

USF

# COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE



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# PLANNING FOR USF

In this planning guide, you'll discover a checklist and timeline for each year of your high school journey so you can effectively prepare and plan for college admissions and make sure you choose the right college for you.

The USF Office of Admissions is also available to answer questions you may have. Visit us at [usf.edu/admissions](https://usf.edu/admissions), or contact us at 813-974-3350 or [admissions@usf.edu](mailto:admissions@usf.edu).



# FRESHMAN YEAR CHECKLIST



## Get a Start on College Planning

Your freshman year isn't too early to get started on planning for college. In fact, in your freshman year, you can create your academic roadmap, build good habits, and create the foundation for your college journey.

### SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

- Create your class schedule so that you make sure you graduate with what's academically required to apply to USF: 4 years of English, 3 years of Mathematics, 3 years of History and Social Studies, 2 years of Biological and Physical Science and 2 years of Foreign Language.
- Maintain a good record of conduct.

### NOVEMBER-FEBRUARY

- Start building good study habits.

### MARCH-MAY

- Start saving money for college.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities.
- Start a list of your awards, honors, paid and volunteer work, and extracurricular activities that you can update throughout high school.

### JUNE-AUGUST

- Use your summer to engage in a meaningful experience, like volunteering or academic camps.
- Work a summer job to save up money for college.

# SOPHOMORE YEAR CHECKLIST



## Build a Solid Academic Foundation

Start challenging yourself academically and learning more about colleges in your sophomore year.

### SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

- Create or review your four-year academic plan.
- Meet with your counselor.
- Start taking your foreign language requirement.
- Challenge yourself with honors and/or AP classes.
- Prepare and register for the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).
- Prepare and register for the PreACT®.
- Start researching colleges.
- Continue and deepen your extracurricular and community involvement.

### NOVEMBER-FEBRUARY

- Attend college fairs.
- Schedule campus visits for spring and summer break.

### MARCH-MAY

- Look into summer programs.

### JUNE-AUGUST

- Use your summer for volunteering, pre-college programs, etc.
- Work a summer job to save up money for college.

# JUNIOR YEAR CHECKLIST



## Prepare for the SAT and Start the College Search

Your junior year is key in preparing for standardized tests, staying on track with your classes, and gathering college information.

### SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

- Meet with your school counselor to discuss your options for college.
- Get involved with extracurricular activities.
- Stay on track with your academics.
- Start studying for the SAT/ACT, SAT Subject Tests, and AP exams.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT.
- Make a file to manage your college search information, testing, and application data.
- Gather college information by attending college fairs and conducting online research.
- Make a list of potential colleges you are interested in attending.
- Start to plan college visits.
- Create and/or update your resume.
- Mark dates on your calendar for upcoming tests.
- Keep fostering relationships with potential writers for letters of recommendation

### NOVEMBER-FEBRUARY

- Continue to study for the SAT/ACT and register for an exam date.
- Start narrowing down your college choices and categorize by safety, match, and reach.
- Volunteer over winter break if possible/applicable.
- Start creating a list of scholarships and begin applying.
- Research summer internship and volunteer programs.
- Discuss college affordability with your family and determine financial need.

### MARCH-MAY

- Discuss your senior year class schedule with your college counselor.
- Continue your scholarship search.
- Apply for summer internship and volunteer programs.
- Learn about the financial aid process.
- Start visiting colleges in person or virtually.
- Contact writers for letters of recommendation.

### JUNE-AUGUST

- Continue to visit your top college choices.
- Work a summer job, internship, or volunteer position to gain experience.
- Get an FSA ID and gather financial aid documents for the FAFSA.
- Continue to apply to scholarship opportunities.
- Start working on your college application essays and personal statements.
- Request letters of recommendation at least two weeks prior to due date.
- Retake the SAT/ACT to improve your score, if applicable.
- Mark down all deadlines for scholarships, admissions applications, and the FAFSA.

# SENIOR YEAR CHECKLIST



## Finish Your College Search and Admissions Process Strong

Your senior year of high school is the culmination of your high school journey. Stave off senioritis and stay focused on your academic goals to ensure a smooth transition to college.

### SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

- Get and stay involved, from extracurriculars to internships/part-time jobs.
- Narrow down your college list to those to which you will apply.
- Work toward a great finish in high school.
- Register for, prep for, and take standardized tests.
- Note important dates in the scholarship, financial aid, and college application processes.
- Polish a final draft of your résumé.
- Give providers notice (at least two weeks) on when you'll need recommendation letters.
- Reconnect with counselor(s) to discuss scholarship and admissions options.
- Prep for ACT/SAT do-overs if there's room for improvement.
- Create a Common App account.
- Begin your application essays. Tailor them to the schools you're targeting.
- Submit Early Decision or Early Action applications.
- Apply for financial aid if needed. Regardless of need, do the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) paperwork as soon as possible.
- Keep executing your scholarship search.

