

College planning: How to get started

Get started.

Assess your strengths, weaknesses, goals, passions, learning style and social skills. What is most important to you in the college-search process? What do you hope to gain from the process?

Make some basic decisions.

Where do you want to live? Will you go to college full-time? Part-time? Do you want to attend a single-sex school, a technical college, a public or private college, a large university, a small liberal arts college, or a historically black or religiously affiliated college? How important to you is the cultural/ideological diversity of the student body?

Enlist help.

Who do you want to assist you in this process (parents, teachers, siblings, relatives, friends)?

Consult references.

Look at college directories (*College Board College Handbook*, Barron's, Peterson's) and use college searches (www.collegeboard.com).

Talk with your teachers and your school counselor about your dreams and goals.

Discuss your plans with your parents. Ask for their advice.

Meet with college representatives when they visit the school.

The guidance office will post information on upcoming visits. Have questions ready.

Visit campuses every chance you get.

Take a tour, meet with an admissions representative and ask students what they think of the college.

Source: Amherst Regional High School, Massachusetts

Handout 3A