

## Get Ready for the Road Ahead

The college admissions journey can feel like a long road trip—full of stops, turns, and milestones. Knowing what to expect at each stage will help you stay on course. From test prep to admissions advice, we've got the expert tips you need to navigate your path to college and hit every marker along the way.

### Let's Talk About Standardized Tests

The SAT and the ACT are the best-known and most-dreaded parts of the college application. Students across the country also take AP Exams each May, but don't worry—these tests aren't roadblocks, just checkpoints. With the right strategies, you can steer your way to success.

### Are You Ready for Your Standardized Tests?

Take a full-length SAT or ACT practice test to see where you stand. You'll get a detailed score report mapping out your overall performance, your strengths, and how you can improve your score.

[www.princetonreview.com/college/free-sat-practice-test](http://www.princetonreview.com/college/free-sat-practice-test)

[www.princetonreview.com/college/free-act-practice-test](http://www.princetonreview.com/college/free-act-practice-test)



## Will You Need to Submit Your SAT or ACT Scores?

Colleges use standardized testing scores in admissions decisions in various ways. Make sure to check each school on your application list about their policy. There are four main categories of testing policies you should know.

**Test-Required:** SAT/ACT scores must be included in your application.

**Test-Flexible:** You can submit other exam scores (AP, IB, etc.) instead of SAT/ACT.

**Test-Optional:** It's up to you whether to include your scores—colleges will review your application either way.

**Test-Free:** These schools don't consider SAT/ACT scores at all.

## The Cost of College

In The Princeton Review's College Hopes and Worries survey **over 38% of parents and students said "level of debt...to pay for the degree" was their biggest concern about college.**† But don't let sticker shock steer you off course—many schools offer significant financial aid if you know where to look.

Visit our **Financial Aid Resource Center:**  
[princetonreview.com/college-advice/how-to-pay-for-college](http://princetonreview.com/college-advice/how-to-pay-for-college)

### Where Could Your Scores Take You?

Check out where your SAT or ACT<sup>™</sup> scores fit and start mapping your destination!

Institution Name	ADMIT %	AVG SAT	AVG ACT
Amherst College	11%	1500	33
Columbia University	4%	1520	34
Georgetown University	13%	1470	33
Gettysburg College	48%	1340	30
Grinnell College	13%	1460	33
Rice University	8%	1540	35
Spelman College	34%	1120	24
Stanford University	4%	1520	35
University of Chicago	5%	1530	35
University of Oklahoma	77%	1190	26
University of Washington	43%	1350	32
University of Wisconsin	43%	1410	30

## Tools to Help You Succeed

### Standardized Test Prep Programs

Tutoring programs, classes, and self-paced courses are all designed to help you boost your score on SAT, ACT, or AP Exams.

### College Admissions Counseling

College Admissions Counselors work with you to personalize your application strategy and help you navigate the college process.

### AI College Admissions Essay Tool

This tool provides instant feedback on your application essays to help them stand out in the eyes of admissions officers.

### Online Testing and Admissions Events

Learn top tips, tricks, and strategies from our experts on college admissions, standardized testing, and academics.

### Homework Help

Got a homework question? We can help! Tutors are available online 24/7 to help you in 80+ subjects.

For these options and more visit: [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com)



## Applying to College: Early Decision vs. Early Action

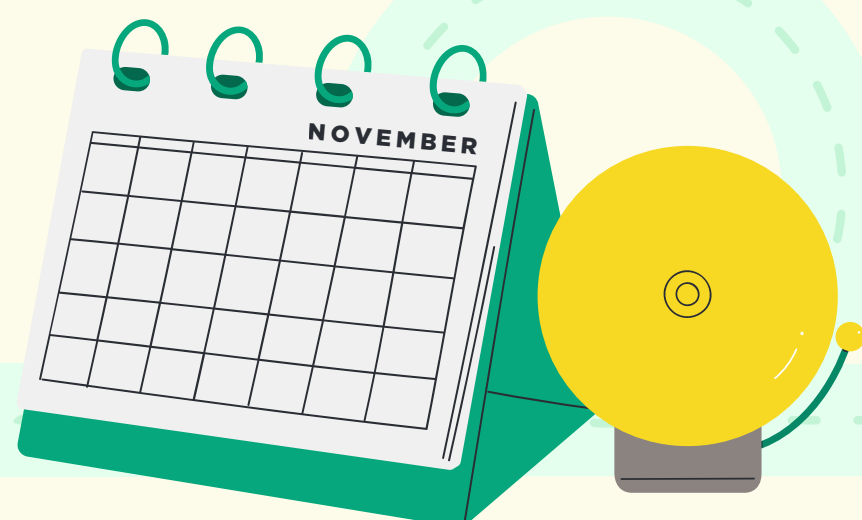
Mapping out your application timeline? If you're thinking about applying early, you have two options:

