

# College Planning Calendar

## Are you planning to attend college?

Stay on track with this helpful calendar to guide you through all of the steps!

JUNIOR YEAR		SENIOR YEAR	
<b>AUGUST:</b>	Talk to your parents about college. Where do you want to go to school? What major are you interested in? How much can you spend?	<b>AUGUST:</b>	With your top schools in mind, begin to draft your essays and leave plenty of time to edit them before applications are due.
<b>OCTOBER:</b>	Prepare and take the PSAT! The results can give you an idea what schools you qualify for. You can also be eligible for scholarships!	<b>OCTOBER:</b>	Ask now for letters of recommendation from coaches, teachers and employers. Give them plenty of time to write the letters...and don't forget to send thank you cards!
<b>NOVEMBER:</b>	How will you pay for college? Start researching different types of scholarships, grants and loans. If you don't think there's a scholarship out there for you, think again. There is an abundance of them and some have early deadlines – so start searching now!	<b>OCTOBER:</b>	Time to submit your FAFSA. Some student aid programs award funds on a first-come basis so don't wait too long!
<b>DECEMBER:</b>	Prepare and take the ACT/SAT. These are very important tests so prepare and practice to score your best! The results will enable you to figure out which schools might be a good match.	<b>NOVEMBER:</b>	Make sure you know the deadlines for each application. Due dates can creep up on you fast especially with the holidays and exams.
<b>MARCH:</b>	What are your top 5 schools you'd consider attending? It's recommended to visit 5 and after those visits, you should have a better idea of what might be a good fit for you.	<b>DECEMBER:</b>	December 1st is a common APPLICATION DUE DATE for most schools!
<b>SUMMER:</b>	<b>SUMMER BEFORE YOUR SENIOR YEAR:</b> This is a great time to schedule those visits with schools you are interested in to help narrow down those on your list.	<b>APRIL:</b>	It's time to make that decision about where you will attend school. Notify the admissions office and make a list of everything you need to do prior to attending in the fall. Also, notify the schools you won't be attending.
		<b>MAY:</b>	Budget, budget, budget. Time to figure out how much money you will need. Will you be working? Will your parents help you financially?
		<b>JUNE:</b>	Get excited! Call the admissions / financial aid office to verify everything is complete and they are ready for your arrival.

### Questions?

Commerce Bank employs a highly knowledgeable student lending staff that can answer any question you may have. We've been in the student lending business for over 50 years and can help you, or your parents, at any stage of the financial aid process.

Call us with questions. We'd love to help!

## Glossary of Terms & Resources:

<p><b>ACT – American College Test</b> and <b>SAT – Scholastic Assessment Test</b> – The two national standardized college entrance examinations used in the US. The ACT is widely used in the West and Midwest. Most universities require either the ACT or the SAT as part of an application for admission.</p>	<p><b>Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan</b> - are made to eligible undergraduate, graduate and professional students, but in this case, the student does not have to demonstrate financial need to be eligible for the loan.</p>
<p><b>AP Test – Advance Placement Test</b> – Test used to earn credit for college subjects studied in high school. Tests are offered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in the spring and are scored on a scale from 1 to 5 (the best possible score).</p>	<p><b>MPN – Master Promissory Note</b> – Your contract with your lender confirming that you understand your loan terms and will repay your loan.</p>
<p><b>Direct Federal PLUS Loan</b> – or Parent PLUS Loans are made to graduate or professional students and parents of dependent undergraduate students to help pay for education expenses not covered by other financial aid.</p>	<p><b>Private Student Loan</b> – a financing option for college that can supplement federally guaranteed loans. They can help bridge the gap between federal loans and the actual cost of school.* These may offer forbearance and deferral options. Fees vary between the financial institutions that underwrite the loan.</p>
<p><b>FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid</b> – A form used to apply for Pell Grants and all other needbased aid. As the name suggests, no fee is charged to file a FAFSA. Learn more at: <a href="https://fafsa.ed.gov/index.htm">https://fafsa.ed.gov/index.htm</a></p>	<p><b>Scholarship/Financial Aid Awards</b> – Money provided to the student to help pay for education. Major forms of financial aid include gift aid (grants and scholarships) and self-help aid (loans and work). Scholarships are a form of financial aid and are restricted to paying all or part of tuition, and some also cover room and board. Scholarships are a form of gift aid and do not have to be repaid, although to keep receiving the scholarship, grade thresholds are usually part of the conditions.</p>
<p><b>Federal Direct Subsidized Loan</b> – are made to eligible undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need to help cover the costs of higher education at a college or career school.</p>	

### Testing:

**ACT** – [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

**SAT** – [sat.collegeboard.org/home](http://sat.collegeboard.org/home)

**AP** – [apstudent.collegeboard.org/home](http://apstudent.collegeboard.org/home)

**PSAT** – [apstudent.collegeboard.org/home](http://apstudent.collegeboard.org/home)

### Scholarships:

**ACT** – [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

**SAT** – [www.fastaid.com](http://www.fastaid.com)

### Financial Literacy:

**Commerce Bank** – [www.commercebank.com/personal/ideas-and-tips](http://www.commercebank.com/personal/ideas-and-tips)

**Practical Money Skills** – [www.practicalmoneyskills.com](http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com)

**Federal Student Aid** – <https://studentaid.ed.gov/>

### Loans:

**Federal Student Aid** –

<https://studentloans.gov/myDirectLoan/index.action>

**Private Loans** – [www.commercebank.com/studentloans](http://www.commercebank.com/studentloans)

\* Investigate scholarships, grants, and federal loans before applying for private student loans.