

# College Application Checklist

A complete checklist of every step and document needed to apply to college.

## Plan and organize

- Finalize your list of schools and their deadlines.
- Note which application platform each school accepts.
- Create a spreadsheet to track tasks per school.
- Mark early and regular deadlines on a calendar.
- List the required documents for each application.
- Set personal target dates ahead of every deadline.

## Tests and scores

- Check each school's testing policy and requirements.
- Register for any required entrance tests early.
- Study with practice exams before test day.
- Take or retake tests with time to spare.
- Send official scores to the schools that need them.
- Save copies of your score reports.

## Transcripts and records

- Request official transcripts from your school registrar.  
Submit requests early — processing can take a week or more.
- Confirm your school will send transcripts on time.
- Gather records of awards, activities and honors.
- List your extracurriculars, jobs and volunteer work.
- Note hours, roles and dates for each activity.
- Keep digital copies of certificates and documentation.

## Essays and writing

- Read each school's essay prompts carefully.
- Brainstorm topics that show who you really are.
- Write a first draft of your main personal essay.
- Draft any school-specific supplemental essays.
- Revise for clarity, tone and word limits.
- Proofread and have someone else review each essay.

## Recommendations

- Choose recommenders who know you well.
- Ask each one at least three to four weeks ahead.
- Give them your resume and key accomplishments.
- Share each school's deadline and submission method.
- Send a polite reminder a week before the due date.
- Thank every recommender once letters are submitted.

## **Submit and confirm**

- Fill in every section of each application completely.
- Double-check your personal and contact details.
- Pay application fees or submit a fee waiver.
- Review the full application before final submission.
- Submit before the deadline, not at the last minute.
- Confirm each school received all parts of your file.