### Early Decision vs. Early Action

**Early decision** is binding. You can apply early decision to only one school, and if you're admitted, you **MUST** attend. If you are accepted to your early decision school, you must withdraw any other applications with decisions still pending and decline any other offers of admission from rolling or early action schools.

**Early action** is not binding, so you can enjoy the benefit of finding out early, without having to commit to the school. This means you can compare financial aid packages from the schools you're accepted to, which is an advantage you don't have with early decision.

Both early decision and early action often have deadlines in November, but it's always smart to check with the schools on your list and make sure you have the most up-to-date information.



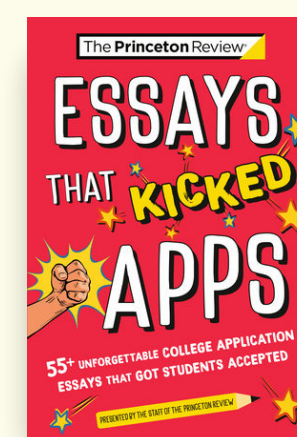
## Know More About Where You Want to Go

There's more to know about schools than just what it takes to get accepted. You want to find a school that fits you. In The Best Colleges book series we survey tens of thousands of students to rank colleges on what really matters—like **Best Campus Food, Best Career Services, LGBTQ+-Friendly Campuses, Happiest Students, and more!**

See the full rankings: [princetonreview.com/best-colleges](http://princetonreview.com/best-colleges)

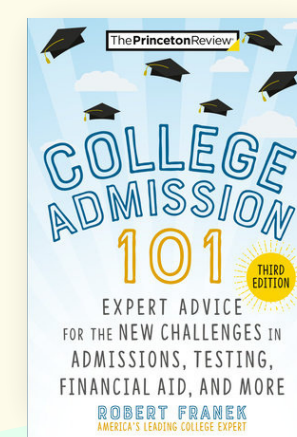
### Recommended Reading

What's a road trip without some good books to read?



#### ESSAYS THAT KICKED APPS

Featuring 55+ real essays that got students accepted to schools like Cornell, Brown, and Duke, this book breaks down what works, and why. Each essay includes expert commentary from The Princeton Review, highlighting the techniques that made them shine.



#### COLLEGE ADMISSIONS 101

This friendly, helpful Q&A book from the editor-in-chief of The Princeton Review presents simple answers to your toughest questions about navigating the college admissions process, figuring out financial aid, and getting into the university of your choice!



Starts Here  
**Your College Roadmap**

PSAT<sup>®</sup> | SAT<sup>®</sup> | ACT<sup>®</sup> | AP<sup>®</sup>  
**The Princeton Review**  
The Road to College Is Long  
Will Get You There

[princetonreview.com](http://princetonreview.com)  
800-2REVIEW (800-273-8439)



## The Princeton Review Can Help You Reach Your Goals

For over 40 years, students and their families have trusted The Princeton Review to help them get into their dream schools.

We help students succeed in high school and beyond by giving them resources for better grades, better test scores, and stronger college applications.

With a range of options, including one-on-one private tutoring, traditional classes, and online prep, The Princeton Review offers the flexibility to fit your schedule and learning style.



Test Prep Courses



Private Tutoring



On-Demand Tutoring



Admissions Counseling



Best-fit Colleges



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# COLLEGE ROADMAP



## Take a Campus Pit Stop

Sign up for in-person or virtual campus tours to get a feel for different colleges. Seeing them firsthand helps narrow your top picks.



