

How to use this: You are not trying to finish the application this spring. You are building the foundation so senior fall does not start from scratch. Check items off as you go. Steady progress beats a weekend of panic.

Review Testing Plans and Next Steps

- ☐ Look up upcoming SAT or ACT test dates
- ☐ Note registration deadlines for any tests your student plans to take
- ☐ Review practice results together
- ☐ Decide whether retesting may be useful
- ☐ Check the testing policies at each college on the list. They vary more than families expect

Start Building a More Realistic College List

- ☐ List the schools your student is curious about
- ☐ Note size, location, and campus preferences
- ☐ Note possible majors or academic interests
- ☐ Write down early questions about fit
- ☐ Flag affordability questions to revisit later
- ☐ Record application types and general timelines for each school

Think Ahead About Recommendation Letters

- ☐ Consider which teachers know your student well
- ☐ Review your school's procedures for requesting letters
- ☐ Note who may be a good fit as a recommender
- ☐ Start drafting a brag sheet
- ☐ If your student plans to ask before the school year ends, ask now. It gives teachers more time

The list does not need to be final yet. It just needs to be clear enough that future research and planning feel grounded. Your student will keep adding and cutting schools, and that is exactly how it should work.

Junior Year Checklist: Summer

Summer is for gathering, not finishing. Collect the details your student will need later, start the essay reflection early, and set up one place to track deadlines before fall gets busy.

Gather Activities, Honors, and Application Details

- ☐ List activities and leadership roles
- ☐ List honors and awards
- ☐ Record work and volunteer experience
- ☐ Include family or community responsibilities. These count too
- ☐ Note important dates and grade levels for each
- ☐ Write rough descriptions of what your student actually did. No need to perfect every entry now

Begin Essay Reflection and Early Draft Work

- ☐ Reflect on meaningful experiences
- ☐ Brainstorm possible personal statement ideas
- ☐ Review likely prompts
- ☐ Draft or revise gradually. Nobody needs a polished final draft in July
- ☐ Identify which colleges may require supplemental essays

Build a Deadline System Before Fall Gets Busy

- ☐ Track application deadlines for every school on the list
- ☐ Track scholarship deadlines
- ☐ Track testing dates
- ☐ Track recommendation-related tasks
- ☐ Set essay target dates
- ☐ Set personal deadlines that fall before the official ones

Applying early? A deadline system matters most for students considering Early Action, Early Decision, or schools with rolling admission. A good timeline makes the fall feel manageable because your student is not relying on memory alone.

Track all of it in one place. CollegeHound gives your family one free shared college planning workspace, and Scout, our AI guide, is the paid upgrade. Start free at collegehound.com/get-started