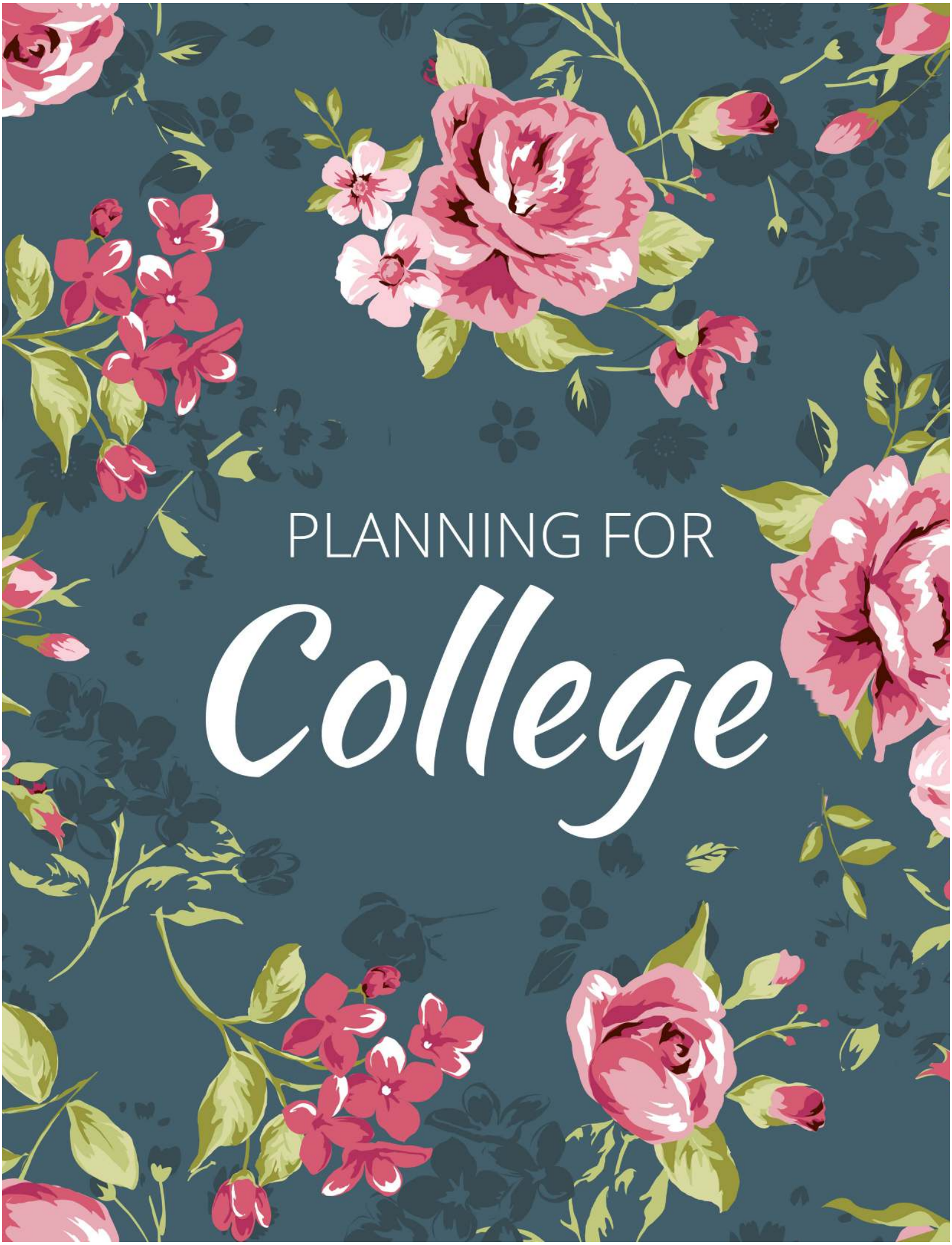
PLANNING FOR
College

Almost Empty Nest

THE ADVENTURE OF PREPARING, GUIDING, AND WATCHING OUR CHILDREN TAKE FLIGHT

www.almostemptynest.net

PLANNING FOR

College

This planner belongs to:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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Published by: Laura Dennis

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Cover Design and Interior Layout by Beyond the Blogger

Welcome to the Planning for College Planner!

