

4 Year College: Xello:

<https://student.xello.world/goals-and-plans/pathway-profile/school4Year>

- **Choose the schools you'd like to apply to:**

It's important that the school you attend is a good fit for you. Think about what matters to you most about a school. This could be anything from the programs it offers to its location.

Try to aim for a mix of safety, target, and reach schools when you're deciding which schools to apply to.

Safety: A safety school is one that you consider a sure thing. Your academic results exceed what is often required.

Target: A target school is one you feel confident about. It's almost a sure thing that you'll be accepted. Your academic results fall within the range of what is often required.

Reach: A reach school may be difficult to get into. It has high academic standards and your results don't meet what is often required.

- **Find out the application deadlines:**

You won't be able to submit your application after the deadline has passed. Find out the deadlines as soon as you know which schools you're applying to, and record them.

There are different types of deadlines to be aware of:

Regular Decision: This is the school's regular application deadline. It's often in early January.

Early Action: This means you can apply earlier than the Regular Decision deadline. You'll get a decision earlier as well. The Early Action deadline is usually in October or November.

Early Decision: This is similar to the Early Action deadline. It's usually in October or November as well. The difference is that the decision is binding. You must attend the school if you apply to Early Decision and are accepted.

Rolling Admission: Colleges with Rolling Admissions don't have strict deadlines. Instead, they accept applications during a specific period of time. This is often from the fall to the spring. Your application will be evaluated soon after it's received.

- **Prepare your application materials:**

Find out what you will need to apply to the schools that interest you. The requirements vary, but often include:

- A personal essay

- Recommendation letters

- College entrance exam scores (eg. SATs or ACTs)

Less common requirements may include:

- A portfolio

- An audition

- A resume

- A writing supplement

You'll need to start preparing your application materials early. It's a lot of work to write application essays, for example. You'll also need to make sure you write the SAT or ACTs if required.

- **Find out how to apply:**

There are different platforms for applying to college:

- Common App: This is a free online tool that allows you to apply to many colleges using just one main application. The Common App is accepted by more than 900 colleges.

- The Coalition Application is another free online tool.

- School-specific platforms: Some colleges or college systems have separate platforms. For instance, the University of California system has its own online application portal.

- State-specific platforms: Some states have their own platforms for applying to different schools in the state. For example, Texas has a platform called ApplyTexas.

Each school's website will have info about which platform you can use to apply. You need to create an account before you can apply through any of the online platforms.

- **Apply for admission:**

You'll typically fill out an online form to apply. Each application process is different. But there's some common information you'll need to provide. This includes:

- Your personal information

This includes your full legal name, date of birth, and citizenship information.

Your contact information

Email is the most important means of communication for most colleges. Make sure you include an address you check often. You may also be asked to provide your mailing address and phone number.

Your high school transcript

This is a record of your classes and grades. You'll typically ask your school to send your transcript on your behalf. Ask your counselor for more info about this process

You may also be asked to provide:

A personal essay

This is a short essay about you and your experiences. It helps college admissions staff get to know who you are beyond your grades. There will be a place in the application to include your essay, if required.

Your standardized test scores

These include tests like the SAT or ACT. You will request these scores to be sent by the testing company, if required by the school.

Letters of recommendation

You'll request these from your teachers or counselors, or other adults in your life.

Your extracurricular activities

There is often a section in the application that asks about what you did outside of school. This is where you can list things like clubs, sports, family responsibilities, and work or volunteer experience.

A credit card number

There is often a fee to apply. Depending on your family's income, you may be able to get a fee waiver.

- **Apply for Financial Aid:**

Financial aid can help you pay for your education. It's important to look into completing the FAFSA if you're going to a 4-year college.

FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Fill out the free FAFSA form to qualify for grants, work-study, and loans. The FAFSA also helps you qualify for college and state aid.

If you're planning to start school in the fall you'll need to complete the FAFSA by June 30. Some schools have earlier deadlines. Either way, it's best to apply early. There are limited funds to go around. The earlier you apply, the more money you can get.

In fact, you can fill out the FAFSA before you even apply to schools. You can list 1 to 10 schools on the form. List any colleges you plan to apply to. These colleges will receive your FAFSA information. Any college you're accepted to will then build a financial aid package based on your FAFSA details.

You'll fill out the FAFSA form on the [federal government's website](#). The form is available on October 1 every year.

- **Look for scholarships:**

It's a good idea to look for scholarships in addition to filling out the FAFSA. A scholarship is a sum of money that can help you pay for your training. And the best part is that scholarships are free money! They don't need to be repaid.

The earlier you can start looking for scholarships, the better. You can start even before you know where you're going to apply.

What are scholarships based on?

Scholarships are awarded based on many factors, such as your:

- Academic performance
- Field of study
- Career interest
- Volunteer work
- Achievements
- Hobbies
- Race or ethnicity
- Gender identity

Who offers scholarships?

Many organizations offer scholarships, including:

- Colleges and technical schools
- Businesses
- Non-profit organizations
- Unions
- Banks

Governments

Individuals

Finding scholarships

There are many ways to find scholarships:

Talk to your counselor about what's out there

Contact the schools or training providers you're applying to

Ask the adults in your life if their employers offer scholarships

Find out if any community organizations you're involved with offer scholarships

- **Accept an offer of admission:**

This is where all your hard work pays off! Your offer of admission may be mailed or emailed to you. Or, it'll be posted in the online portal you used to apply.

You'll need to accept the offer of admission by the deadline indicated. This is usually around the beginning of May. You'll typically need to send in a tuition deposit at this time as well.

Another scenario is waitlisting. This means you may be accepted if enough students decline their offers of admission.

If you decide not to accept an acceptance offer or a waitlist invitation, be sure to decline it.

You may also have the option to defer an offer of admission for a semester or a year. This means you won't start studying at the college until the end of the deferral period.