

# SAGE Scholars' High School Timeline for College Preparation

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## Junior Year

### Fall

☐ STUDY STUDY STUDY—KEEP YOUR GRADES UP.

☐ Meet with your school counselor often. Review your GPA, current courses, and activities to ensure you're following your college plan.

☐ Develop a master calendar which includes:

ACT/SAT/SAT Subject Test dates.

Personal deadlines for completing essays, resumes.

Local college fairs.

Dates college representatives are visiting your school.

Dates you plan to visit your schools of interest.

Application due dates for summer programs.

☐ Register for the PSAT/NMSQT([collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10](https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10)) through the counseling office to be screened for the National Merit Scholarship Program. The top 1% of students generally qualify as semi-finalists.

☐ Attend meetings with college representatives.

☐ Attend college fairs: they're a valuable source of information ([nacacfairs.org](https://nacacfairs.org)).

☐ Research colleges: consider location, major, size, required GPA, SAT/ACT score ranges, and athletics. Now is the time to explore, so make your list as long as you wish. Some useful college search sites are:

[bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search)

[cappex.com](https://cappex.com)

[college-insight.org](https://college-insight.org)

[chegg.com/schools](https://chegg.com/schools)

[unigo.com](https://unigo.com)

☐ Check your school calendar for special evening programs about college. Topics usually include Junior Night, College Panels, and Financial Aid.



☐ If you're planning on playing a sport in college, check out The Guide for College-Bound Student-Athlete ([ncaapublications.com/productdownloads/CBSA18.pdf](https://ncaapublications.com/productdownloads/CBSA18.pdf)).

☐ Set up an organization system for all of your documents if you haven't already.

☐ Develop a testing plan: plot out when will you start test prep and take the SAT/ACT, AP, and SAT Subject tests. FREE sites useful for SAT/ACT/AP prep:

[prepfactory.com](https://prepfactory.com)

[khanacademy.org](https://khanacademy.org)

[appracticeexams.com](https://appracticeexams.com)

[collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat-subject-tests/subjects](https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat-subject-tests/subjects)

☐ Financial planning for college: every college website has a net-price calculator which was developed to help families plan for educational costs.



## Spring

- Take the SAT/ACT/AP/SAT Subject Tests.
- Ask your teachers for letters of recommendation. Consult with your counselor. Colleges use letters to discover a student's personal qualities, including academics, personal traits, and contributions to school and the community. Discuss with your recommender how you excelled in their class and what you would like to share with colleges.
- Attend a college fair.
- Search for summer opportunities such as internships, specialty programs, and work.

## Winter

- Register for the spring SAT and ACT tests, including the writing section. Students should take both tests, compare their scores, then repeat the test they performed better on or were more comfortable taking.
- Plan a junior-year meeting with your school counselor that includes your family. Discuss academics, college planning, and the high school's application process.
- Plan your college visits. Spring break and summer work best for most families and most admissions offices are geared up for visits. Campus life will be typical during spring break but less busy during the summer. Either way, you'll get a feel for the campus.
- Plan for your senior year by signing up for challenging classes. Update your 4-year plan for graduation. Make sure you are on track with courses that will meet college admission requirements.
- Stay involved with extracurricular activities. Colleges look for consistency, depth, and leadership.

## Summer

- Visit colleges.
- Take on specialty summer programs, internships, and/or work.
- Start your college essay.
- Start to narrow down your college choices.
- Begin thinking about whether you'd like to apply to any colleges either early decision or early action.
- Start applying by using the Common Application or an individual college's application.

**High 5!** You are more than halfway through your high school career and you're handling the college search process like a pro. There are nearly 400 SAGE colleges out there—you can be confident that you'll find your perfect fit.