INNOVATIVE COLLEGE PREP

PLANNING CHECKLIST

College Application Checklist

Components, deadlines, essays, recommendations and a final submission check

For: Seniors, families and counselors

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Revised November 2026. General guidance only. Admissions policies and deadlines vary by college and change; always confirm with each institution.

Complete each application with confidence

Copy this checklist for each college. Fill in dates from the college's own admissions page for your entry year, and note the date you checked.

College:	Deadline & time zone:	Plan (EA/ED/RD/rolling):

Application components

- ☐ Account created on the right platform (Common App, Coalition with Scoir, state or college portal).
- ☐ Personal information, family and education sections complete and accurate.
- ☐ Activities, honors and work entered with accurate dates and hours.
- ☐ Personal statement final, proofread and within the word limit.
- ☐ College-specific supplements and short answers complete.
- ☐ Application fee paid or fee waiver requested through my counselor.
- ☐ If applying early decision: ED agreement signed as the college requires, and I understand it is binding.
- ☐ Any program-specific materials: portfolio, audition, interview or additional forms.

School documents and recommendations

- ☐ Counselor knows each college and deadline and has sent the transcript and school report.
- ☐ Teacher recommenders invited on the platform and given a summary of my goals.
- ☐ Recommenders reminded politely two weeks before the deadline.
- ☐ Mid-year report or final transcript requested if the college requires it.
- ☐ Thank-you note sent to each recommender.

Testing

- ☐ Confirmed each college's testing policy (required, optional, test-free) for my entry year.
- ☐ Scores sent officially by the testing agency to each college that requires or wants them.
- ☐ Checked score-reporting deadlines and fees (or waivers).
- ☐ Confirmed policies about score choice or superscoring where relevant.

Financial aid

- ☐ Checked which parents must contribute using the “Who’s My FAFSA Parent?” tool (studentaid.gov/fafsaparent).
- ☐ StudentAid.gov accounts created for the student and each required FAFSA contributor.
- ☐ Every contributor completed their section and gave consent to share federal tax information.
- ☐ FAFSA submitted for the correct aid year (check studentaid.gov for current dates).
- ☐ CSS Profile or the college’s own forms completed if required.
- ☐ Scholarship deadlines and requirements added to my tracker.

Before and after you submit

- ☐ Reviewed the whole application on screen. Read it aloud once.
- ☐ Submitted at least a few days before the deadline.
- ☐ Saved confirmation emails and screenshots.
- ☐ Checked each college’s portal to verify every item arrived.
- ☐ Responded to any request for missing items quickly.

Essay and supplement tracker

Essay or supplement	Prompt	Word limit	Draft	Final

Recommender tracker

Recommender	Colleges / platform	Date asked	Materials sent	Thank-you sent

Notes and follow-ups

Date	Question or missing item	Who to contact	Resolved

Official sources: Common App · Coalition with Scoir · Federal Student Aid

Keep learning, free. More free college admissions guides and planning resources are at innovativecollegeprep.com. Read the matching online guide: innovativecollegeprep.com/guides/college-application-platforms.

Revised November 2026. General educational information, not individualized advice; no admissions or financial aid outcome is guaranteed. Colleges set and change their own requirements and deadlines: confirm them on each college's official website.