

College Preparation Checklist

High School Juniors

August/September (Back to School)

- Create a MYCAP account and fill out your profile
- Review your courses with your high school counselor
- Prepare a list of questions to ask college reps
- Collect college catalogs
- Sign up to take the PSAT
- Use MYCAP to get and stay organized

October -- November

- Attend college fairs and financial aid nights
- Update your MYCAP profile and checklist
- Take the PSAT
- Search for scholarships and financial aid
- Learn the basics about federal and private loans
- Plan and make college visits

December

- Review your PSAT results with your counselor
- Update your MYCAP profile and checklist
- Talk with college friends home on break
- Take both the SAT and ACT at least once

January

- Identify characteristics you want in a college
- Attend college fairs and financial aid rights, if you haven't already done so

February

- Update your MYCAP profile and checklist
- Register and study for the SAT and/or ACT

March

- Plan campus visits
- Narrow your college list to a reasonable number
- Discuss ways to pay with each college on your list
- Keep up family college discussions
- Estimate how much each college will cost
- Update your MYCAP profile and checklist

April-May

- Compare college requirements to your course load
- Select senior year courses
- Visit colleges
- Take the SAT and/or ACT, if necessary
- Get a summer job to save extra money
- Update your MYCAP profile and checklist

Summer

- Improve your reading and vocabulary skills
- Combine vacation plans with campus visits
- Start working on your college application essays
- Talk to people in careers you find interesting
- Decide who you'll ask to write recommendations
- Talk with college friends home for summer

High School Seniors

September

- Discuss your course load, college plans, and test scores with your high school counselor
- Request college applications
- Arrange campus visits
- Register to take the SAT/ACT, if necessary
- Search for scholarships and ways to pay
- Stay organized with MYCAP

October

- Verify that your transcripts are accurate
- Find out which financial aid applications are required at your choice colleges
- Ask for letters of recommendation to include with your admissions and/or scholarship applications
- Work on admissions application essays
- Attend college fairs and financial aid nights
- "Early Decision" candidates should complete college applications
- Update your MYCAP profile and checklist

November

- Continue completing your college applications
- "Early Decision" deadline is often November 1 or 15
- Determine which financial aid forms the colleges on your list require - when in doubt, contact the Financial Aid Office
- Search for additional sources of financial aid

December

- Complete school applications ideally by December 1st
- Collect family tax information
- Complete then make a copy of your FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). *Don't submit before January 1st, it will only be returned to you not processed.*
- Take SAT or Achievements, if registered
- Stay organized with MYCAP

January

- Submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1st as possible. *Some student aid programs award funds on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are depleted. Waiting too long to submit your FAFSA could be costly*
- Fill out and submit required financial aid forms. Follow instructions carefully and make copies

February -- March

- College decisions start rolling in
- Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR). Carefully examine the results. *A mistake could cause you to miss out on college funding.*
- Don't panic if you're selected for verification. Just provide the college with the documents they need
- Stay on top of important financial aid deadlines
- Respond quickly to college requests for additional documentation
- College acceptance and financial award letters start rolling
- Update your MYCAP profile and checklist

April

- Carefully analyze your letters
- Make a decision, most colleges request your reply by May 1st, and send your tuition deposit
- Notify other colleges that you won't be attending
- Register for Advanced Placement (AP) tests, if necessary
- Mark your calendar with important deadlines (housing, meals, transportation, financial aid, etc.)

May

- Send transcripts
- Respond quickly to requests
- Return necessary forms
- Notify your FAO of any additional funding you'll be receiving (scholarships and loans, etc.)
- Evaluate student loan lenders and take time to understand student loans

Summer

- Attend orientation
- Complete any college financial aid info received, if you have questions, ASK
- Finalize your budget
- Send thank you notes to individuals who help you get in