

college selection guide

Your guide to finding
the right school for **you**



why college?

By now, you've probably heard the same question over and over:

Where are you going to college?

Before you settle on the **"where,"** there are a few questions to answer.

Why do you want to go to college?

Is there a particular job you want to have?

Are there skills you want to learn?

Is there an area of the country or the world you want to experience?

Think about what your life looks like now.

What do you want to keep, and how would you like for it to change?

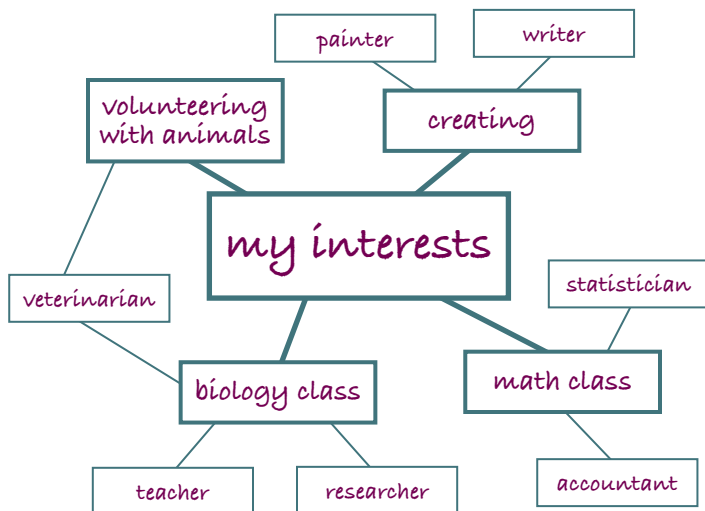


what do you enjoy?

Mind map it.

Mind mapping is an exercise to help you take one big idea and break it up into smaller categories. Breaking up ideas in this way helps you to see any larger themes that may appear as you work through the process. Use the grid shown here to map out your interests and potential careers related to those interests.

The example below gives an idea of what to include in your mind map.



There are several great mind mapping software programs and websites online. The basic map above will give you a start, but we **highly recommend** going online and creating your own.

where do you want to be?

Do you want to stay in your town, your state, or your region (Southeast, Midwest, West Coast, etc.)?

Will you be energized by a big city?

Or are you looking for a quieter campus life?

Select your location choices below.

I would like to go to school in the:

Northeast **Southeast** **Southwest** **West** **Midwest** **Doesn't Matter**

I would like to go to school in a college town that is:

Rural **Small Town** **City** **Big City** **Doesn't Matter**

I would like to go to school in a location surrounded by:

Beach **Flat Land** **Mountains** **Doesn't Matter**

I prefer weather that is:

Dry **Wet** **Warm** **Cold** **Doesn't Matter**

I want to be this far from home:

30-Minute Drive **2- to 5-Hour Drive** **1-Day Drive** **I Want to Fly to Get Home** **Doesn't Matter**



what else?

When it comes to college, **there's something for everyone!** Whether you're looking for a vocational program to specialize in a trade or a bachelor's degree to lead you to a doctorate, there are a lot of choices to consider.

Here are a few questions to think about as you start your search.



Select your college type.

I would prefer a college that is:

Public **Private** **Doesn't Matter**

I want a college with a student population that is this big:

Large (15,000 +) **Medium** (5,000 - 15,000) **Small** (less than 5,000) **Doesn't Matter**

Ultimately, I want to earn a/an:

Associate's Degree **Certificate** **Bachelor's Degree** **Master's Degree** **Doctorate**

I'm interested in a college with a focus on:

Performing Arts **Liberal Arts** **Religious Studies** **Military Service**
Specialized School **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)**

other interests

There's more to college than going to classes. To be well-rounded, you need to pursue interests and hobbies that are important to you. Start exploring what else makes you tick and will ultimately help you cope with the pressures of college – and live a fulfilling life.



Your activities

I am interested in participating in these activities:

Campus Radio / Newspaper

Community Service Organizations

Greek Life

International Opportunities

Intramural Sports

Music / Band

Outdoor Recreation

Political Clubs

Religious Programs

ROTC

Student Government Association

Theater

Visual Arts

Include additional interests below.

make a list

As a high school junior, it's good to have a list of 7-10 potential college options.

Think about the colleges you are considering and what appeals to you at each place.

Can you think of other schools that have similar qualities?



1

Write down the colleges you're currently thinking about below.

2

Add your **top 5 interests** below.

The schools that match your listed criteria are a good place to start your college search. After adding your interests below, research each college you listed to determine if they offer programs related to those topics.

Interest #1		Interest #2		Interest #3		Interest #4		Interest #5		Total number of "yes" responses
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	

more about cost

There are a lot of creative ways to pay your way through college. **Some examples include:**

Work Study These are on-campus jobs where your pay applies directly to your bill.

Scholarships These are often offered by the prospective college, but be sure to talk to your high school counselor and search online to find outside scholarships offered by local businesses and community organizations.

Grants Similar to scholarships, grants provide money you don't have to pay back.

Loans Offered to both students and parents, these help you delay making payments until after you graduate.

Check out additional financial aid resources:

Federal Student Aid Information

Budget Calculator

Big Future



next steps

You've made your list and narrowed it down. **What's next?**

Connect Visit the school websites and fill out an interest form. Getting on the mailing list will keep you in the loop about important details such as deadlines and upcoming events.

Develop your questions Before you hit the road to visit campus, think about the questions YOU want to ask!

Visit Schedule a campus visit. You won't really know if a college fits you until you step on campus. Take a look around: Can you see yourself going to classes and living there?

Get more insight on the college search and admission process:



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