

Visiting a college is one of the most effective ways to determine whether it's right for you.

No matter how perfect a college may seem on paper or online, nothing compares to the impression you get when you're on campus. Below is a list of questions to ask and things to observe on a college visit.

Admission and Financial Aid

- What are the GPA and SAT[®] /ACT[®] test score requirements for admission and scholarships?
- Is there an admission application fee? If so, when is it due? Is it refundable?
- What are the application deadlines for admission and financial aid? Does the school award institutional scholarships? How do you apply?
- What's the cost of attendance? What items are included in the cost of attendance? Are there other costs (lab or health fees)?
- What types of payment plans are available? When is payment due?

Academic

- What type of academic calendar does the school have?
- What's the retention rate?
- What's the job placement rate? Do employers recruit on campus?
- How long, on average, does it take students to graduate? Is it difficult to get into the classes required for graduation?
- What's the student to faculty ratio? Does faculty include teaching assistants or do professors teach the majority of classes?
- What's the average class size? Are the professors accessible to students?
- What's the academic advising system like? Are you assigned an adviser or do you choose your own?
- How are AP[®], CLEP[®], Postsecondary Enrollment and Dual Enrollment courses treated?

Campus

- Is a car necessary? What type of public transportation is available?
- Do many students use bicycles around campus or town? Is there a secure place to keep or store a bicycle?
- Are there computers in the residence hall rooms or are the rooms equipped for them? Do they offer wireless Internet access?
- What types of meal plans are available? Are there alternative options available besides the dining hall?
- What's the crime rate on campus? Is the campus security adequate? Does the college have safety procedures and precautions in place?

Student Life

- Are there fraternities and sororities on campus? What other student organizations could you join?
- What are the housing options? Can you live in a sorority or fraternity house? Is housing guaranteed?
- How diverse is the student body? What's the male to female ratio? Do the majority of students come from within or outside the state?
- Is the town or city safe? What types of cultural events (music, theater, art) are offered? Are airports, bus stations, etc., nearby for travel?
- What types of athletic programs does the school offer? Are the athletic teams important to the campus?
- Is health insurance offered?

College Visit Checklist

It's a good idea to visit at least two or three schools. While you're there, take a campus tour and stay overnight in a residence hall. Call ahead to schedule appointments with an admission counselor, financial aid officer and faculty member from your major course of study.

Use this chart to take notes and compare schools. Make a copy of it if you plan to visit more than three schools.

	School A	School B	School C
Name			
Location <i>Positives and Negatives</i>			
Size <i>Positives and Negatives</i>			
Admission Requirements And Financial Aid Deadlines			
Academic <i>Majors That Interest Me</i>			
Academic <i>Positives and Negatives</i>			
Campus <i>Positives and Negatives</i>			
Student Life <i>Positives and Negatives</i>			
Comments			