

# Choosing a School

## It's Decision Time! Which College Will You Choose?

Most schools want a decision by May 1. Here are some tips to help you choose the school that's best suited to help you achieve your goals and dreams:

### Don't Focus On The Cost

There are usually plenty of grants, scholarships and loans that could offset the cost. However, be honest with yourself and your family. If you don't get any scholarships, and it is too expensive, pick one that is more reasonable.

### Location

The farther away your college is from home, the tougher it's going to be to go back and visit. It will also cost more, whether you drive, fly or take a train.

### Environment

What's the atmosphere on campus like? Is it welcoming to your race, culture or ethnicity? Are students friendly, outgoing and supportive?

### Activities

What kinds of activities does the college or university have for students? Are you interested in athletics? What about debate or chess or some other hobby? Check out these activities as they can make the entire experience more fulfilling and rewarding.

The more activities in which you're engaged, the better it'll be when applying to grad school or jobs.

### Pros

- Affordable
- Has degree program you want
- Offers scholarships
- You can play sports
- Good student life
- Good administrative support

### Cons

- Costly
- Has limited major programs
- Lots of competition for scholarships
- Students seem standoffish

### Majors and Extra Curriculars

You probably have an idea about what you want to do in life, but it can change. Narrow your focus towards programs best suited to your career goals, ambitions and interests, and don't forget to check out the extra curricular activities.

### Size

How many students attend the school? A larger student body may demand more outward ambition and effort on your part.

### Support

Does the college offer internships? Scholarships? Learning labs? Quiet study areas? What kind of advisors and support do they offer? You'll want a strong support network to lean on.

### Residences

Many colleges and universities require freshmen and sophomores to live on campus, but they do make exceptions for those who live close to campus or have family in the area with whom they can live.

The cost of dorm living can be significant, and it's a good way to help you narrow down your choices, especially if you have a number of colleges on your list that are not too far from your home.

