

The Campus Visit

Campus visits are vital in making your college selection. Lists, websites, viewbooks, recommendations are only a part of your decision. You cannot get accurate information about a college without visiting. Visit different “types” of campuses to determine what you want in a college. Students should formulate your own opinions on one of the most important decisions in their lives.

Before The Visit:

- Contact the college at least one to two weeks in advance to schedule a date and time. The college’s admissions office can arrange for you to talk to an admissions counselor and take a campus tour. Many admissions offices also are willing to set up housing, classes or other appointments. Some offer to make overnight arrangements for visiting students. Selective colleges may require more advance notice since they may schedule an interview with an admissions officer. Some colleges allow you to register for a visit online. Go to the admissions section of their website.
- Plan your visit. You should try to visit the campus when classes are in session. You can get a better idea of what a college is like if you visit when students and faculty are there. If your calendar won’t allow it, a summer or vacation visit is better than nothing.
- Try to schedule appointments with professors or representatives from your academic interest area. You may even be able to sit in on a class.
- Read the college’s catalogs and brochures. This will provide general information, so you don’t waste time on these questions during your visit.
- Take the “Campus Visit Worksheet” available in the guidance office. This will give you some guided questions to ask on your tour.
- If possible, bring an unofficial copy of your high school transcript and know your PSAT, SAT, or ACT scores. There may be other things you wish to bring with you, such as a portfolio or an instrument for an audition.
- Bring your parents. Parents often have questions of their own and may want to make the visit with you. Remember, they care about you and have an interest in what you do, AND they may be paying the tuition, room and board!
- If you have access to the Internet, visit the home pages of colleges for current information.

The Visit:

- Be on time. If you will be late or have to postpone your visit, you should call the college as a courtesy.
 - Wear comfortable shoes.
 - Pick up a copy of the student newspaper and check out bulletin boards.
 - Try to visit the following places:
 - Student Center or Union
 - Rec center, athletic facilities
 - Typical dorm room and dining hall (You may even be able to try out the food.)
 - Computer labs
 - Library
 - Student health center if you have special health/medical concerns
 - Campus bookstore
 - Career center
 - Talk with as many people as you can. Meeting a variety of people will give you a more complete picture of what a college is really like. This is why staying overnight and attending classes is highly recommended.
 - Try to work some free time into your schedule. Use this time to wander around, perhaps drop into the campus snack bar, talk to students.
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After The Visit:

- On your way home, while your thoughts are still fresh, jot down some of your impressions of the college. Use the “Campus Visit Worksheet.”
- If questions come up after the visit, don’t hesitate to contact the people you have met.
- Send thank-you notes to those with whom you had appointments.