

When to Visit Colleges

How to Schedule Your Campus Visits

Visiting a college campus is one of the most exciting steps in choosing a college. If possible, it's best to visit colleges before your applications are due. That way, you can be confident you'd be happy at any of the colleges you're applying to.

It's also best to go is when the college is in session. That way, you'll get to see it when classes are meeting and day-to-day activities are taking place.

How to Pick a Date

Below are some guidelines on when to visit. Plan your visit well ahead of time, so you can make sure that you see what you need to see and meet with the people who can tell you what you need to know.

During the Week

Mondays through Thursdays are ideal for visits since campuses are generally in full swing. Visiting on a Friday may not be as practical, as students, faculty and staff might be busy with social activities starting Friday afternoon.

High school holidays that fall on Mondays are often great opportunities for making college visits. Many colleges are in session on these days — and you won't be missing any of your high school classes.

The Best Seasons

The late summer and early September before senior year are convenient times to visit, since many colleges begin their fall semester as early as mid-August.

The spring of junior year is a good time if you've already researched colleges. Spring break is also good if you play fall sports or are considering applying under early action or early decision plans, which usually have application deadlines in November of senior year.

It may be more useful for seniors to wait until the fall through winter to make their visits. That timing can help seniors narrow college lists.

After You've Been Accepted

Many colleges invite their accepted candidates to spend a few days on campus before the May 1 reply date to encourage them to enroll. This is a good opportunity to make some in-depth comparisons between the colleges that have accepted you.

However, if you're planning to wait to visit colleges until after you've received acceptances, keep in mind that you may have only a few weeks to visit and make your decision. Most colleges don't mail acceptance letters before April, and the standard reply date is May 1.

When Not to Go

Check specific dates with each college so you don't arrive when the campus is deserted. Call the college or look on the college's website for the academic calendar to find out when breaks, reading periods and exam periods are scheduled.

The following Information was taken from Collegeboard.com

The admission office may be closed to visitors at certain times. For example, admission officers may be too busy to meet with you in May and April — that's when they're reviewing applications. Check with the college.