

COLLEGE PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR JUNIORS

Woolf College Consulting

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College Planning Checklist for Juniors

As a junior starting the college application process, you may feel like Alice tumbling through the Looking Glass into a confusing and unsettling Wonderland.

It's dizzying to think that you have to navigate among some 4,200 colleges and universities in the U.S. alone, each with its own character, philosophy, location, student body, calendar, academics, and activities.

You're anxious. Your parents are stressed. The admissions process may seem overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be.

Picture yourself navigating the process with *confidence* and *minimal stress*—all without conflict with your parents.

You can do that by following this proven checklist designed *specifically for high school juniors* by certified educational planner Betsy F Woolf.

**Start taking your first steps now.
You'll be happy you did.**



1 GET ORGANIZED

Create a digital folder where you can keep college materials and information you receive via email.

In addition, make space in a file drawer or get a box or file in which to keep the college materials that will be sent to you, plus materials you receive on college visits.

2 NETWORK IN SCHOOL

Your college applications will need to be supported by letters of recommendation from your high school college counselor and two high school teachers. (Some colleges only ask for one recommendation, but some ask for two.)

Start cultivating relationships with these important people now. The better they know you, the stronger their letters of recommendation will be.

3 PREPARE FOR STANDARDIZED TESTS

This year, many colleges are not requiring students to submit SAT or ACT scores, but a good test score can help your application stand out. You won't have to report a score unless you want to do so.

You do need to register for and take SATs or ACTS. Juniors typically don't start to take tests before December of junior year, and many take them in the spring.



4 MAKE A LIST

Now's the time to become a list-maker. **Write down your extracurricular activities** (both inside and outside school and including clubs and sports), summer experiences, jobs and internships, and community service. Include an estimate of how much time you've spent on these (number of weeks per year; hours per week.)

Make sure you haven't missed anything. Even a one-day event may have a lot of significance in the context of your overall application.

5 SHOWCASE YOUR TALENTS WITH A VIDEO OR PORTFOLIO

If you're a good athlete, have someone videotape your performances and/or games. You may want to send a short video to a college with your application, and you can't do it if you don't have it.

If you're an artist, someone should be recording your performances and/or you should be gathering the materials for a portfolio to send to colleges.

If you've written a great article for the high school newspaper, won a poetry contest, or had your letter to the editor published in the local newspaper, keep a copy or copies and make duplicates.



6

REVIEW YOUR TRANSCRIPT

Your high school will send your transcript to the colleges to which you apply. **It's a good idea to obtain a copy of your transcript** showing grades through junior year and the classes you are planning to take senior year so you can ensure there are no mistakes.

7

GET COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE

The more you know about colleges, the better your chances of finding the colleges that are the right fit for you. This knowledge will also help you impress the colleges to which you apply because you've shown initiative and interest in getting to know those schools.

HERE'S WHAT TO DO:

GO ONLINE — Read about colleges on their websites. When you find one that interests you, register online. The college will open a file on you and may track your interest, including additional communications with the admissions office; meeting with an interviewer and/or a professor at the college; visits to the college; meeting college reps at college fairs in person and virtually, and when they visit your high school. The more contact you have with a particular college, the more you show the college you're seriously interested and not just applying on a whim. Plus, you'll get a more in-depth view of the school.



GET COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE (CONT.)

TAKE A TRIP – The winter and spring of your junior year is a great time to look at colleges to help you narrow your choices. If you can't travel, you can tour most colleges virtually.

Try to "visit" when school is in session if you can. Figure on looking at two schools a day. If the choice is doing well in school or visiting a college, save the college visit for another day.

ATTEND A COLLEGE FAIR (OR TWO) – College fairs usually take place in the fall and spring, in person and virtually. Your high school guidance counselor should have a schedule of fairs in your area. If not, you can find a schedule of national fairs at: nacacfairs.org.

BONUS TIP – *If you're interested in studying the Arts, you should also look at the schedule for college fairs geared to the Arts.*

8

KEEP INTERVIEWS IN MIND

Some colleges offer interviews but generally don't start to interview juniors until the spring. Interviews continue throughout the summer before senior year and into the fall of senior year.

When you are ready to interview, make the appointment several weeks in advance so that you don't get closed out.



9

CONSIDER WORKING WITH AN INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT

Talk to your parents about retaining the services of an independent education consultant. These experts have an extensive knowledge of college admissions and can broaden your potential choices.

They can provide critical assistance in weighing factors such as location, program, curriculum, and admission criteria. Because they're not tied to any specific college or university, they can give you an impartial view.



“ Thank you again for working with our three kids. Each one got into his/her first choice school and I don't believe that's luck or a coincidence – they had the benefit of your good counsel! ”

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About Betsy F Woolf, J.D., C.E.P.

DIRECTOR OF WOOLF COLLEGE CONSULTING



Betsy F Woolf has devoted her career to enabling students to Stand Out to Get In® by making intelligent and thoughtful choices about applying to college.

She pilots each student's college application journey by creating an individualized strategy and action plan that reflects the student's unique qualities, talents, and abilities.

As a certified educational planner, Betsy is one of a select number of consultants who have achieved the highest level of competence in educational planning and who adhere to strict ethical and professional standards.

Her approach is balanced and independent of pressures from high school administrators.

Betsy's focus is on college fit and academic success for each student.

Find out if working with Betsy is right for you

Contact Woolf College Consulting Today

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