

Student Quick Guide: How To Build a Balanced College List






Before You Start - Key Areas of Focus To Guide Your Process

Personal: Always remember your personal values - never sacrifice who you are for your choices in this journey

Academic: Think about your future self and who you want to be to inform your choice in Degree Programs and Major

Institution: Research your College Matches' student completion rates to ensure they have you in mind.

Affordability: Align your future goals with your choices and how much you are willing and able to spend investing in yourself.

| STEP | WHAT | THE WHY AND HOW | WHEN |
|------|---|---|--|
| 01 | Give Yourself Time  | <p>WHY: Time is your best resource in any situation. Keep time on your side to guide big decisions - make plans, change course, and end up with the right balanced list.</p> <p>HOW: Log into your myOptions account, complete your profile and peruse your matches - start to see yourself at these schools. No account? Check out this myOptions Student Quick Guide.</p> | As soon as you decide you're college-bound |
| 02 | Self-exploration and Self-reflection  | <p>WHY: It is critical to explore what you are good at, what drives you and research how that can inform your major and future career aspirations.</p> <p>HOW: Refer to the "Before You Start" at the top of this document to frame how to approach this key step.</p> | <p>At least 12 weeks before the application deadline</p> <p>TIP: This process evolves. It is important to continue to be open to ideas as you go through steps 3 - 5.</p> |
| 03 | Get Advice  | <p>WHY: There is a lot of noise on the internet. It is crucial that you receive honest and timely advice from those that came before you.</p> <p>HOW: Explore the advice blog right from your myOptions account and hear from those who have been in your shoes.</p> | Ongoing - At least 10 weeks before application deadline |
| 04 | Build a Support System  | <p>WHY: Getting help from the start is a sign of intelligence in any life matter. As you embark on college planning - your first true investment in your future self - bring on those that know and believe in you.</p> <p>HOW: Find a parent, family member, mentor, or anyone in your community you trust to have your back, then invite them right from your myOptions account.</p> | Ongoing - At least 8 weeks before application deadline |
| 05 | Connect With Your School Counselor  | <p>WHY: Your school counselor is your best ally, who has the tools and resources to enable you. Keep them in the loop as you go through your journey.</p> <p>HOW: Find your School Counselor's email address and share your progress with them. Don't overthink it and use this email template.</p> | At least 6 weeks before application deadline |

Not everyone can start in the Summer - If you are seeing this at the start of your senior year, no fear! Use this document to walk through the necessary steps to be ready for your school's college application day or by your colleges' application deadlines.