## Start Touring Your Dream Schools

Every great road trip needs exciting stops! Check out The Princeton Review's Best 390 Colleges or use the online search tool. Consider working with an admissions expert for extra navigation help.



## Tackle the SAT or ACT

Once you know which test suits you best, shift into prep mode! Explore different test prep options to gear up for success.



## Stay in the Race

Colleges will be looking at your grades this year, so keep your engine running strong. Online tutoring can help if you hit a rough patch.

## Expanding Your Impact

Take the wheel in leadership roles and steer toward activities that align with your intended major. Colleges love to see dedication—so lead, volunteer, or start a project to fuel your future!

## Fuel Up with Scholarships

Now's the time to map out financial aid! Chat with your parents and school counselors about funding options and start scouting local and national scholarships.

## Go for the Gold

A high PSAT score can qualify you for the National Merit® Scholarship. If you performed well last year, a little extra prep could put you in pole position!

## FRESHMAN YEAR Hitting the Open Road



## Map Out Your Route

Start high school on the right foot by challenging yourself academically and keeping your grades up. Need a pit stop? Get extra help with online, on-demand tutoring with Homework Help.

## Explore Your Interests

Extracurriculars are like scenic detours—join clubs, sports, or volunteer groups to see what excites you. You can fine tune your route next year.



## Level Up Academically

Thinking about Honors or AP® courses? Freshman year is the time to build the skills you'll need for these advanced lanes.

## SOPHOMORE YEAR Picking up Speed



## Test Drive the PSAT®

The PSAT is like a practice lap—it helps you get familiar with standardized tests before the big race in junior year.



## Find Your Best Fit

Take a practice SAT® and ACT® to see which test drives better for you. Colleges don't prefer one over the other, so choose the route that plays to your strengths.



## JUNIOR YEAR The Fast Lane



## Send in Applications

The Common App makes it easy to apply to multiple schools at once. For rolling admissions schools, apply early while spots are still available.

## Fill Up on Financial Aid

Submit the FAFSA® as soon as possible to determine your financial aid package. Be mindful of priority deadlines to avoid roadblocks.

## Tell Your Story with a Standout Essay

Your college essay is your personal billboard—make sure it showcases who you are beyond grades and test scores. Get feedback from teachers and mentors.



## Take the Express Lane with Early Decision

If you've found your dream school, applying Early Decision can fast-track your admissions journey and ease the stress of waiting.



## Last Pit Stop for the SAT/ACT

If you still need to take the SAT or ACT, make sure you schedule it early enough to get your scores back before application deadlines.



## SENIOR YEAR The Final Stretch



## Celebrate the Journey

You've reached your final stop—college! Submit your acceptance, pay any necessary deposits, and finalize student loan applications. Don't forget to thank your teachers and counselors for helping you along the way. **Congratulations! Your next adventure awaits!**



## The Checkered Flag: Decision Time

Once acceptance letters roll in, compare financial aid packages before making your final choice. If your family's financial situation changes, notifying colleges could impact your aid.



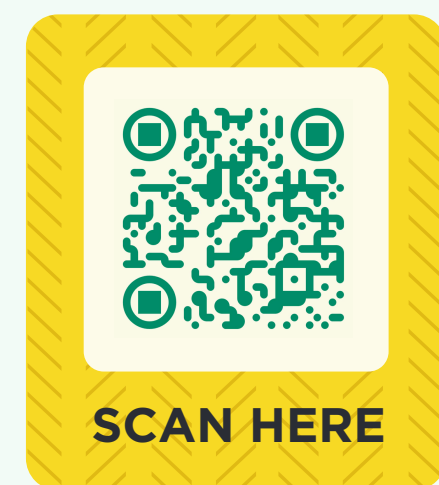
## Cruise to the Finish Line

Senioritis is real, but don't stall out now! Stay on top of grades, recommendation letters, and transcript submissions.



princetonreview.com  
800-2REVIEW (800-273-8439)

## Roadside Assistance



SCAN HERE

Or find our resources here: [www.theprincetonreview.com](http://www.theprincetonreview.com)

Everyone has a different roadmap to college. Call us at 800-2Review for a free consultation to plan yours.

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