This planner has been in the making for several years. After helping two sons go through the process of everything it takes to get from high school to college, and finding no available planner to guide the process, I decided to design my own.

My own daughter is just now entering this process and I designed every page with her and her classmates in mind. The planner is created to give you a spot to record and organize everything you need as you plan for your future.

Take a day and get out your colored pens, pencils, washi tape, and stickers. Whether you are a high school freshman just starting your plan or a senior overwhelmed by the process, there is a place to begin.

Fill in the courses you have completed and the ones you need to take to graduate. Continue throughout highschool recording your activities, employment, leadership positions, and volunteer hours. You will need all of this information to prepare a resume to give to the people who will write your letters of recommendation and to complete all of your college and scholarship applications.

Think about your dream college atmosphere and activities.

Reflect on your experiences. The reflection and dream pages will help you brainstorm for essay ideas.

And finally, take a deep breath. There will be days it will feel like a whirlwind, but take time to savor the experience and know that you will soon be a college student with the world at your feet.

Blessings to you and your family!

Laura

Start Planning

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29:11

High School Course Planning

Math

Credits Required: _____

Science

Credits Required: _____

English

Credits Required: _____

Social Studies

Credits Required: _____

Foreign Language

Credits Required: _____

Other/Extracurricular

Credits Required: _____

Advanced Placement/IB Courses

High School Resume

Extracurricular Activity	Description of Involvement	Dates Participated

Employment	Position	Dates

Leadership Positions	Description	Dates

Volunteer Hours

LOCATION	ACTIVITY	HOURS

My Dream College and College Experience

Make a vision board, mind map, or list of the things that would make your future college experience the best it can be.

SAT/ACT

Test Name: _____

Plans for preparation: _____

_____

Dates offered: _____

Date Registered for: _____ Fee Paid ☐ Time: _____

Location: _____

Bring to the test: _____

Date scores released: _____ My Score: _____

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Junior Year

"The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do."

Steve Jobs

Junior Year Checklist

- ☐ Check on your high school course plan and make sure you are on track for graduation.
- ☐ Take AP, IB, and concurrent enrollment classes to prepare for college and to gain college hours.
- ☐ Research colleges. Use the provided "Notes" pages for your initial searches and take more detailed notes on the "Schools I Am Thinking About" pages.
- ☐ Attend college fairs and sign up for college visits to your school.
- ☐ Be active in clubs and extracurricular activities and take on leadership roles.
- ☐ Consider a part-time job or freelancing some of your skills.
- ☐ Update the resume worksheet so you will have everything together when you need to make the real thing.
- ☐ Prepare for and take the SAT/ACT.
- ☐ Identify teachers, coaches, activity sponsors, and others to write your letters of recommendation.
- ☐ Prepare your resume for the letters of recommendation.
- ☐ Do meaningful community service and log your hours on the "Volunteer Hours" page.
- ☐ Begin College Visits.

My Dream College and College Experience

Make a new vision board, mind map, or list of things that would make your future college and experience the best it could be. Has anything changed? What experience/person has contributed to changing your thoughts?

College Fairs/ College Visits to My School

College Fair Name	Location, Date, Time	Colleges I Want to Talk to

College Visits to My School	Room #, Date, Time	Notes

Teachers/Coaches/Other People to Ask for Recommendation Letters

(ask them BEFORE the end of your junior year)

NAME	DATE ASKED	RESUME PROVIDED	RECEIVED
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
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			☐
			☐
			☐

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A place to take notes while researching colleges

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Schools I Am Thinking About

Name of School: _____

Location: _____

Website: _____

Phone number: _____ Counselor: _____

Why I think I might like this school: _____

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Possible Majors: _____

Visit policy/visit days: _____

Sticker price of school: _____

Estimated Cost to Attend: _____

Scholarships/Financial Aid: _____

Visit scheduled: _____

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Sticker price of school: _____

Estimated Cost to Attend: _____

Scholarships/Financial Aid: _____

Visit scheduled: _____

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Reflections on my Junior Year

What were the three most significant or important things that happened this year, whether positive or negative?

