

# COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TIMELINE

## FOLLOW THE TIMELINE AND GET AHEAD

Maximize your chances for college admissions!  
Take the right steps each year in high school.



### FRESHMEN

**25%**

Early decision has been shown to increase one's chance of admission by as much as 25% over regular decision admission rates

**1**

#### Fall Freshman Year

- Start school activities and community service
- Meet your school counselor
- Develop a four-year academic plan
- Register for honors and AP classes
- Take the PSAT
- Don't fall behind with schoolwork

**2**

#### Spring Freshman Year

- Become an avid reader
- Sign up for sophomore honors and AP classes
- Prepare for finals and finish the year strong

**3**

#### Summer Freshman Year

- Volunteer 100 hours or more, work, or attend a summer program
- Visit two or more colleges
- Prepare for PSAT and upcoming AP classes
- Join an organization or an activity group to develop non-academic skills

### SOPHOMORES

When applying to college, admissions officers will look for these items on your application:

- GPA and rigor of coursework (regular, honors, gifted, AP, IB)
- Test scores (SAT®, ACT®, AP®, PSAT®, SAT Subject Tests, etc.)
- Activities (sports, clubs, internships, volunteer work, etc.)
- Recommendations
- College essays

**4**

#### Fall Sophomore Year

- Get to know your counselor better and update academic plan
- Take the PSAT
- Get more involved in school and community activities

**5**

#### Spring Sophomore Year

- Take SAT Subject Tests that correspond with your AP classes
- Sign up for the next year's honors and AP classes
- End with a strong GPA

**6**

#### Summer Sophomore Year

- Visit two or more colleges
- Do at least two of the following: Volunteer 100 hours or more, work, or attend a summer program
- Prepare for the SAT, ACT, PSAT, and upcoming AP classes
- Join an organization or an activity group to develop non-academic skills

The average admissions officer reads between **75 to 100** applications a day



### JUNIORS

**23%**

In 2014, it was reported that public high school college counselors spend 23% of their time on college advising

**7**

#### Fall Junior Year

- Your junior year grades **MUST** be strong
- Course selection is one of the most critical factors in college acceptance
- Obtain positions of leadership in your school and community activities
- Take the PSAT and compete for the National Merit Scholarship
- Meet with your school counselor to develop an initial list of colleges
- Prepare for the SAT and/or ACT

**8**

#### Spring Junior Year

- Meet college representatives who visit your school and community
- Take SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests, and AP tests
- Visit your top college choices during spring break
- Get college applications for next year



Between 1980 and 2012, the overall college enrollment rates increased from 26% to 41%.

**9**

#### Summer Junior Year

- Do at least two of the following: Volunteer 100 hours or more, work, or attend a summer program
- Visit two colleges
- Start writing your college application essays
- Finalize college list
- Start researching scholarship opportunities

### SENIORS

**10**

#### Fall Senior Year

- Polish your college application essays
- Maintain good grades
- Obtain positions of leadership in your school and community activities
- Check dates for early and regular application deadlines
- Ask teachers, counselors, and others for recommendations two months before the deadlines
- Take SAT, ACT, and/or SAT Subject Tests
- Apply to colleges

**11**

#### Spring Senior Year

- Submit financial aid forms
- Visit the colleges where you have been accepted
- Choose a college and submit deposit
- Maintain good grades
- Finalize and submit scholarship applications

**8.05%**

**AVERAGE ACCEPTANCE RATE**  
for all 8 Ivy League colleges  
(Harvard the lowest at 5.4%)