Preparing for College Checklist

Every Year in High School
☐ Take a rigorous course load, with honors and AP classes
☐ Keep up your grades/GPA
☐ Get and stay involved in extracurricular activities

9th Grade
☐ Take the PSAT 8/9 (optional)

10th Grade
☐ Start thinking about possible majors and colleges you might want to attend
☐ Learn how to pay for college by familiarizing yourself with FAFSA and financial aid
☐ Take the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, or PreACT (optional)
☐ Use your summer after 10th grade wisely—do a summer program, get a part-time job, etc.

11th Grade
☐ Befriend teachers and ask them for letters of recommendation in the spring
☐ Start to research specific colleges you’re interested in attending
☐ Learn more about financial aid, such as tuition costs and how loans work
☐ Begin searching and applying for scholarships
☐ Take the PSAT/NMSQT
☐ Take the SAT or ACT (preferably twice: once in the fall and once in the spring)
☐ Take SAT Subject Tests in the spring (if needed)
☐ Use the summer to finalize your list of colleges

12th Grade
☐ Get your college applications ready to submit by their designated deadlines
  ☐ Write your college essays
  ☐ Ask for letters of recommendation if you haven’t already done so
  ☐ Take the SAT or ACT one last time in the fall (if needed)
  ☐ Visit college campuses (optional)
☐ Complete and submit your FAFSA as soon as possible after October 1
☐ Apply for more scholarships
☐ Compare financial aid offers from colleges you’ve been accepted to
☐ Make your college decision and send your confirmation and nonrefundable deposit by May 1

Summer Before College
☐ Continue applying for scholarships
☐ Save money by getting a part-time job (optional)
☐ Reach out to your roommate
☐ Attend orientation
☐ Get started on your college packing list