How did you handle these situations?
Do you like how you handled them?
How would you change how you handled them?

Reflections on my Junior Year

How are you different from a year ago?

What are you most excited about for your senior year?

Senior Year

"You can't be that kid standing at the top of the waterslide, overthinking it. You have to go down the chute."

Tina Fey

Summer Before Senior Year Checklist

- ☐ Register for and take the SAT/ACT
- ☐ Narrow down the list of colleges to which to apply and schedule any visits for the summer or early fall.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the common application. (www.commonapp.org)
- ☐ For schools that do not accept the common application, find out what application they do accept. The school website is the best source for this information.
- ☐ Begin writing your essay. The fall will be busy and having the essay written and/or having a basic rough draft that can be adapted for any application will be a tremendous stress relief. The common application essay prompts are released for the next application year around February.
- ☐ If you have not already, contact teachers and others for recommendation letters. **The most popular teachers can become overwhelmed with requests and may limit how many they write**. Provide these teachers with a resume of high school accomplishments and activities to assist them in writing the letter.
- ☐ Research and apply for scholarships.

Senior Year Checklist

- ☐ Finish college visits
- ☐ Make final decision about which schools to which you will apply.
- ☐ Gather the information you need for each school's application including all application requirements and all deadlines (admission, financial aid, supplemental department applications, scholarships). Fill out a College Form for each school.
- ☐ Apply for outside scholarships.
- ☐ Fill out the FAFSA.
- ☐ After decisions are announced, make note of housing and other deposit deadlines.
- ☐ Possibly attend Admitted Students' Days at the schools you are trying to decide between.
- ☐ MAKE YOUR DECISION!
- ☐ Graduate from high school
- ☐ Send final transcript and anything else your school requires.
- ☐ Schedule your orientation.

My Dream College and College Experience

Make a new vision board, mind map, or list of things that would make your future college and experience the best it could be. Has anything changed? What experience/person has contributed to changing your thoughts?

Notes

A place to take notes while researching colleges

Aug

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Sept

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Oct

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Nov

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Dec

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Jan

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Feb

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Mar

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Apr

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

May

How I will savor my senior year this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Jun

How I will savor summer this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Jul

How I will savor summer this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

Aug

How I will savor summer this month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

DEADLINES:

TO DO:

College Visits

"I think goals should never be easy, they should force you to work, even if they are uncomfortable at the time."

Michael Phelps

College Evaluations

Name of School: _____

Location: _____

Mode of travel to the school: _____

Travel time: _____ Am I ok with the travel time? **YES** *No*

Major and Department I desire at this school: _____

How up-to-date is that department's facilities? _____

What will be the class size for your major classes? _____

How academically rigorous is the school? _____

Does the school lean a particular way politically or religiously? _____

How do I feel about these leanings? _____

Greek Life and would you participate if active? _____

What are the dorms like? _____

_____

What is the car policy? If cars are not allowed or it would be inconvenient to bring one, how will you get around off campus and to travel home?

_____

When do students move off campus? _____

What is off campus housing like? _____

Can my family afford this school? _____

How much financial aid and scholarships do I need to attend this school?

_____

Do you like the weather you will experience? **YES** *No* _____

College Evaluations

What are the social and recreational activities available at the school? _____

_____

Which social and recreational activities interested you most?

_____

Would you feel comfortable and safe on this campus? **YES** *No* _____

Would you feel comfortable and safe in the surrounding off campus area? **YES** *No* _____

What is the dining situation and required meal plan? _____

_____

Is there an accessible grocery store? **YES** *No* _____

What do the students do for fun? _____

What is the school spirit like? _____

_____

Did the students you saw walking around campus look like people you would want to hang out with? **YES** *No* _____

What did you think of the tour guide? _____

Final impressions? _____

_____

Anything that surprised you, positive or negative? _____

_____

How does this school compare to your Dream College pages?

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After your visit, do you want to apply? **YES** *No*

On a scale of 1-10, how much do you want to attend this school? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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What are the dorms like? _____

_____

What is the car policy? If cars are not allowed or it would be inconvenient to bring one, how will you get around off campus and to travel home?

