

THE Road to COLLEGE

The path to higher education and training can be confusing and full of pitfalls for students and the adults who want to help them. While it doesn't show every detail necessary for preparation, this map can serve as a guide to help navigate the way.

Start here

High School Freshman Year

Start your freshman year by meeting with a counselor to make a four-year plan for your future.



Do a **skills inventory**: Identify your academic strengths and weaknesses and make plans to improve where possible.

Find out your school's **requirements for graduation** and write them down. Refer to them often to make sure you are staying on track.

Testing Dates			
SAT		ACT	
Registration deadline	Test date	Registration deadline	Test dates
2004			
Sept. 7	Oct. 9	Aug. 20	Sept. 25
Oct. 1	Nov. 6	Sept. 17	Oct. 23
Oct. 29	Dec. 4	Nov. 5	Dec. 11
Dec. 20	Jan. 22 ('05)		
2005			
Feb. 7	March 12	Jan. 7	Feb. 12
March 25	May 7	March 4	April 9
April 29	June 4	May 6	June 11

www.collegeboard.com www.act.org

Begin a **resume** of activities, achievements, awards and academics. Update it periodically.



Begin to research types and availability of scholarships.

Set up a calendar of testing dates and application deadlines.

Start to prepare for **SATs** and the **CAHSEE** (h.s. exit exam).



Take the most challenging classes you can handle. Consider signing up for advanced placement classes.

Attend job and college fairs. Research the schools and jobs you find interesting.



Start saving money!

Sophomore Year

Prepare for the CAHSEE and PSATs.

Reality check: Are you meeting graduation requirements?



FINANCIAL AID!

Educate yourself about the process of applying for financial aid.

Participate (reasonably) in community service and extracurricular activities.

Update your resume.

Keep saving money!



Athletes: Prepare to meet the NCAA requirements for competition.

Remember to take challenging classes.

Seek a mentor in your area of interest.



Scholarships/Financial aid

- Check with your school counselor for specific aid information.
- Fill out a **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): www.fafsa.ed.gov
- Check out **Cal Grants**: www.csac.ca.gov
- www.edwise.org
- www.finaid.org
- www.studentaid.ed.gov



Junior Year

Continue to research colleges, scholarships and financial aid. Begin to narrow down your choices.

Plan for a summer job, internship, apprenticeship or possibly a community college class.

Meet with your counselor to plan the school year.

Another reality check: Make sure your grades, test scores and other graduation requirements are on track.

PSATs and SATs: Practice taking the tests. Concentrate on building up areas of weakness that the test results reveal.

Send for and review college applications, brochures and information packages, and become familiar with what they require.

Guides for rating colleges

- www.usnews.com (U.S. News and World Report)
- www.campustours.com
- www.cccco.edu (California Community colleges)
- www.aiccu.edu
- www.collegeboard.com
- www.guideforparents.com



If you know your college major, research the college requirements for that major.

Attend college and career fairs (see your school counselor).



Consider taking Advanced Placement and community college classes.

Begin to firm up career choices and narrow down potential college choices. At least have an idea of what you don't want.

Retake parts of the CAHSEE if necessary.

Apply for summer jobs, internships, apprenticeships or community college classes.

Meet with your counselor to plan the school year.

Apply for Cal Grants and other financial aid.

Senior Year

Apply to UC/CSU schools.



Send replies and required information to college of your choice.

Send transcripts; notify schools of scholarships received.

Take AP and SAT exams.

Visit college campuses of your choice.



Make a budget for college expenses such as books, lab fees and miscellaneous funds for unforeseen costs.

Apply for community college and take the placement exams.

Get a summer job, save money and good luck!

Job search/more resources

- www.californiacareers.info
- www.worksmart.ca.gov
- www.edwise.org
- www.campuscareercenter.com
- www.jobstar.org/tools/resume
- www.nacac.com (College Admission Counseling)
- www.ncaa.org
- www.essayeval.org

How to take tests

- www.avidonline.org
- www.collegeboard.com
- www.aiccu.edu
- www.californiacolleges.edu
- www.students.gov
- www.cde.ca.gov/ta