### NOVEMBER-FEBRUARY

- Finish application forms for target schools before winter break.
- Follow up on applications.
- Make decisions on early-decision applications.
- Submit financial aid forms and midyear grade reports.
- Finish the standardized testing process.
- Keep socking away money and continue the scholarship hunt.

### MARCH-MAY

- Watch for application responses.
- Choose your school and do the enrollment paperwork.
- Compare financial aid offers and follow through on things such as the FAFSA acknowledgement and Pell Grant applications.
- Press the scholarship hunt, and, just in case, research the student loan process.

### JUNE-AUGUST

- Stay connected and keep earning and saving money. And yes, the scholarship hunt.
- Stay on top of communications with and from your college. There are choices to make on housing, meal plans, what to pack, and much more. Schedule orientation.
- Continue discussing and calculating finances. It's also time to sharpen budgeting skills, prepare for the move, and hone life skills you'll need as an independent college student.

# APPLICATION DATES & DEADLINES



Make sure you apply early! Admissions decisions are made on a rolling basis beginning in the late fall as applications are completed and all supporting documents are received. You may apply as early as August of your senior year. Freshman applications are considered for the spring, summer and fall semesters.

## SUMMER/FALL 2023 SEMESTER START

- **August 1, 2022** – Summer/fall application opens.
- **November 1, 2022** – Priority application deadline for admission, including campus choice.
- If you do not apply by the priority deadline, you are not guaranteed the campus that you applied for. You will be considered on a space-available basis.
- **December 12, 2022** – First release of admission decisions followed by rolling decisions release.
- **January 1, 2023** – Priority deadline for financial aid consideration. Submit your application and FAFSA by this date to be considered for the most types of aid possible.
- **January 15, 2023** – Application completion deadline for admissions scholarships. Submit your application and all supporting documents by this date to be automatically considered for valuable admissions scholarships.
- **January 15, 2023** – Priority application completion deadline for admission consideration.
- **March 1, 2023\*** – Final application deadline. Submit your application by this date to be considered for summer or fall admission.
- **March 15, 2023** – Final application completion deadline. Submit your application and all supporting documents by this date to be considered for Summer and Fall 2023 admission.
- **May 1, 2023** – Admission deposit deadline. Submit your \$200 admission deposit or deposit waiver by this date to reserve your space in the summer or fall semester.
- **June 1, 2023** – Orientation registration deadline for summer students. Student must have an orientation reservation by this date or their admission will be canceled.

\*Or prior on a space available basis.

## SPRING 2024 SEMESTER START

- **March 1, 2023** – Spring application opens.
- **October 1, 2023** – Spring final deadline to apply.
- **October 1, 2023** – Priority admission deposit deadline. Submit your deposit or deposit waiver by this date for your best chance of securing a space in our Spring 2024 class.
- **October 15, 2023** – Application completion deadline. Submit all supporting materials by this date to be considered for the spring semester.
- **November 1, 2023** – Admission deposit deadline. Submit your \$200 admission deposit or deposit waiver by this date to reserve your space in the spring semester.
- **December 1, 2023** – Orientation registration deadline. Student must have an orientation reservation by this date or their admission will be canceled.





You can apply for admission using USF's online application or the Common App. USF does not have a preference between the two, so choose whichever application you would like.

## APPLY IN 4 EASY STEPS

### 1. Submit Your Application

Complete the [USF online application](#) or the [Common App](#).

### 2. Pay Your Application Fee

Pay the nonrefundable, \$30 application fee or submit an ACT/SAT application fee waiver\* to [admissions@usf.edu](mailto:admissions@usf.edu).

### 3. Submit Your Student Self-Reported Academic Record (SSAR)

Fill out the [Student Self-Reported Academic Record](#). After you submit your online application, you'll receive a Thanks for Applying email with a link to complete the SSAR. List your high school courses and grades exactly as they appear on your transcript.

If you have already completed the SSAR, please link the University of South Florida to your [SSAR account](#) or via the [USF Admissions Portal](#).

### 4. Submit Your SAT or ACT Scores

You will need to submit test scores directly from the testing service to be considered for admission.

- SAT Code for USF: 5828
- ACT Code for USF: 0761

# VISIT USF



USF is comprised of three extraordinary campuses, each with a one-of-a-kind college experience. The best way to check out our three Gulf Coast locations is an on-campus visit. Come explore your future home – discover student-led campus tours, group tours, virtual tours and more.

Tampa

St. Petersburg

Sarasota-Manatee



# JOURNEY THROUGH ADMISSION

Want to learn more about USF's admissions process? Explore our interactive, tailored experience, [Journey Through Admission](#).

