



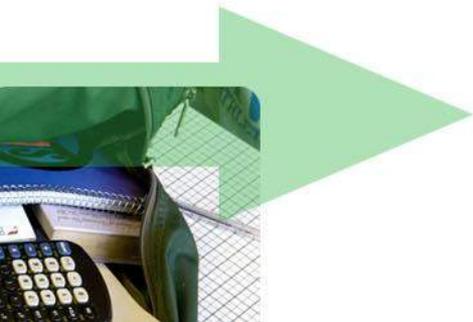
# Planning for College

What you need to know about the college admission process

# Simplify the College Planning Process

College opportunities exist for everyone. These four steps can help simplify the planning process:

1. Understand admission factors
2. Learn about the SAT<sup>®</sup> and SAT Subject Tests<sup>™</sup>
3. Explore college options
4. Develop a financial plan





# Understand Admission Factors

# What Colleges Consider

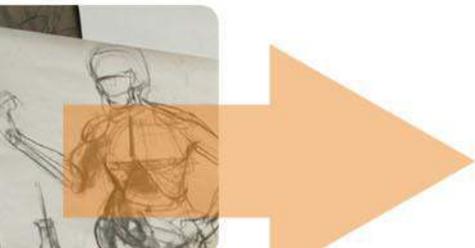
The first part of planning for college is understanding what factors colleges consider when looking at a student profile.

- Primary Factors

- Quality/Rigor of Academic Courses
- Academic Performance/Grades
- Test Scores (SAT, SAT Subject Tests, AP<sup>®</sup>, etc.)

- Additional Factors

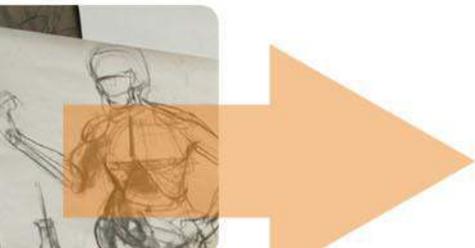
- Extracurricular Activities
- Essay(s)
- Letters of Recommendation
- Demonstrated Interest



# Grades & Course Work

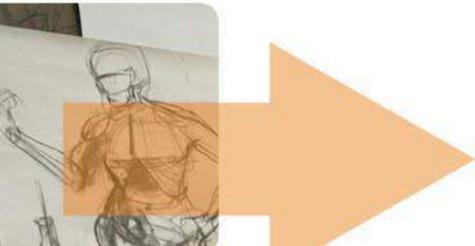
Your high school academic record is one of the most important factors in college admission. Colleges will look at a few aspects:

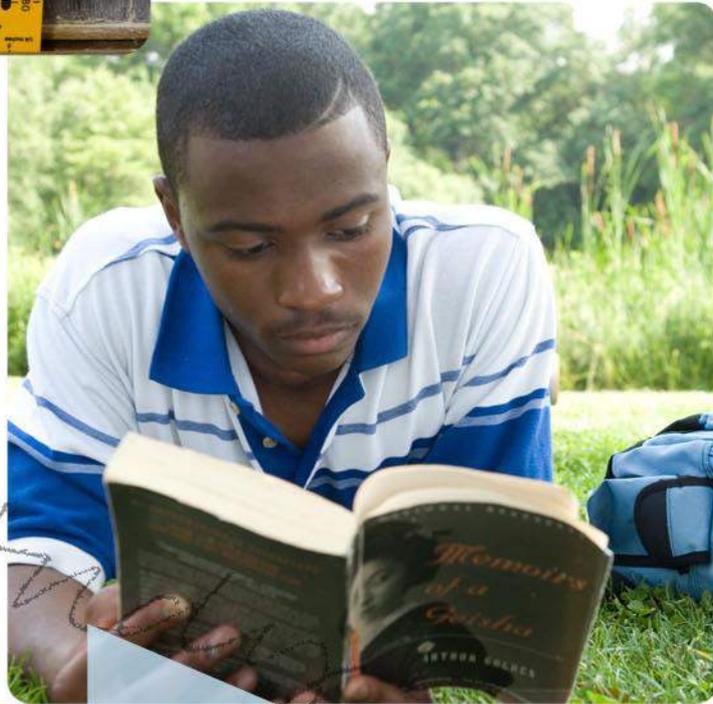
- **Course selection:** Challenge yourself with a rigorous course load and high-level classes, including AP or honors courses.
- **Grades:** Every year counts, starting with freshman year.
- **GPA trends:** Keep improving through every grade.
- **Class rank** (if offered by your high school).



