

Introduction

There are many ways to search for the right college for you. However, need to start this search early in your junior year of high school. This plenty of time to prepare for the admission requirements and gather all of the appropriate materials to begin the application process.

Here is a checklist by category of the major things to consider when choosing which college to attend.

<http://www.collegexpress.com/articles-and-advice/admission/articles/find-college/top-7-things-consider-when-choosing-college/>

Academics

- Does the school have not just your ideal major but several good backups in case you change your mind?
- What is the reputation of the faculty and the faculty in your major(s) in particular?
- What are the academic facilities, libraries, and labs like?
- What kind of research opportunities—not just in the sciences—exist on campus?

Affordability

- What is the average financial aid package?
- Does financial aid include loans?
- What is the average student loan debt?
- Is the school need-blind or need-aware in admission?
- How many years does it typically take students to graduate?

Community

- What is the social scene like on campus?
- How many students live on campus full time?
- How many stay on campus during the weekends?
- How many are on campus during summer break?

Location

- What is the “town-gown” relationship like between the college and surrounding community?
- What are the area’s employment opportunities like for students as well as recent grads?
- What’s the average cost of living and general quality of life?
- What kinds of recreational opportunities are there?
- How safe is the area?

Selectivity

- What is the average admitted student’s academic profile like, and how does it compare to yours?
- Is it a safety, reach, or realistic option for you?
- Does the school take a holistic approach to admission decisions?

Support

- What campus services are available to students, such as tutoring, career guidance, and mental health?
- Are any of those services available to you after you graduate?

College Search



Enrichment

- What kinds of extracurricular opportunities exist on campus?
- How many students participate in extra curriculars?
- How easy is it to start your own club?
- What kinds of experiential education opportunities, such as internships, co-ops, and volunteering, exist on and around campus?

Useful links

<http://www.uscollegesearch.org/>

This is a directory of U.S. colleges where you may request information.

<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>

This site provides many links to colleges.

<http://www.princetonreview.com/>

A college planning site that offers test preparation and information on scholarships and financial aid.

<http://www.act.org/>

ACT is a comprehensive search engine that provides useful information on college and career readiness skills, benchmark scores, as well as information on colleges and their requirements.

<http://www.collegeboard.com/>

The College Board is a comprehensive search engine with useful information on colleges and their requirements (including applications), campus visits, and the SAT.

<http://www.collegecountdownkit.com/>

A good college search site with sample essays, financial aid information, etc.

<http://www.collegenet.com/>

This site provides a database of links to colleges, majors, and tuition information.

<http://www.campustours.com/>

This site offers virtual campus tours of colleges and universities across the country.

<http://www.collegeview.com/>

This site provides information on colleges, including diversity, fields of study, athletics, religious affiliations, and special programs and services for students with disabilities.

<http://www.library.illinois.edu/edx/ranld.ngs>

This site contains a comprehensive overview of college rankings.

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