

# COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE -- Grades 9-12

## Admission Factors

### Academic

1. GPA
2. ACT/SAT
3. Rigor

### Nonacademic

4. Activities' Leadership (Resume)
5. Recommendations
6. Interest in the College
7. Special Talent
8. Diversity

## MINIMUM SUGGESTED COLLEGE PREP SUBJECTS

"Core" Subject	English	4 credits (English, language arts)
"Core" Subject	Math	4 credits (alg.1, geom., alg.2, one senior year)
"Core" Subject	Foreign Lang.	2 credits (one language)
"Core" Subject	Science	3 credits (biol., chem. or phys., one addnl.credit)
"Core" Subject	Social Studies	3 credits (govt/econ., geog/US and world history)
	Perform/Fine Arts	1 credit
	Technology	1 experience
	Phys.Educ/Health	1 credit
	Electives	See your counselor

**RIGOR OF CLASSES:** Selective colleges expect you to take the most advanced classes offered by your high school, in one or more of the five "core" subjects listed above. The number expected depends on how selective the college is.

**EARNING COLLEGE CREDITS IN HIGH SCHOOL:** Can reduce college costs & college class loads.

AP (Advanced Placement). [www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html)

CLEP (College-Level Exam Program). [www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/clep/about.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/clep/about.html)

Dual-enrollment class taken at a college. This is a semester class taken in any subject, with high school's approval.

SAT II subject exams are generally not for college credit or admission, but for scheduling classes at selective colleges.

**"GAP YEAR"**. Deferring college entry for a year to develop greater focus, maturity and self-confidence. Paid or voluntary.

**COPING WITH TEST ANXIETY.** [www.ets.org/Media/Tests/PRAXIS/pdf/01361anxiety.pdf](http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/PRAXIS/pdf/01361anxiety.pdf). Self-help coping strategies.

9<sup>th</sup> Grade. *Goals: Do your best academically. Participate in a variety of activities.*

\_\_\_ Complete and save **Student Resume**.

\_\_\_ Take the freshman level standardized test(s) offered by your school.

\_\_\_ Develop a four-year plan for classes. Earn good grades.

\_\_\_ Develop a daily time management plan (schedule) for all in-school and out-of-school activities.

\_\_\_ Extra-curricular activities -- Go wide! Sample a variety of school-based and community-based activities.

\_\_\_ **Parents.** Browse key college financial planning links ([www.finaid.org/sitemap](http://www.finaid.org/sitemap)).

10<sup>th</sup> Grade. *Goals: Do your best academically. Narrow your activities to those you like the most and could lead.*

\_\_\_ Update your **Student Resume**.

\_\_\_ Take the sophomore level standardized test(s) offered by your school.

\_\_\_ Continue to refine and implement your time management plan. Earn good grades.

\_\_\_ Extra-curricular activities – Narrow to those you like the most and have leadership opportunities.

11<sup>th</sup> Grade. *Goals: Do your best academically. Take standardized tests. Develop leadership skills. Visit colleges.*

\_\_\_ Update your **Student Resume**. Complete College Matching Questionnaire, College Readiness Survey and the survey's Results and Guidance.

\_\_\_ Extra-curricular activities -- Build depth! Narrow your activities to things you like, will excel in, and lead.

\_\_\_ Continue to refine and implement your time management plan. Do not let your grades slip.

\_\_\_ Know how admissions works, and develop strategies to find your "best fit" public and private college(s).

\_\_\_ **Visit** 4 or more colleges (public and private). Ask carefully prepared questions.

\_\_\_ **Junior & senior years.** Search for college-based Merit/Talent scholarships and private donor scholarships.

\_\_\_ Take the practice and "real" ACT, SAT, and PSAT. Take SAT II's if necessary.

\_\_\_ Carefully identify people to write college letters of recommendation for you.

12<sup>th</sup> Grade. *Goals: Maintain your GPA. Apply to colleges. Scholarship search. Strengthen your leadership skills.*

*Select a college. Parents – submit financial aid application(s).*

\_\_\_ Update your **Student Resume**.

\_\_\_ Continue to refine and implement your time management plan

\_\_\_ Extra-curricular activities - Continue to build depth. Colleges value commitment, excellence & leadership.

\_\_\_ Don't get *senioritis*. Your senior courses and grades do make a difference with colleges.

\_\_\_ Pay strict attention to application deadlines for admissions, recommendations and financial aid.

\_\_\_ Apply, preferably on-line, to your top 2-4 college choices (public and private) by **October 15**.

\_\_\_ **Parents:** Financial aid applications: Submit FAFSA from 10/1 to 3/1 ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)) or

[www.nitrocollege.com/fafsa-guide](http://www.nitrocollege.com/fafsa-guide) . If required, submit CSS Profile after 10/1

<https://profileonline.collegeboard.com>). Use estimated figures initially for both applications.

\_\_\_ Make your college decision by **May 1**.