



Find It Fast! Download additional materials from the Resource Zone at www.ICANSucceed.org.

Visit www.ICANSucceed.org or call (877) 272-4692 to schedule an appointment for assistance with college planning or financial aid applications.

August

- Obtain dates and locations of college fairs and “parent nights” in your area. Check the ICAN presentation calendar at www.ICANSucceed.org/calendar.
- Keep your grades up. Colleges look at your overall GPA through all four years of high school.
- Review your college savings plan; start saving money if you haven't already done so.
- Talk to your parents and your school counselor about where you want to go to college.
- Research careers at www.ICANSucceed.org/researchcareers.
- Prepare for college with the ICAN e-newsletter; sign up at www.ICANSucceed.org/impact.


September

- Register for the PSAT/NMSQT,® a two-part exam similar to the SAT.® Scores are used to determine National Merit Scholars.
- Determine what factors are important to you in a college. Go to www.ICANSucceed.org/explore for information on choosing a college.
- Review college and career resources at your high school.
- Plan to attend Golden Circle College Fair — Iowa's largest — Oct. 2, 2011, at Hy-Vee Hall in Des Moines. Visit www.ICANSucceed.org/goldencircle for more information.
- If you're planning to play college sports, visit www.ncaaclearinghouse.net to register and complete the amateurism questionnaire.

October

- Consider taking the PSAT/NMSQT to help prepare you for the ACT/SAT tests.
- Attend a college fair and talk with college representatives to start researching potential colleges. Visit www.ICANSucceed.org/collegefairs.
- Find information about Iowa colleges at www.ICANSucceed.org/explore. Request information from colleges that interest you.
- Visit with your school counselor to discuss ways to increase your chances of being admitted to the college of your dreams.
- Attend an ICAN College Planning Night at your school. Ask your school counselor about time, date and location or visit www.ICANSucceed.org/calendar.

November

- Review brochures and catalogs from colleges that interest you. Make a list of 10 to 15 colleges that fit your requirements.
- Download the College Checklist from www.ICANSucceed.org to stay organized. 
- Start planning to take the SAT and/or ACT® exams, if required. Familiarize yourself with registration deadlines and test dates. Check colleges' entrance requirements to see which test(s) you need to take. Take advantage of online test preparation resources such as practice exams and study guides.

December

- Research scholarships. Keep an ongoing file of scholarship and financial aid information (such as criteria, amounts, contact persons and deadlines). Check out www.ICANSucceed.org/scholarships for free scholarship searches. Avoid scholarship searches that charge fees.
- Meet with college representatives at your school and keep looking at colleges online.
- Register now if you're planning to take the January SAT or February ACT. Pick up a study guide at a local bookstore or library.


January

- Begin scheduling visits to colleges.
- Organize scholarship information by deadline. Keep a calendar with application deadlines so you don't miss any.
- Register now if you're planning to take the March SAT. Pick up a study guide at a local bookstore or library or review online resources.
- Become familiar with the financial aid process and forms. Visit www.ICANSucceed.org/payforcollege.

February

- Keep saving money for college!
- Make sure you enroll in senior classes that fulfill the credits you need for college.
- Put together a resume listing your activities, volunteer experiences, academic achievements and employment.
- Register now for the April ACT if you plan to take it.

March

- It's time to schedule college visits. During each college visit, meet with the admissions and financial aid offices. Download a helpful checklist at www.ICANSucceed.org. 
- Talk to your school counselor about AP® courses and CLEP® tests. Consider taking honors or college-level classes.
- Register now for the May SAT if you plan to take it.

April

- If you take AP courses, consider AP exams.
- Compare your impressions of each college and rank them according to preference.
- Continue to search for scholarships.
- Find out about scholarships offered by your place of worship, civic and business groups in career fields that interest you.
- Register now for the June ACT or SAT.

May

- Narrow your college choices to five or fewer and highlight the important features at each.
- Take AP exams if you need to.
- Consider taking a summer course at a local college.
- Find a summer job related to your career interest or do community service.
- Polish your resume; if required, assemble writing samples, a portfolio or audition tape.

June

- If you haven't visited all the colleges on your list, schedule visits.
- Begin completing private scholarship applications.
- Save your summer earnings to pay for college.
- Serve your community — grades aren't the only thing colleges evaluate.
- Prospective student athletes: Ask your school counselor to send an official transcript to the NCAA Eligibility Center.

July

- Obtain college admission applications, and learn what they require.
- Prepare for your senior year.
- Consider which teachers, employers or other adults you'll ask to write letters of recommendation.
- Create a spending plan. It's easy to get in over your head. Talk with your parents to consider your options or learn more at www.ICANSucceed.org/budgeting.





