

# Senior Year College Checklist

Thinking about going to college? Follow these steps:

## 1 Get Started

- ☐ Use the [CFNC.org](https://cfnc.org) college search tool to identify the colleges/universities that match your interests. Consider factors such as majors offered, location, GPA, ACT/SAT test score requirements, and campus life.
- ☐ Create a list of dates associated with the colleges/universities you intend to apply to, such as admission application, and scholarship deadlines.
- ☐ Complete NC Residency Determination Service (RDS) at [NCResidency.org](https://ncresidency.org) to see if you qualify for in-state tuition (a substantial savings on tuition and fees for NC residents).  
**Note:** You'll need your parent/legal guardian's information to complete RDS and your residency certification number (RCN) during the admissions process for NC colleges.
- ☐ Schedule a one-on-one meeting with your school counselor or college adviser to discuss financial aid options, such as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and local scholarships.
- ☐ Before completing your applications, make sure you have created a professional email address (i.e. JSmith2026@gmail, @hotmail, @icloud). Note that your school email will be disabled after graduation.

## 3 Finish Strong

- ☐ Compare financial aid offers from the colleges/universities where you were accepted. Talk with your family and carefully review out-of-pocket costs (costs that are not covered by financial aid).
- ☐ If you earned college credit while in high school, contact the colleges/universities that admitted you to confirm how your credits will transfer.
- ☐ If you're going to a community college, be sure to check with the campus about placement tests and deadlines.
- ☐ After carefully considering your options, select a college/university to attend and notify the college by their deadline. You may also want to decline offers you receive from other institutions.
- ☐ Check your email and mailbox regularly for official communication from your chosen college/university. Look for information about enrollment deposits, orientation, housing applications, class registration, and financial aid.

## 2 Big Push

- ☐ Log in or create a [CFNC.org](https://cfnc.org) account to apply to colleges through the Application Hub and send official high school transcripts to the colleges/universities you applied to.
- ☐ Gather your application materials, including essays/personal statements, recommendation letters, residency certification number (RCN), and SAT/ACT test scores (if needed).
- ☐ Before submitting your applications, double-check for accuracy and ask your school counselor or college adviser if you qualify for application fee waivers. Take advantage of NC's College Application Week in October, when many NC colleges and universities waive their application fees for students applying through [CFNC.org](https://cfnc.org).
- ☐ Complete the FAFSA at [StudentAid.gov/FAFSA](https://studentaid.gov/FAFSA) to see if you are eligible for federal and state financial aid, including the Next NC Scholarship and the Need-Based Scholarship for Private College Students. Completing the FAFSA could also unlock aid at the college level. Visit [CFNC.org/Pay](https://cfnc.org/Pay) to learn more about FAFSA and financial aid.
- ☐ Use [CFNC.org/Scholarships](https://cfnc.org/Scholarships) to find and apply for additional scholarships.
- ☐ Regularly check your email, college portal and mailbox for official communication from the colleges/universities you applied to. Be on the lookout for missing application materials, admission decisions, and next steps.