

Navigating the Common Application

1. Gather Materials

Filling out your application takes time, and if you have to keep interrupting your progress to find information, it can take even longer. Get a headstart by collecting all the material you need prior to starting:

- A Copy of Your High School Transcript
- A List of Your Activities, Work and Family Responsibilities
- SAT/ACT Test Scores & Dates
- Parent/Legal Guardian Information
- Academic Honors & Achievements

2. Create An Account

- Choose your registration type...if you're applying to college for the first time you'll select the "First Year Student" button
- Provide your login credentials. Use an email address you check often since that will be the email the Common App and colleges will use to get in touch with you
- Complete your registration information
 - Your name, home address, phone number and date of birth
 - Be sure to use your legal name as it appears on official school documents and standardized tests so colleges can match documents to the correct person
 - Adjust your communication preferences
- Select "Create Account" to complete it!

3. Add Colleges

Once you've created your account and explored the colleges that accept the Common App, you're ready to start adding colleges.

The College Search tab is where you will search for and add the colleges you want to apply to. If you have a school in mind, you can search by name. If you want to keep exploring, you can use the "More Filters" button.

Adding a college is easy! You may add a college using the add button in the search results list. You can also select a college and add them using the "Add to My Colleges" button from their info screen.

Once you've added colleges, you can see them on your Dashboard and in your My Colleges tab. Keep in mind you *may only add up to 20 colleges!!*

4. Family Makeup

Asks various questions about the household dynamic as well as requires information about Parent #1, Parent #2 and your sibling (if you have one). These questions cover topics like Age, Employment, etc.

5. Education

First, find your current high school through the search option. You'll be asked about your start date at the high school and graduation date. Additionally, you'll be asked for your high school counselor's information.

The next section(s) ask about classes you've taken inside the school as well as dual enrollment courses, self-reported GPA, honors you've received and future plans.

All colleges need things like official school forms, and many colleges will also ask for letters of recommendation. Counselors, teachers and recommenders will submit these kinds of forms on your behalf! Invite these recommenders by clicking on a college you would like to apply to, click "Recommenders & FERPA" and type in the email address for the recommender.

6. Self-Reported Testing

Under the Testing Section, you can self-report your SAT/ACT, AP/IB scores by typing in your Math, Reading and Writing Scores. It is important that you report your highest scores!!

Many colleges also require that you send an official copy of your standardized testing scores to them (in addition to your self-reported scores). You can do this by logging into your CollegeBoard account - remember it costs about \$12 to send them to the specific college!

7. Activities Galore

The last section before the Essay Section is dedicated to all the activities you do outside of the classroom. This helps the admissions counselor understand more about who you are and what you're passionate about. Fill in everything you do whether you think it is important or not!

8. Write the Common App Essay & Check for College-Specific Essay Prompts

The Common Application has its own essay which requires you to pick one of the seven essay prompts and answer it. The prompts for 2019-2020 can be found here: <https://www.commonapp.org/apply/2019-essay-prompts>

Check each college you want to apply to, to see if they have supplemental essays or short answers that you must complete.

9. Review & Submit Your Application

Submission is a three-step process:

1. Review your application to ensure you have all correct information, and there are green checkmarks by each section!
2. Pay the application fee for *each college that you decide to apply to*. If you are on Free and Reduced Lunch, there are app fee waivers! If you have any questions about fee waivers, please see Mrs. Molino in the Guidance Office!
3. Click submit!!

