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# The Road To College!

— Tips and tricks you need to know! —

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# Choosing Colleges

# What To Look For When Picking a School

Don't choose a school based on where you're friends are going.

Take the following into consideration:

- **Distance:** How far do you want to go?
- **Location:** Where do I want to be and why?
- **Course Content:** Is there a variety of majors I can pick from?
- **Support System:** If you academic help how easy can you get it?
- **Cost:** What is considered affordable for you?

# Pro and Cons of Combined Degree Program

Since combined degrees demand are an extraordinary commitment early in your undergraduate years, you should weigh them carefully.

## Advantages of Accelerated Degrees

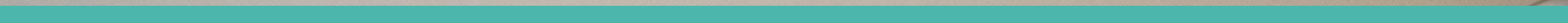
- You are quickly immersed in a field that you are passionate about.
- You get to start graduate studies early.
- They generally cost less than traditional programs.
- One admission fee covers both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- You graduate with an advanced degree in less time.

## Drawbacks of Accelerated Degrees

- You might change your mind about your career plans after you start the program.
- Due to the demands of your studies, you won't have a typical college experience.
- And you won't have time to explore studies outside the program.
- You might decide that you want to attend a different graduate school.



# Structuring The Application



# Personal Statement

## 1. Reveal something new about yourself.

- Take this opportunity to give the admissions office insight into something new about you.

## 2. Spend time brainstorming topics.

- Take time to think about what's important to you, what people or events have shaped you, and what you think is interesting about yourself. Don't just choose the most obvious topic, like the soccer team captain writing about winning the championship game.

## 3. Be mindful of word choice, tone, and voice.

- Your essay should sound like you wrote it, so don't overload it with long vocabulary words, complex sentence structure, or a lofty tone if that's not how you normally write or speak.

# Fundamentals of Essay Writing

## 1. Write about something that's important to you.

It could be an experience, a person, a book—anything that has had an impact on your life.

## 2. Don't just recount—reflect!

Anyone can write about how they won the big game or the summer they spent in Rome. When recalling these events, you need to give more than the play-by-play or itinerary. Describe what you learned from the experience and how it changed you.

## 3. Being funny is tough.

A student who can make an admissions officer laugh never gets lost in the shuffle. But beware. What you think is funny and what an adult working in a college thinks is funny are probably different. We caution against one-liners, limericks and anything off-color.

## 4. Start early and write several drafts.

Set it aside for a few days and read it again. Put yourself in the shoes of an admissions officer: Is the essay interesting? Do the ideas flow logically? Does it reveal something about the applicant? Is it written in the applicant's own voice?

## 5. No repeats.

What you write in your application essay or personal statement should not contradict any other part of your application—nor should it repeat it. This isn't the place to list your awards or discuss your grades or test scores.

# What to say if you have a low GPA or SAT?

- **Do explain when a drop in grades is because of extreme hardship:**

You shouldn't hesitate to mention if your grades are lower because of extraordinary circumstances, such as needing to work part time because a parent lost a job, experts say.

- **Do show your strengths:**

Sometimes, your GPA may take a hit because of a bad breakup or a general lack of motivation in a class. It's best to be honest about an academic slip-up, even a slightly embarrassing one, but focus on how you bounced back.

Admissions experts say it's most important that students with lower GPAs relay in their applications how they responded to life's curve balls in the past and how they'll respond in the future.



# Financing Your Education



# How To Find and Win Scholarships

## Websites To Find Scholarships:

- Scholarships.com
- College.net
- Fastweb.com

## How To Win Scholarships:

- Apply to local scholarships
- Apply for scholarships that have smaller awards
- More work= fewer applicants= better chances

# How do private loans work? Are they good/bad?

When you get a private student loan, you're telling the bank that if you don't pay it back, they can garnish your wages and income to get their money. That's why it's like a car loan.

Many private student loans are variable rate loans now, meaning the interest rate on the loan could rise as interest rates rise. This is good for banks, but bad for students.

You could take out a student loan at one interest rate as a freshman and soon be paying a much higher interest rate when you graduate four years later.

Almost all Federal student loans have fixed rates on them, so you know what you're going to pay.

# Hidden Expenses That You Need To Beware Of

## 1. Books and media

According to the College Board, the average annual cost of books for a college student ranges from \$850 to \$1,000.

## 2. Class fees

Some classes — like art or chemistry — charge fees for materials and studio or lab use. Know in advance which classes come with additional fees and plan for them so you aren't blindsided.

## 3. Having fun

Campus life often includes socializing and entertainment. However, movies, concerts and sporting events come with a cost.

## 4. Fraternities and sororities

The Greek system can be pricey. Dues may be required (from modest to expensive), and joining halfway through the year can require paying for months past, which can double the dues.

# Tips From Harvard Students

**Be your true self**

**Be authentic**

**You are different just make sure to show that in your application**

**Yes, grades do matter**

# Good Luck!

Shoot Gabriel an email at [ggavrilov@weboro.co](mailto:ggavrilov@weboro.co) with any questions!