

How to Apply

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO PLAN YOUR ROUTE TO UNIVERSITY



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO GET THERE

Grades 9-10

GET A HEAD START

1 Start thinking about what you might be interested in studying: arts, sciences, medicine?

Many post-secondary institutions offer advice on what courses to take at the start of high school to ensure you'll meet admissions requirements later on.

2 Sign up for extracurricular activities and volunteering.

Having diverse interests can help you land scholarships. They might also help you identify potential careers.

3 Have a frank talk with your parents about the affordability of university.

Find a part-time job if you're expected to cover part of the cost of your education.

Grade 11

WEIGH YOUR OPTIONS

September

- Ask your school counsellor and teachers for advice about prerequisite courses for post-secondary programs.
- Double down on extracurricular activities and volunteering.

October

- If you're considering applying to U.S. schools, register for the SAT. The test is offered seven times a year; dates are posted at collegeboard.org.

January

- Update your counsellor about your grades, extracurriculars and career aspirations.
- Explore opportunities for scholarships from local organizations, business groups and even your part-time employer.

February

- Conduct deep research into individual programs: find out about prerequisites and early admission dates, as well as scholarship opportunities.
- Now that you're informed about prerequisites for your post-secondary programs of choice, pick your Grade 12 courses.
- Quebec students: apply to CEGEP for the fall term.

March

- Use the March break to start touring the campuses of your prospective schools.
- Attend career and education fairs to explore options, and be on the lookout for programs you haven't heard of.

April

- Apply for a summer job or volunteer gig. These will look good on your school and scholarship applications, and allow you to explore possible career options.

May

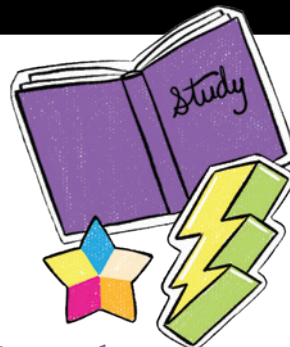
- Prepare your scholarship applications (personal statements, essays, resume, references). It's a time-consuming process, so block off time and proofread your work.

August

- Update your portfolio with Grade 11 marks, plus any work and extracurricular experience.

Grade 12

CRUNCH TIME



September

- Narrow down your list of preferred programs to a handful, and keep track of when their applications are due.
- If you haven't done so yet, visit the schools you want to attend, either at an open house or at a pre-booked tour.
- Attend individual university information sessions and university fairs.
- Continue applying for scholarships.

October

- Though dates vary widely by program, it's now possible to apply to Canadian schools.
- Many provinces have a central service (OUAC, EducationPlannerBC, ApplyAlberta) that accepts multiple schools simultaneously. Know their deadlines and be sure to keep a record of your application confirmations.

November

- Deadlines for some scholarship applications; be aware of specific dates.
- Give your references plenty of time to write letters of recommendation.

December

- If you haven't completed applications, use the holiday break to do so. The first wave of application deadlines is in January.

March

- Letters of admission start to arrive. Confirm your acceptance of the school you plan to attend.
- Know how and when to register for classes. Details will be provided in your offer-of-admission package, so be sure to carefully read through everything.

- Let your school know your housing preference, because some residence applications are first-come, first-served. If you'd like to live off-campus, consult listings on your school's student housing service website.
- Bursary deadlines are usually a month after early admissions; if you think you qualify, take the time to apply.

May

- Different provinces begin accepting loan applications at different times. Usually, you can still apply for a loan for a certain period of time after classes have started, but that won't help pay your first tuition bill.
- Attend your school's transition programs (such as academic advising and school tours). Many schools offer virtual and in-person options.

June

- Finally: graduation day. So long, high school.
- In the months leading up to frosh week, you'll likely receive several emails from your school with reminders about key dates. Pay special attention to updates on deposit and fee deadlines.

July

- Review the course calendar and choose your classes as soon as possible. Getting into the classes you want, at the time slot you want, may require preparation.
- Make a checklist of everything you need for your dorm or off-campus housing.
- Contact future roommates and coordinate who will bring what to your shared accommodation.

August

- Wrap up your back-to-school shopping.
- Get packed. Does it all fit in the family car?
- Depending on your school, frosh week could be the end of this month, or early next.

September

- Classes commence.



Illustrations by Amanda Lanzone