SENIOR COUNTDOWN TO COLLEGE CALENDAR



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August

- Decide which colleges best suit you and your career interests. Review your campus visit notes.
- Find information on admission, scholarships and financial aid for the top schools you're considering.
- Select at least five colleges to visit, if you haven't already done so. Download a *Make The Most of College Visits* work sheet. 
- Download the College Checklist. Keep a folder for each college to keep track of the information. 
- Research military education benefits, if you're interested.

September

- Visit with your school counselor about application deadlines, local or state scholarships, and grants.
- Register now to take the SAT® and/or ACT® if you haven't already done so.
- Meet with college admissions counselors when they visit your high school.
- Ask adults to write letters of recommendation for your admission and scholarship applications.
- Begin writing essays for your admission applications, if required.


October

- Talk to admission counselors at the colleges you're applying to and find out whether retaking the ACT or SAT would be advantageous.
- Be wary of scholarship search and financial aid companies that charge a fee. Find free services at www.ICANSucceed.org/scholarships.
- Begin submitting your admission applications to the colleges you're most interested in. Be aware of deadlines! Try to have your applications submitted by **Nov. 1**.
- Search for scholarship and grant opportunities.

November

- Obtain financial aid forms from colleges that require forms other than the FAFSA.*
- Start thinking about how campus life will be different than living at home.
- Attend a financial aid presentation with your parents. Ask your school counselor when presentations take place or visit www.ICANSucceed.org/calendar.
- Finalize your college admission applications.
- Research college scholarship days and deadlines at the schools you've applied to. Fill out any additional scholarship forms before the deadlines.

December

- Continue to look and apply for grants and scholarships.
- Stay focused! Grades in your senior year can affect college admittance.
- Visit www.pin.ed.gov to get a personal identification number for your financial aid form. Print a list of items you need to fill out the FAFSA at www.ICANSucceed.org/fafsachecklist. 
- Parents:** Save your year-end payroll stubs if they show your earnings for the year. You may need them for the FAFSA.
- Know the priority dates for filing the FAFSA at the colleges you're applying to.

January

- Submit your completed FAFSA as soon after Jan. 1 as possible.
- Remember to keep copies of all forms you submit to colleges and agencies.
- Ask your school counselor to send your first-semester transcripts to your top colleges.
- Parents:** Get your federal income tax returns prepared early. Colleges may request copies.
- Need help filing a FAFSA? ICAN can help. Call (877) 272-4692 to schedule an appointment.
- Watch the mail for letters of acceptance.
- Send in college housing applications.

February

- Visit www.IowaCGS.org to find an Iowa College Goal Sunday location near you. Volunteers will help you with your FAFSA for free.
- Confirm that the colleges you've applied to have received your first-semester transcripts.
- Submit your FAFSA, if you haven't already done so.
- Need help filing a FAFSA? ICAN can help. Call (877) 272-4692 to schedule an appointment.
- Keep your grades up — second semester grades are important and can affect scholarship eligibility and college admittance.

March

- Watch for your Student Aid Report (SAR). Check that it lists all the colleges requiring receipt of your FAFSA.
- Be prepared to submit a copy of your federal tax forms to the college(s) of your choice.
- Find out whether you need to submit any additional financial aid verification forms.
- Begin making plans for a summer job.
- Ask your school counselor about local scholarships.

April


- Compare the financial aid packages from colleges.
- Decide which college you'll attend. Send the required deposit, and sign and return the financial aid award letter, if required. Note other important deadlines (financial aid, student housing, etc.).
- Tell other colleges you won't be attending.
- If you're securing a student loan, complete the required promissory note.
- Prospective student athletes: Review your amateurism questionnaire at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net and request final certification.

May


- Take any AP®/CLEP® exams you can.
- Finalize your summer job plans.
- Ask your school counselor to send your final transcript to the college you'll be attending.
- Return all necessary documents, including financial aid forms, to your college.

Congratulations on your high school graduation!

June

- Notify the college about any scholarships you receive.
- Save money from your summer job. Your savings will help with college expenses.
- Attend orientation sessions to meet people, get familiar with the campus and register for classes.
- Prepare a budget for college and review it with your parents. 

July

- Check out our "College Packing List" to help make packing less of a chore. Contact your roommate and decide who's bringing what so you don't pack the same items. 
- Thank your family and friends for their support.
- Continue your success in college; sign up for the ICAN e-newsletter at www.ICANSucceed.org/ignite.

* The FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid, is a free form that may be completed without professional assistance via paper or electronic forms provided by the U.S. Department of Education at www.fafsa.gov.

YOUR FUTURE, EXPERTLY PLANNED