

# CONQUERING THE COUNTDOWN TO COLLEGE!

## Checklist for 11<sup>th</sup> Graders

General Time Frame	College Admissions & Career Planning	Testing	Financial Planning
<b>AUGUST—SEPTEMBER</b>	<p>*Work hard in all of your classes—it's difficult to pull up a low GPA (grade point average)! Manage your time effectively.</p> <p>*Use your PLAN results, GPA, level of courses, and interests to research career options.</p> <p>Tip—Use GCIS, <a href="http://www.gcis.peachnet.edu">www.gcis.peachnet.edu</a>, at school. You should also use <a href="http://www.gacollege411.org/">http://www.gacollege411.org/</a> to start or continue a college and career planning account.</p> <p>*Continue to take college preparatory and advanced level classes. Also consider taking classes that offer career training.</p> <p>*Explore college websites in order to find schools that interest you. Familiarize yourself with institutional programs, requirements, deadlines, and scholarships.</p> <p>Tip—attend the PROBE college fair at Alcovy High School.</p> <p>*Become familiar with the admission standards of the colleges in which you are interested. Be sure to find out which admission tests they require.</p> <p>*Commit to regular attendance at school. Also, take part in extracurricular activities—they will look great on your high school resume.</p>	<p>*You may want to begin registering for ACT and SAT tests. Check the college admission test schedule for registration and testing dates.</p> <p>Tip—Writing has become more important to college admissions tests. Work on your writing skills now!</p> <p>Tip—obtain the college bound reading list from your school's website and focus on reading as many of the selections as possible.</p> <p>*Work on vocabulary skills—obtain a list of often used words on the SAT and ACT and study them.</p>	<p>*Begin planning now for financing your college education—it's never too soon to start!</p> <p>*Locate the list of scholarships for underclassmen from your school's website. Many of these are essay contests which provide writing practice, as well as a potential financial reward.</p> <p>Tip—check out the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators website: <a href="http://www.nasfaa.org">www.nasfaa.org</a></p> <p>*Check the HOPE website, <a href="http://www.gsfc.org/HOPE/Index.cfm">http://www.gsfc.org/HOPE/Index.cfm</a>, for requirements that will apply to your graduating class. Make sure you stay on track!</p> <p>*Begin looking for senior year scholarships. GCIS, FastWeb.com, and <a href="http://www.collegeanswer.com">http://www.collegeanswer.com</a> are good resources.</p> <p>Tip—avoid scholarship scams. If you are asked for money, or if something seems too good to be true, it may be questionable. Check <a href="http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/edcams/scholarship/">http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/edcams/scholarship/</a> for answers to your questions.</p> <p>*Discover how the military can help pay for college through ROTC scholarships, academy appointments, or educational benefits for enlisting. Check <a href="http://www.myfuture.com">www.myfuture.com</a> for information.</p> <p>*Research cooperative education at colleges you are interested in attending. This is a great way to pay for your college education while gaining relevant work experience at the same time.</p>
<b>OCTOBER</b>	<p>*Make sure you have established a good relationship with teachers, coaches, club sponsors, counselors, and administrators. Later, when you ask them for letters of recommendation, they will remember you in a positive way.</p>	<p>*Take the PSAT</p> <p>*If your writing skills are not what they should be, get help now from a teacher.</p>	<p>*Work with your parents and ask your counselor how to plan for college costs.</p>
<b>NOVEMBER — DECEMBER</b>	<p>*Work on improving any disappointing grades. Ask for help and/or weekly reports.</p> <p>*Ask about opportunities to experience different work situations firsthand, including job shadowing, Youth Apprenticeship, and part-time employment.</p>	<p>*Take the ASVAB. This exam provides helpful vocational aptitude feedback.</p>	<p>*Talk with your parents about coming up with a plan to meet college expenses without going into debt.</p> <p>*Research different ways to save for college. Establish a savings plan and set aside money regularly.</p>

<b>JANUARY—MARCH</b>	<p>*Begin to narrow your list of college choices. Familiarize yourself with those colleges' admissions standards. Also, make sure you call the college admissions office and set up a tour for each school you're interested in during the spring. This will help you narrow your list of choices.</p> <p>Tip—With the implementation of the HOPE scholarship, admissions standards at Georgia colleges have become much stricter.</p> <p>Example:  <u>UGA 2007 Admitted Student Profile</u>  Middle 50% Core GPA: 3.63—4.0  Middle 50% SAT: 1150—1310  Middle 50% ACT: 25—29</p> <p>*Notify your counselor if you are interested in attending a college during your senior year, participating in the Youth Apprenticeship program, attending either a military academy or a highly selective college after high school, or participating in a college summer program.</p> <p>*Continue to take the highest level of courses in which you are successful. Schedule Advanced Placement classes for your senior year.</p>	<p>*Keep reading and expanding your vocabulary.</p> <p>*Register to take the SAT and ACT</p> <p>Tip—If you are interested in a technical school, you should check with the school to see what placement testing will be necessary.</p> <p>Tip—Don't take the ACT or SAT too often. Scores may improve with the second and third tests and then begin to decline.</p> <p>Tip—Register for ACT or SAT online courses if needed.</p> <p>*If you are interested in a highly selective school, ask whether they require the SAT II subject exams, and register for the ones needed.</p>	<p>*Begin saving pay records for your FAFSA form that you will fill out in January of your senior year.</p> <p>*Save regularly for college.</p> <p>*If you work, put part of every paycheck into your college savings account.</p> <p>*To help you understand how financial aid rules work, check out the book <i>Don't Miss Out</i> offered by Octameron Press.  <a href="http://www.octameron.com/productsframe.html">www.octameron.com/productsframe.html</a></p> <p>Tip—Find federal financial aid information at <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a></p> <p>*If you plan to seek appointment to one of the military academies or a ROTC scholarship, begin the application process.</p> <p>*If you will need portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other evidence of talent, begin preparing them now.</p> <p>*Begin talking with your parents and counselor about summer opportunities. Check out potential summer jobs or volunteering opportunities.</p>
<b>APRIL—JUNE</b>	<p>*Consider obtaining work experiences related to the career in which you are interested.</p> <p>*Apply for the Youth Apprenticeship program if it appears to be a good match for your interests and abilities.</p>	<p>*Advanced Placement Exams are given nationally in May in high schools. Be sure to have your scores sent to the college that you are most interested in attending.</p>	<p>*Continue researching college scholarship opportunities. Ask your counselor for the password for GCIS so that you can use this resource at home.</p> <p>Tip—Athletes should examine <i>The Winning Edge</i>, published by Octameron Press.  <a href="http://www.octameron.com/productsframe.html">www.octameron.com/productsframe.html</a> and <a href="http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net">www.ncaaclearinghouse.net</a> to make sure they will qualify academically to play sports in college.</p>
<b>SUMMER</b>	<p>*Work, travel, or participate in a college summer program. Visit colleges that are near your family's vacation spots.</p> <p>*Write or email asking for college applications and begin preparing your college essays.</p>	<p>*Practice for the SAT during the summer.</p>	<p>*Collect information for your high school resume.</p> <p>Tip—Keep names, numbers, and addresses from volunteer or part-time work. You will need them for future use.</p> <p>Tip—Locate a sample resume form on your school's website.</p>