_____

When do students move off campus? _____

What is off campus housing like? _____

Can my family afford this school? _____

How much financial aid and scholarships do I need to attend this school?

_____

Do you like the weather you will experience? **YES** *No* _____

College Evaluations

What are the social and recreational activities available at the school? _____

_____

Which social and recreational activities interested you most?

_____

Would you feel comfortable and safe on this campus? **YES** *No* _____

Would you feel comfortable and safe in the surrounding off campus area? **YES** *No* _____

What is the dining situation and required meal plan? _____

_____

Is there an accessible grocery store? **YES** *No* _____

What do the students do for fun? _____

What is the school spirit like? _____

_____

Did the students you saw walking around campus look like people you would want to hang out with? **YES** *No* _____

What did you think of the tour guide? _____

Final impressions? _____

_____

Anything that surprised you, positive or negative? _____

_____

How does this school compare to your Dream College pages?

_____

After your visit, do you want to apply? **YES** *No*

On a scale of 1-10, how much do you want to attend this school? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

College Evaluations

Name of School: _____

Location: _____

Mode of travel to the school: _____

Travel time: _____ Am I ok with the travel time? **YES** *No*

Major and Department I desire at this school: _____

How up-to-date is that department's facilities? _____

What will be the class size for your major classes? _____

How academically rigorous is the school? _____

Does the school lean a particular way politically or religiously? _____

How do I feel about these leanings? _____

Greek Life and would you participate if active? _____

What are the dorms like? _____

_____

What is the car policy? If cars are not allowed or it would be inconvenient to bring one, how will you get around off campus and to travel home?

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After your visit, do you want to apply? **YES** *No*

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Notes

A place to take notes while researching colleges

Applications

"I know how it looks. But just start.
Nothing is insurmountable."

Lin-Manuel Miranda

Applications

Name of School: _____

Website: ----------

Location: ----------

Counselor Name: ----------

Counselor e-mail: ----------

Counselor phone number: ----------

Applicant portal: ----------

Applicant ID and password:

ID: ---------- Password: ----------

Application Requirements: ----------

Common App? ☐ Deadline: ----------

Other Application Name: ---------- Deadline: ----------

Supplemental Requirements ----------

---------- Deadline: ----------

---------- Deadline: ----------

---------- Deadline: ----------

Applications

Letters of Recommendation:

Essay Prompts:

Scholarship Applications:

--- Deadline: ---

--- Deadline: ---

--- Deadline: ---

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Application fee: ---

- ☐ Application Complete
- ☐ Letters Sent
- ☐ Transcript Sent
- ☐ Supplemental Application Complete
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Essay Checklist

- ☐ Is the essay about me and my ideas?
- ☐ Would I want to know me after reading it?
- ☐ Do I have the CORRECT school name/mascot, etc. listed? It is ok to reuse essays, but make sure you get the name of each school correct.
- ☐ Does it answer the essay prompt?
- ☐ Is it interesting?
- ☐ Has it been proofread for grammar, spelling, and structure?
- ☐ Have I met the character/word requirements?
- ☐ Have I re-read the requirements and double-checked that the essay meets them?

Essay Prompt:

What is the essay for? (Common app, supplemental question, scholarship, etc.)

Additional essay requirements (length, other specifics not in the prompt):

Initial Ideas:

Did you find any ideas from your College Dreams or Reflections pages?

People to ask for help with this question?

Who will I ask to proofread and give their opinion?

Due date: ---

Goal date for rough draft: ---

Goal date for completion: ---

- ☐ **Rough Draft Completed**
- ☐ **Final Essay Completed**
- ☐ **Proofread**
- ☐ **Submitted**

Essays

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Goal date for rough draft: ---

Goal date for completion: ---

- ☐ **Rough Draft Completed**
- ☐ **Final Essay Completed**
- ☐ **Proofread**
- ☐ **Submitted**

The FAFSA

Complete the FAFSA whether you believe you qualify for financial aid or not. Some schools require it for their scholarships and it is the only way to receive any federal aid. Your parents will likely need to assist you in filing this form.