# Other Considerations

- Positive recommendations from educators and mentors
- Personal statement and essay(s) demonstrating writing ability and self-expression
- A “demonstrated interest” that shows your enthusiasm for the colleges to which you’re applying
- Extracurricular activities, including participation in sports, performing/visual arts, volunteering, etc.
- Community involvement, part-time work or internship
- Interview (if applicable)





# Learn About the SAT<sup>®</sup> and SAT Subject Tests<sup>™</sup>



# About the SAT

Learn  
About the  
SAT

The SAT measures what you know and how well you apply that knowledge.

- It tests the same things taught every day in high school classrooms — reading, writing and math.
- It's the most widely used college entrance exam.
- Almost all colleges and universities use the SAT to make admission decisions.
- A combination of grades and SAT scores is the best predictor of a student's future success in college.



# Test Details

Learn  
About the  
SAT

- Three sections: critical reading, mathematics and writing
- Length: 3 hours, 45 minutes (including three breaks)
- Score range: 200–800 per section, 600–2400 overall
- Question types:
  - **Critical Reading** — Sentence Completions, Reading Passages
  - **Mathematics** — Algebra, Geometry, Statistics and Probability
  - **Writing** — Essay, Identifying Errors, Improving Grammar and Usage



# Getting Ready for the SAT

Learn  
About the  
SAT

- Select challenging high school courses.
- Read widely and write extensively, both in and out of school.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT<sup>®</sup> as a sophomore or junior.
- Become familiar with SAT question types, format and directions.
- Take advantage of free College Board resources at [sat.collegeboard.com](https://sat.collegeboard.com).



# A Little Practice Goes a Long Way

Learn  
About the  
SAT

- Research is clear that cramming and short-term test prep aren't effective substitutes for hard work in school.
- To feel comfortable and confident on test day, it's a good idea to be familiar with the test format and question types.
- Like anything else in life, a little practice never hurts.



# About SAT Subject Tests

Learn  
About the  
SAT

SAT Subject Tests allow you to showcase your accomplishments and interest in subjects in which you do well. They provide a more complete story about your academic abilities and distinguish you in the admission process.

## For admission

- Certain schools require or recommend them as part of the admission process.

## For placement and advising

- Placement out of beginner classes allows you to focus on more interesting/in-depth classes and satisfy basic requirements for certain majors prior to attending college.
- College advisers use them to help you pick course subjects and levels.



# About SAT Subject Tests

Learn  
About the  
SAT

Subject Tests cover content knowledge in:

**Literature**

**U.S. History**

**Biology**

**Math Level 1**

**World History**

**Chemistry**

**Math Level 2**

**Physics**

Foreign language Subject Tests measure reading comprehension, language usage and vocabulary. Some of these tests have a listening component:

**Spanish**

**Chinese**

**French**

**Japanese**

**German**

**Korean**

**Modern Hebrew**

**Latin**

**Italian**



# Getting Ready for SAT Subject Tests

Learn  
About the  
SAT

- It's best to take a Subject Test after completing course work for that subject. However, foreign languages, math and literature tests should be taken after two or more years of study in those areas.
- The best way to prepare for the Subject Tests is to review what you've learned in the classroom.
- Be sure to take advantage of free College Board resources at [sat.collegeboard.com](http://sat.collegeboard.com).



# Score Choice™

Learn  
About the  
SAT

Score Choice™ enables you to choose which scores you send to colleges by test date for the SAT and by individual test for the SAT Subject Tests.

- Score Choice can be used on any score report that you send, including the four reports included with registration.
- Score Choice is an optional feature, and you should follow each college's stated score-use practice when using it.
- Colleges and universities will only receive the scores that you send them — your scores will not be released for admission purposes without your specific consent.



# Myth vs. Reality

Learn  
About the  
SAT

**MYTH:** The SAT is a logic test designed to trick students.

**REALITY:** The SAT does not test logic abilities or IQ. SAT questions are based on high school subjects, and students who do well in the classroom are often the same ones who do well on the test.

**MYTH:** Short-term commercial test-preparation courses give students an advantage.

**REALITY:** Students see very insignificant results from such courses. The best way to get ready for the SAT is to take a challenging course load and study hard.

**MYTH:** The SAT is the most important factor in admission.

**REALITY:** The SAT is just one of many factors. Although grades and SAT scores are important, colleges look at and value other things, too.



explore



# Explore College Options



Now that you know what colleges are looking for, it's time to put them to the test.

**Which colleges are right for you?**



*explore*

# What to Consider

- ✓ Size and diversity of student body
- ✓ Location
- ✓ Academic programs
- ✓ Campus life — athletics, activities, housing
- ✓ Graduation and retention rates
- ✓ Financial aid and scholarship opportunities

Above all, think about where you will be the most happy and successful in your college life.



