

# 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