



Start your college applications.

Get started early on your applications, especially if you are applying early decision.

Helpful websites:

ApplyTexas (applytexas.org)
The Common Application (commonapp.org)
College Admissions (aie.org)

Edit/proof your college essay.

Ask your teacher, parent, counselor, and/or college adviser to review a draft of your college essay(s) and provide feedback and edits.

Helpful websites:

Writing a College Essay (nacacnet.org)

Take the SAT or ACT.

Take the SAT or ACT in the fall/early winter. Don't forget to ask for your scores to be sent to the colleges to which you are applying. Find out if there are any additional tests you need to take by checking the colleges' websites.

Helpful websites:

SAT (sat.collegeboard.org)
ACT (actstudent.org)
Tests You'll Need (collegeforalltexas.com)
GenTX Rock Your Future (gentx.org/rockyourfuture)

Research CLEP and/or AP exams.

These tests give you the opportunity to earn college credit by exam. Make sure to check with your target schools first to see which test scores they will accept for college credit.

Helpful websites:

CLEP (clep.collegeboard.org/exam)
AP (collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html)

Secure recommendation letters.

Ask people who are familiar with you to write letters of recommendation. The more specific they can be about your academic strengths, analytic abilities, and leadership roles, the better. Make sure to talk to your recommenders about your career goals, and give them plenty of advance notice in order to meet the college application deadlines. Write thank-you notes to those who provide recommendations, and keep them informed of your decisions.

Helpful websites:

Recommendation Letter Tips (greatcollegeadvice.com)

Pay attention to deadlines.

Be sure to submit college applications by the required deadline, and keep copies of all your application materials.

Helpful websites:

Filling Out the Application (aie.org)

Check your application status.

Make sure to check the status of your application after you submit it to ensure the college received all of your materials on time, and find out if they require anything else from you.

Helpful websites:

After You Apply (applytexas.org)

Take the THEA or Accuplacer.

Find out whether you need to sign up for one of these tests to satisfy the Texas Success Initiative, and register if necessary.

Helpful websites:

TSI Exemptions (thecb.state.tx.us)
THEA (thea.nesinc.com)
ACCUPLACER (collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer)

Make sure you're prepared.

To make sure you are prepared for college-level coursework, some colleges may require you to take remedial courses or participate in a summer bridge program. Determine whether you need to take any summer courses, and sign up for them if necessary.

Submit final grades.

Be sure to submit your second-semester grades to colleges if necessary/applicable.

Mail your official transcript.

Talk to your registrar or counselor about the best way to send official transcripts to your colleges.

Check your email regularly.

It is important to read every email and letter that a college sends you.

Make a decision.

Submit your deposit and notify colleges of your decision. Once you decide where you will enroll, follow the college's instructions on submitting your deposit and any other necessary forms. Notify other colleges of your decision.