

College Prep Checklist for Parents of Rising Seniors

Senior year is around the corner—and with it comes college applications, financial aid, and big decisions. This checklist is here to help you stay ahead of the game without feeling overwhelmed. We’ve broken it down month by month, so you and your student can move forward with confidence and clarity. Let’s make this year a successful one—together!

Your Month-by-Month Guide to a Stress-Free Senior Year

May–June: End-of-Junior-Year Prep

- ☐ Encourage your teen to request letters of recommendation (teachers, counselor).
- ☐ Discuss potential college essay topics or help your teen brainstorm.
- ☐ Review the transcript and make sure everything is accurate.
- ☐ Create a preliminary college list (reach, match, safety schools).
- ☐ Schedule summer campus tours (in-person or virtual).
- ☐ Register for summer or fall SAT/ACT if needed.

July: Get Organized

- ☐ Set up a shared calendar with application and scholarship deadlines.
- ☐ Finalize the college list with your teen’s input.
- ☐ Help your teen draft or revise their college essay.
- ☐ Research application platforms (Common App, Coalition, school-specific).
- ☐ Create or update a resume/brag sheet with your teen.

August: Application Ready

- ☐ Help your teen gather personal information for applications.
- ☐ Review FAFSA/CSS Profile requirements and deadlines.
- ☐ Make a list of schools that require supplemental essays or portfolios.
- ☐ Encourage your teen to finish their main college essay.
- ☐ Discuss family financial expectations for college.

September–October: Go Time

- ☐ Submit applications for Early Action/Early Decision (if applicable).
- ☐ Attend local or virtual college fairs and info sessions.
- ☐ Begin FAFSA (opens October 1) and gather necessary documents.
- ☐ Double-check application deadlines and requirements.
- ☐ Encourage your teen to request fee waivers if needed.

November–December: Stay on Track

- ☐ Submit regular decision applications (most deadlines Dec–Jan).
- ☐ Help your teen apply for scholarships—local, national, and college-based.
- ☐ Confirm that test scores, transcripts, and recommendations were sent.
- ☐ Review financial aid submission status (FAFSA, CSS Profile).
- ☐ Celebrate completed applications—it’s a big deal!

Parent Tips

- Be a coach, not a micromanager.
- Keep communication open and supportive.
- Remember: This process is about your teen—not just getting into the “best” school.

Need more support? Visit [PARENTINGFORCOLLEGE.COM](https://parentingforcollege.com) for blog posts, free resources, and college planning tools.