Read the website and instructions carefully.
The website is: https://fafsa.ed.gov

This is the **ONLY website for the FAFSA that you need**. Do not be tricked by other websites that may charge for assisting you with filing your FAFSA. **Filing the FAFSA is free through the .gov website.**

Information you will need to fill out the form:

- Your social security number
- Your parents' social security numbers
- Your driver's license
- Prior year's W-2 and income records for you and your parents
- Parents and Student's federal tax returns
- Records of all assets – cash, real estate (not including the home you live in), and investments (not including retirement funds like a 401K) for both parents and student
- Records of any untaxed income – child support, veteran's benefits, etc. for both parents and student

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE

The CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE is used by some colleges to award institutional financial aid and scholarships. It is administered by the College Board at *https://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile*

There is a fee to file the PROFILE, although waivers are available.

You will need the same information required for the FAFSA, but will also need:

- Current bank statements
- Current mortgage information
- Records of savings, stocks, bonds, trusts, and other investments
- Your noncustodial parent's email address, if applicable.

Scholarship Checklist

- ☐ Do I meet the requirements for the scholarship?
- ☐ Do I fit the mission of the scholarship and organization?
- ☐ Did I brag a little, but not too much?
- ☐ Did I focus on my contributions and/or leadership to continue the sponsoring organization's mission?
- ☐ Did someone proofread my essay?
- ☐ Did I include all the required materials?
- ☐ Did I meet the deadline?

Scholarships

Name of scholarship: _____

How I learned about this scholarship: _____

Sponsoring Organization: _____

Amount: $ _____

Scholarship Requirements:

_____

_____

Application Requirements:

- ☐ Essay
- ☐ Transcript
- ☐ Letter of Recommendation
- ☐ Other _____

Double check to make sure I meet the requirements (residency, income, grades, test scores, etc.):

_____

_____

Due Date: _____

Goal Date for Completion: _____

- ☐ Submitted _____

Decision Date: _____

Decision

- ☐ Celebrate
- ☐ No sweat. I will keep trying.

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Name of scholarship: _____

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_____

_____

Due Date: _____

Goal Date for Completion: _____

- ☐ Submitted _____

Decision Date: _____

Decision

- ☐ Celebrate
- ☐ No sweat. I will keep trying.

Scholarships

Name of scholarship: _____

How I learned about this scholarship: _____

Sponsoring Organization: _____

Amount: $_____

Scholarship Requirements:

_____

_____

Application Requirements:

- ☐ Essay
- ☐ Transcript
- ☐ Letter of Recommendation
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My Decision

My Top 3 College Choices

Name of School			
Top 3 things about this school			
Any negatives			
Do they have an admitted students day I wish to attend?			
Scholarships/Financial Aid Offered			
Bottom Line Price			
Rank the schools by department and resources for my major			
Rank the schools by the atmosphere I desire (size, activities, dorm life, Greek life, etc.)			
Can I see myself at this school?			

My Decision is...

Getting Ready for the Move

"You can, you should, and if you're brave enough to start, you will."

Stephen King

Dorm Shopping Checklist

BED

Pillows
Twin XL Mattress Pad
Twin XL Mattress Topper
Twin XL Mattress Encasement
2 Sets of Twin XL Sheets
Twin XL Comforter
Blanket
Bedside Shelf/Pocket
Bed Risers

BATH

2-3 Towel Sets
Shower Caddy
Shower Shoes
Over the Door Towel Rack
Shower Wrap Towel
Hair Wrap Towel

IN-SUITE BATH

All of the above “bath” items
Trash Can
Toothbrush Holder
Bath Mat
Shower Curtain Rings
Shower Curtain
Toilet Bowl Brush
Toilet Plunger
Toilet Paper
Bathroom Cleaners
Cleaning Rags/Sponges/Brushes

CLOSET

Hangers
Double Closet Rod
Hanging Jewelry Organizer
Hanging Organizers for sweaters, shirts, purses, etc.
Shoe Storage

DESK

Desk top Organizers
Desk Drawer Organizers
Desk Chair
Desk Lamp
Calculator
Printer/Paper/Ink
Notebooks/Post-it Notes
Highlighters/Pens/Pencils
Scissors/Tape
Flash Drive