*explore*

# Visit Campuses

Get to know a school from the inside:

- ✓ Take a campus tour.
- ✓ Speak with an admission counselor.
- ✓ Ask about financial aid opportunities.
- ✓ Sit in on a class of interest.
- ✓ Read the student newspaper.
- ✓ Talk to students and faculty.



*explore*

# Get Organized and Apply

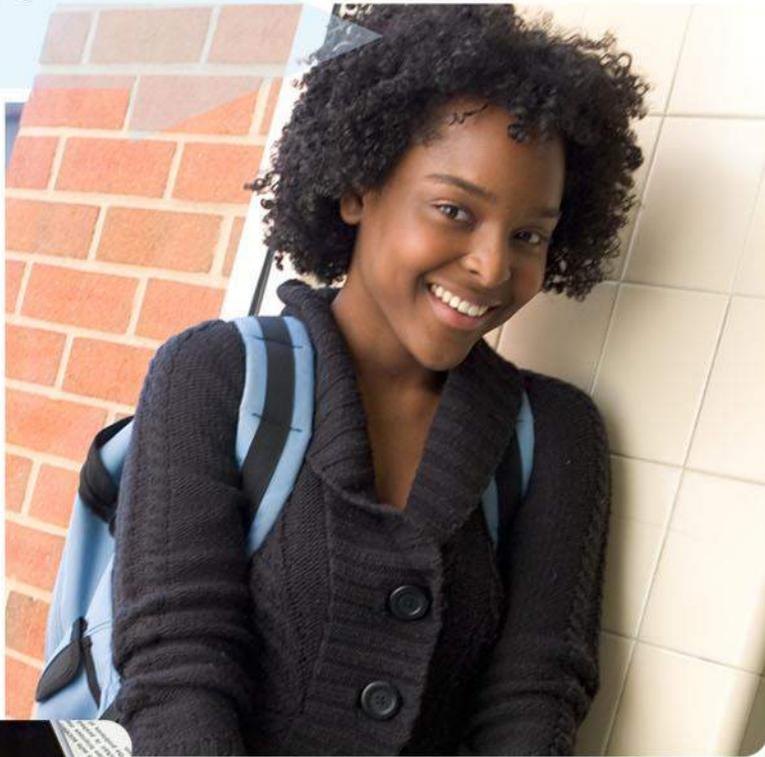
- Narrow and categorize your choices:
  - “More than likely” schools (1 or 2)
  - “Good match” schools (2 to 4)
  - “Reach” schools (1 or 2)
- Review scholarship and financial aid requirements.
- Revise application essays and share drafts with a trusted teacher, adviser or family member.
- Ask for recommendations and set firm dates for their completion.
- Request transcripts and schedule interviews, if needed.



explore



plan

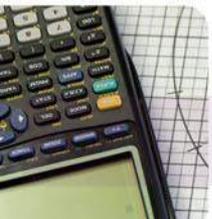


# Develop a Financial Plan

# Add It Up

- + Determine all **college costs** — not just tuition.
- + Calculate your college **savings** so far and see if you're on track.
- + Estimate your family's **expected contribution** — an EFC calculator is available at [www.collegeboard.com/payforcollege](http://www.collegeboard.com/payforcollege).
- + Search for **scholarships** — try the Scholarship Search: [www.collegeboard.com/scholarships](http://www.collegeboard.com/scholarships).

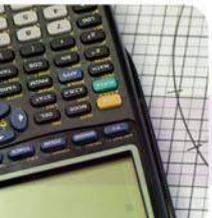
Remember to explore every opportunity!



# Apply and Compare

Develop a  
Financial  
Plan

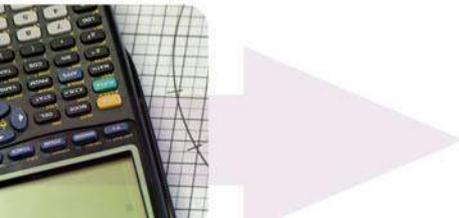
- Know your options: grants, loans, work-study, etc.
- Fill out the free FAFSA application as early as possible, and meet all deadlines.
- Compare financial aid awards and determine how they fit with other contributions:
  - Family
  - Savings
  - Scholarships



# Making a Decision

- Try to visit colleges where you've been accepted.
- Compare financial aid packages.
- Send your deposit.
- Get ready to graduate!

**Congratulations, you're off to college!**



# College Planning Recap

Remember: College opportunities exist for everyone!

- Simplify the planning process:
  - Understand admission factors.
  - Learn about the SAT and SAT Subject Tests.
  - Explore college options.
  - Develop a financial plan.

For more college tools and guidance, visit  
[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

