

# Planning Guide for Your Senior Year of High School

Your senior year of high school is a super important time in your life, and it can feel pretty overwhelming. But don't worry, it's also a super exciting time full of possibilities! You've got some big decisions to make about your future education, career, and personal goals, and it can be tough to know where to start. That's why this planning guide for your senior year can be a total lifesaver!

## *Senior Portrait Sessions*

- Research photographers and find one you like.
- Contact photographer spring of junior year to get scheduled.
- Apply to senior model rep program, if that interests you.
- Work with photographer to plan location and outfits.
- Decide on graduation announcements.

## *College Deadlines Demystified*

- Junior year: Research colleges and prep for SAT or ACT, if required
- Summer before senior year: Visit colleges
- Fall of senior year: Fill out applications, and watch deadlines like a hawk.
- Winter of senior year: Submit applications and keep an eye out for early decision or action deadlines.
- Spring of senior year: Sit back and relax until admission decisions start rolling in.



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## *Maximizing Your Scores on SAT & ACT*

- Take practice tests to identify your strengths and weaknesses.
- Learn test-taking strategies to increase your scores.
- Take a prep class or find a study group or tutor for extra support.

## *Choosing Your College*

- Research online with College Board, Niche, or US News & World Report.
- Attend college fairs to speak with representatives from colleges and universities.
- Do college tours to experience college culture firsthand.

## *Winning College Applications*

- Write a standout personal essay that highlights your unique qualities and experiences.
- Showcase your accomplishments and extracurriculars.
- Request strong letters of recommendation.
- Proofread carefully, and have someone else review it too.



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## *Navigating the Labyrinth of Financial Aid*

- Research state grants, private scholarships, and employer tuition reimbursement programs.
- Consider federal student loans before private ones.
- Don't be afraid to negotiate with schools' financial aid offices.

## *Fun Senior Memories*

- Yearbook: make sure to get your picture taken/submitted on time
- Prom: plan your outfit, who you're going with, and after-prom plans
- Senior Skip Day: only do this if it's a tradition at your school
- Senior Trips: some schools organize trips for seniors to enjoy some time together before graduation
- Senior Class Activities: maybe your school has a senior talent show, a senior picnic, or a senior breakfast.
- Senior Week: some schools have a designated "senior week" where seniors can participate in activities and events to celebrate their final week of high school.
- Graduation: buy cap & gown, find out attire requirements, ticket information

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