

Tips for Making the Most of Your College Tour: Before, During, and After...

BEFORE – Do your homework:

- Check the school's admissions office website and call to confirm times and availability (especially if going over a holiday or school break). RSVP well in advance of your intended visit.
- If offered, attend both the tour (usually student-led) and information session (usually run by an admissions representative and focused on application information)
- Questions to ask the admissions office when making an appointment:
 - Can you sit in on a class or two? Is there a list of pre-approved classes?
 - Can you do an on-campus interview while you are there? (not all schools interview candidates or they may limit them to seniors or people who have already applied, but doesn't hurt to ask)
 - Do they provide meal vouchers (usually for lunch) in the cafeteria?
 - Can you stay overnight with a current student?
- Contact leaders of clubs you are interested in, see if you can attend a meeting or event during your visit
- Leave plenty of time for parking, info session, tour, a meal, and just walking around the campus
- Do some research about the college in advance so that you already have some background information and context before your visit. Don't waste your time on campus by asking questions which could have been easily answered by doing a quick search online.

DURING – Go beyond the basics:

- Wear comfortable shoes and appropriate clothing (not too formal, not too casual)
- Take notes - include your initial impressions, pros/cons, names and contact info of people you meet
- Stop by departments you are interested in, ask about their requirements and course descriptions
- Check out facilities where you might spend time such as the gym, student union, library, theater, etc.
- Talk to random students as you are walking around and get multiple perspectives on the school
- See a dorm room
- Have a meal in the cafeteria
- Pick up a student newspaper to see what the hot topics are
- Check out fliers posted around campus to see what's going on
- Don't be afraid to ask hard questions – you are there to get the information you need to make an important decision and this may be your only chance to do so
- Don't let an annoying tour guide or bad weather totally ruin your impression of a school (and, conversely, a sunny day spent on the campus green shouldn't be the only reason you want to go!)

AFTER – Give them something to talk about:

- Follow up with thank you emails (hand-written notes are even better!!) to people you have met with on-campus such as the admissions staff, tour guide, professors, overnight host, club leaders, etc. It's classy and adds that little something extra so that they remember you
- Discuss your visit with your family, counselor, and other trusted sources – be specific about what you liked and didn't like
- File your notes and keep them in a safe, easy-to-find place so that you can refer back to them when it's time to make your final decision

COLLEGE VISIT CHECKLIST

To help you find the right college, fill out one of these forms each time you visit a school.

COLLEGE NAME

CITY

STATE

SIZE

TUITION

ROOM & BOARD

FINANCIAL AID OPTIONS

ADMISSIONS CONTACT

NAME

EMAIL

PHONE

TO-DO CHECKLIST

Talk to professors

Visit the library

Tour campus

Sit in on a class

Eat at a cafeteria

Talk to admissions office

Read the college newspaper

Check out computer labs

Talk to students

Visit student housing

Read bulletin boards

Check out recreational facilities

Check out student activities

Tour the city around campus

Eat at an off-campus student hang-out

Picture yourself living here

RATE IT

On a scale of 1-5, five being the best, rate the following:

People _____

Social life _____

Classrooms _____

Dorms _____

Town _____

Campus _____

Food _____

ASK A STUDENT

What is the best part about this college?

What is the worst part?

What is a typical day like?

What do the students do on the weekends?

How are classes structured?

Why did you choose this college?

THE BEST PART ABOUT MY VISIT

THE WORST PART ABOUT MY VISIT

CAPTIP! Weather on the day of a college visit can affect your impression of a school. Don't let the rain keep you from a school you like. For more tips, go to www.Cappex.com/tips.