

What You Need to Know in Middle School about Applying to College

Understand the basics of the college application process.



The Basics of College and College Applications

As a middle school student, you have choices to make about your future in high school. Do you want to continue going to school after high school? Or do you want to go directly from high school to a job? If you choose to go to college, there are different types of colleges you should know about:

- Community colleges offer 2-year programs and you can transfer to a 4-year school to further your education.
- California State University (CSU) offers 4-year programs in a broad range of interest areas.
- University of California (UC) offers 4-year programs that more competitive to get into than other 4-year options.

When you think about college, start with these questions:

- What am I interested in?
- What do I like to do?
- What do I want to do in my life?

It is okay if you do not know the answers yet, but it is good to start thinking about them. You have plenty of time to explore different options and find the careers and subjects you like the most. College gives you the chance to take new courses, discover new ideas, meet new people, and even, travel outside the country. It is a great time to explore and discover what makes you happy. It is also increasingly difficult to get a good job without some kind of college education.

In high school, you will have the option to take different types of classes and choose what classes you want to take. To get into four year colleges, certain classes are required in specific subject areas, and there are a minimum number of classes you must take. Discuss with your school counselors the required classes you should take in high school in order to prepare you for college.

How do I know what I want to do as a career?

Since you are in middle school, it is a good idea for you to think about different careers and jobs you might like when you grow up. This will help you figure out the classes you will want to take in high school and what you might want to study in college. Remember, you can take career assessments to help you discover what you are interested in and some available options for you. Make a list of the careers you are interested in, and then you can find out what you should study in college to help lead you to the careers you think you might like.

Some careers will require a degree, while others might require a certificate. Every career has different requirements, and the education and training time and costs will be different. You should consider all the different options you are interested in.

- [College Admissions Exams](#)
- [Talk to Your Family about College](#)

- How and When to Apply
- Preparing for the College Essay

How to Apply to College

You can use CaliforniaColleges.edu to:

- Research colleges that interest you.
- Apply to California Communities Colleges.

- Find links to applications for California State University, University of California, as well as public and private colleges across the country.

Talk to your school counselor if you have any other questions about applying to college

When to Apply to College

- You should apply to college during the spring of your junior year and the fall of your senior year in high school.
- You will narrow down your choices during your junior year.
- Use your [College List](#) in your My Plan to save and track the colleges you are interested in.
- Begin looking at the application requirements and the materials you will need.

Sources:

<https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/college-essay>



CALIFORNIA
COLLEGES.edu
DISCOVER. PLAN. LAUNCH.