CLEANING

Small Trash Can for under desk
Larger Trash Can for the room
Small or Hand-held Vacuum
Swiffer
Air Freshener
All-Purpose Cleaner

FOOD AREA

Plates, Bowls, Cups, Mugs
Eating Utensils
Water Bottles
Travel Mug
Food Storage Containers
Keurig Coffeemaker
Coffee Pods
Microwave
Refrigerator
Ziploc Bags
Paper Towels
Fridge Cart
Hot Pad
Dish Soap

LAUNDRY

Laundry Bag/Hamper/Basket
Laundry Detergent/Fabric Softener/Bleach
Steamer
Iron
Ironing Board
Ironing Pad
Drying Rack
Downey Wrinkle Release
Febreeze Fabric Refresher

STORAGE

Shelving Unit
Underbed Storage
Storage Trunk
Storage Furniture
Drawer Organizers
Makeup Organizers
Over the Door Hooks
Stacking Drawers
Elfa Drawers

Dorm Shopping Checklist

HEALTH & SAFETY

- First Aid Kit
- Prescription Medications
- Health Insurance Card
- Room Safe
- Computer Lock
- Surge Protector
- Flashlight

PERSONALIZE YOUR ROOM

- Fan
- Rugs
- Throw Blanket
- Magnetic Dry Erase Board/Markers/Magnets
- Bulletin Board
- Door Stop
- Speaker
- Washi Tape
- Over-the-Door Mirror
- Command Hooks
- Command Picture Hanging Strips
- Plant
- Headphones
- Bed phones

PRACTICAL EXTRAS

- Tool Kit
- Sewing Kit
- Umbrella
- Rain Jacket
- Gym Bag
- Reusable Shopping Bags
- Weekend Bag or Duffle
- Bike
- Bike Lock
- Amazon Student Prime

MUST HAVES

- Laptop Computer
- Planner
- Backpack
- Personal Bathroom Supplies
- Clothing

Dorm Assignment & Roommate

Dorm Name: ----------

Type of Room: ----------

Room Number: ----------

Notes: (room, window, furniture, closet dimensions)

Move-In Date: ----------

Roommate: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Social Media: _____

_____

Meal Plans, Health Forms, & Other Details

MEAL PLAN OPTIONS

Option Name			
Meals Included			
Dining Dollars			
Other Notes			
Price			

My choice: _____

HEALTH FORMS

Forms Required: _____

_____

Physical Needed? YES No

Physical Scheduled: _____

Vaccines Required: _____

Due Date: _____

ORIENTATION

Possible dates: _____

Date scheduled: _____

Travel arrangements:

_____

_____

_____

Classes/Degree Plan

Total Hours Needed	Course	Choices	Notes	Hours Earned	Hours Still Needed
General Requirements					

Classes/Degree Plan

Total Hours Needed	Course	Choices	Notes	Hours Earned	Hours Still Needed
Major Requirements					

Class Registration

CLASSES I WANT

List several extra choices in case a class choice is unavailable

CLASS NAME	CODE	CLASS DAYS	TIME

My Schedule

MY CLASSES

CLASS NAME	CODE	CLASS DAYS	TIME

Packing for the Move to College

PACKING SUPPLY LIST

- Banker's boxes (can be purchased in multi-packs at Sams, office supply stores, or online). These are just the right size for small collections of items, are easy to carry (handles), and stack in the car or on a dolly.
- Depending on your items, a few larger boxes
- Drawer units, storage boxes, laundry baskets, etc. (Any dorm room item that will hold other items.) You will never be sorry you purchased good, quality drawer units that will last through college and beyond.
- Mover's stretch plastic wrap
- A system for labeling
- Trash bags
- Wheeled duffles or suitcases

HOW TO PACK CLOTHING

Make a small hole in the middle of the non-open end of several trash bags. Slip the trash bags over clothes on hangers.

Place other clothing in wheeled suitcases or in your drawer units.

HOW TO PACK SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND OTHER SMALL COLLECTIONS OF ITEMS

Place these items in banker's boxes.

