

Grade 11/Junior Year

Fall Semester

- Maintaining your grades during your junior year is especially important. You should be doing at least 2 hours of homework each night and participating in study groups. Using a computer can be a great tool for organizing your activities and achieving the grades you want.
- Talk to your guidance counselor (or teachers, if you don't have access to a guidance counselor) about the following:
 - ◆ Availability of and enrollment in Advanced Placement classes
 - ◆ Schedules for the P SAT, SAT I and II, ACT, and AP exams
 - ◆ Discuss why you should take these exams and how they could benefit you.
 - ◆ Determine which exams you will take. (You can always change your mind.)
 - ◆ Sign up and prepare for the exams you've decided to take.
 - ◆ Ask for a preview of your academic record and profile, determine what gaps or weaknesses there are, and get suggestions on how to strengthen your candidacy for the schools in which you are interested.
 - ◆ Determine what it takes to gain admission to the college(s) of your choice, in addition to GPA and test score requirements.

August:

- Obtain schedules and forms for the SAT I, SAT II, ACT, and AP exams.

September:

- Register for the P SAT exam offered in October. Remember that when you take the P SAT in your junior year, the scores will count towards the National Achievement Program (and it is good practice for the SAT I).

October:

- Take the P SAT. Narrow your list of colleges to include a few colleges with requirements at your current GPA, a few with requirements above your current GPA, and at least one with requirements below your GPA. Your list should contain approximately 8-12 schools you are seriously considering. (You may want to visit our [College Selection](#) section for more information on the schools in which you're interested.) Start researching your [financial aid](#) options as well.
- Begin scheduling interviews with admissions counselors. If possible, schedule tours of the school grounds on the same days. You and your parent(s) may want to visit the colleges and universities during spring break and summer vacation, so that you do not have to miss school. Some high schools consider a campus visit an excused absence, however, so if need be, you may be able to schedule interviews and visits during the school year, without incurring any penalties.
- November:
- Review your P SAT results with your counselor, in order to identify your strengths and to determine the areas that you may need to improve upon.

December:

- You will receive your scores from the October P SAT. Depending on the results, you may want to consider signing up for an SAT preparatory course. Many high schools offer short-term preparatory classes or seminars on the various exams, which tell the students what to expect and can actually help to boost their scores.

Spring Semester

January:

- Take [Campus Tours](#) online or in person to further narrow your list of colleges to match your personality, GPA, and test scores.

February:

- Register for the March SAT and/or the April ACT tests. Find out from each college the deadlines for applying for admission and which tests to take. Make sure your test dates give colleges ample time to receive test scores. It is a good idea to take the SAT and/or ACT in the spring to allow you time to review your results and retake the exams in the fall of your senior year, if necessary.

March:

- Take the March SAT I exam.
- If you are interested in taking any AP exam(s), you should sign up for the exam(s) at this time. If your school does not offer the AP exams, check with your guidance counselor to determine schools in the area that do administer the exam(s), as well as the dates and times that the exam(s) you are taking will be offered. Scoring well on the AP exam can sometimes earn you college credit.

April:

- Take the April ACT test.
- Talk to teachers about writing letters of recommendation for you. Think about what you would like included in these letters (how you would like to be presented) and politely ask your teachers if they can accommodate you.

May:

- Take AP, SAT I, and SAT II exams.

June:

- Add any new report cards, test scores, honors, or awards to your file. Visit colleges. Call ahead for appointments with the financial aid, admissions, and academic advisors at the college(s) in which you are most interested. During your visits, talk to professors, sit in on classes, spend a night in the dorms, and speak to students about the college(s). Doing these things will allow you to gather the most information about the college and the atmosphere in which you would be living, should you choose to attend. Some colleges have preview programs that allow you to do all of these; find out which of the schools that you will be visiting offer these programs and take advantage of them.
- Take the SAT I, SAT II and the ACT tests.
- If you go on interviews or visits, don't forget to send thank you notes.

Summer Between Junior and Senior Years

- Practice writing online applications, filling out rough drafts of each application, without submitting them. Focus on the essay portions of these applications, deciding how you would like to present yourself. Don't forget to mention your activities outside of school.
- Review your applications, especially the essays. Ask family, friends, and teachers to review your essays for grammar, punctuation, readability, and content.
- Decide if you are going to apply under a particular college's early decision or early action programs. This requires you to submit your applications early, typically between October and December of your senior year, but offers the benefit of receiving the college's decision concerning your admission early, usually before January 1. If you choose to apply early, you should do so for the college/university that is your first choice in schools to attend. Many early decision programs are legally binding, requiring you to attend the college you are applying to, should they accept you.
- Read your college mail and send reply cards to your schools of interest.