try to finish) common app essay
- Register for final standardized tests
- Narrow down your list of colleges to roughly 15 schools and [consider applying early](#)

September:

- Visit schools for a final time. If you're deciding between a few schools for an early application, visit them again. You should also visit as many schools on your list as possible to demonstrate interest
- Update Naviance
- Register for final standardized tests
- Ask teachers for recommendation letters
- Finalize your list of colleges
- Meet with your guidance counselor. Give your guidance counselor your finalized list of schools
- Finish common app essay
- Run for [leadership positions](#)
- Make changes to your schedule so that you can [take the most challenging course-load available](#)
- Create a master schedule with all of the due dates for every application, supplement, etc. for every school you're applying to
- Decide on your [Early Decision or Restrictive Early Action and Early Action](#) schools

October:

- Take final standardized tests (this is the last time you can take the ACT for early decision applications)
- Finish early decision application

- Start regular decision applications
- Send standardized test scores to early decision college
- Edit and re-edit your common app essay. Then edit again
- Have guidance counselor send transcripts
- Keep your grades up

November:

- Submit early decision application
- Finish at least two-thirds of your regular decision applications before December 1st. If you don't get into your early decision school, you don't want to spend all of winter break working on applications.
- Take the SAT/SAT 2s for the last time for early decision schools. Check with your specific school for details

December:

- Send standardized test scores to regular decision schools
- If you do not get accepted to your early decision school, send in regular decision applications
- If you have decided to apply to more regular decision schools than were on your initial list, notify your guidance counselor immediately so she can send your transcripts
- Complete your final regular decision applications

January:

- Submit all regular decision applications
- Have your guidance counselor send your first semester grades
- Make sure you receive confirmation on all of the applications you submitted

February:

- If you were deferred early decision, send a mid-year update to your school of choice

March:

- You should begin hearing from colleges in mid-March

April:

- [You will hear from all of your colleges by April 1st](#)
- Prepare for AP tests

May:

- Final decision about college is made on May 1st