HOW TO PACK LARGE ITEMS

Some items will not fit in boxes and will have to be placed in the car "as is." Wrap anything that might get dirty or has loose parts with plastic stretch wrap.

TIME TO LABEL!!!

Label every box with your dorm name, room number, and name. Hopefully you will be met at the curb by some smiling upper classmen who will empty your car and have everything to the dorm room in less than 10 minutes. However, you want these willing souls to bring your stuff to the correct room.

Parent Survival Kit for College Drop-off

Be patient with your parents. They are going through as many, if not more, emotions as you are. Give these pages to your parents to help them prepare for your college drop-off.

PARENT SURVIVAL KIT FOR COLLEGE DROP-OFF

Whether you are approaching college drop-off with dread or excitement or a combination of both, you want the day to go as smoothly as possible. There is the potential for crowded hallways and staircases (forget the elevator), no or very little air conditioning, and a high emotional level from every person you bump into in these crowded hallways. Being prepared will keep you from bursting into tears as soon as you walk into your child's very small room that is already full of her roommate's stuff and her roommate's five family members.

Follow these steps and you will be smiling at least most of the day.

1. The first step to being prepared is to follow the instructions from the school. Plan to arrive at the time you have been assigned. Don't try to beat the system. They have assigned the times for a reason and they will not want to check you in early. If you manage to beat the system and get moved in early, it will cause resentment from your child's roommate who arrives to find the room already set up without her input.

2. ***Bring your Parent Survival Kit for College Drop-off***
   Include these items:

   - A dollie. Hopefully, happy and enthusiastic upper classmen will meet you at the curb and take everything to the room for you. If this does not happen, you will be prepared to stack things on a dollie and make quick work of moving the stuff to the room.
   - A wheeled ice chest with some cold drinks and snacks.
   - A door stop to prop the dorm door open while moving in or to keep the room from being too stuffy.
   - A few tools (electric screwdriver/drill, rubber mallet, hammer) for assembling shelves and drawer units.
   - Pen and Paper to make a list of items to go buy once you arrive.
   - Tape Measure. If you need to go buy shelves or drawer units, it will help to know the space available.
   - Kleenex (a few for your pocket and a box for the car).
   - Multi-purpose cleaner and paper towels to clean spots in the room or furniture that were missed by the last occupant.

3. Expect chaos and be ready to be patient and malleable to the situation.

4. Don't plan to give advice to your child about room setup or anything else. This is not the time. It is their room and they need the freedom to decide where the bed goes, what drawer they want their underwear in, and whether they want you to unpack everything.

5. Take pictures of any existing damage to walls, floors, doors, and furniture in case it is an issue at move-out.

6. Plan a shopping trip. After you arrive and get the basic unpacking done, take a survey of the room and make a list of items to go buy. These may be items that were too big to bring with you or just some snacks and laundry detergent. A shopping trip gets you out of the dorm for a while and lets you and your child pick out a few last things together.

7. Find a place other than the dorm for your good-byes - some place calmer and more private. Take your child out to dinner or for ice cream as your last activity and say good bye there.

While it may be hard to believe, you both will survive the drop-off experience. Planning ahead and bringing a ***Parent Survival Kit for College Drop-Off*** will certainly help. While you cannot anticipate everything the day will entail, having a few items at your fingertips will keep the panic at bay. When it is time to get in the car and drive away, smile through the tears and congratulate yourself on raising a spectacular kid who is ready for the adventures and experiences ahead.

Congratulations!
You did it!

You are beginning a new and exciting journey. Some days will thrill you with new experiences. Some days will fascinate you with possibilities. Some days will include new friends, fun, and laughter. Other days may be a bore filled with the tedium of college classes and the realization that college is harder than you thought. Some days may break your heart and make you long to give up and go home.

Don't go home. Stick it out. Call your mom. Call a friend. Eat some ice cream, but don't give up. The world belongs to the "chippers" – the ones who chip away at a task day after day, no matter how small the chips seem. Get up, go to class, go to the interest meeting for the club, sit with someone new in the dining center, ask for help if you need it.

If you find you need to make changes to your plans with a different major or friend group or even transfer to a different school, that is ok.

Just never stop chipping!