



Tips for surviving the college application process

- Enjoy the process: be diligent, but not stressed out. There are a lot of colleges out there who would love to have you attend—search for them.
- Do NOT procrastinate. Waiting till the last minute can cost you admissions, scholarship money, etc.
- Be realistic about who you are, but not too critical. Know your strengths and weaknesses and match your college list to who you are, not who others may expect you to be.
- Ignore rankings—for the most part they are based on factors that have nothing to do with how happy you will be on campus or how good the education offered is.
- Avoid choosing a college by major—50% of students who arrive with a major picked out will change their mind in the first year or two. Find a college that is a comfortable fit and has a variety of options.
- Talk to your guidance counselor frequently. The counselor letter comes from this person, and if she doesn't know you very well, it is hard to write an enthusiastic letter.
- Take some risks! Look for schools that are different, maybe even unknown to all your relatives and friends. There are so many good schools with unusual programs or activities.
- Do something special for your parents sometimes—they will be spending a lot of money on your education, something which many kids won't have.
- Be visible to the schools you apply to. Visit, email, call with questions, connect on social media.
- Create a clear email address with your name, and get used to checking it throughout the college admissions process. Use a more formal style when contacting admissions reps.
- The “perfect” college does not exist. Every school will have its pros and cons. Don't limit yourself to a dream school—there are many colleges you could be very happy attending.
- If you are not accepted, remember it is NOT personal. It doesn't mean you are not good enough or smart enough. Admissions decisions are made with the school's benefit in mind and driven by factors beyond your control.
- Pray, pray, pray. God has a plan for your life, including your college choice, and He will direct the path of those who seek Him.