



Tips for College Tours and Visits

Research the Colleges

- It's important to know something about the colleges before you arrive on its campus, especially if you have an interview scheduled.
- Spend some time surfing their website, check out these pages for more information:
 - About
 - Fast Facts
 - Academics/Majors
 - Mission/Vision Statements
 - Student Life/Organizations
 - Virtual Tours
- Check out YouTube for any videos or virtual tours.
- Talk to currently enrolled students or alumni about their college. Some college websites let you contact them online, or you can get their contact information from the admission office.
- Many college tours are hosted by current students. This is a great opportunity to ask direct questions to your guide.

Scheduling Your Trip

- Pick a time that's convenient to you but try to go when classes are in session. That way, you can sit in on a lecture or stay in a dorm

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overnight. You'll only get a true feel for the campus if you're there on a day when classes are in full swing.

- Schedule your time on campus, too, to make sure you'll have time for everything you want to do.
- Find out how often college tours run, and if you must sign up in advance.
- Most campuses have a “Visit” page where you can sign up for a tour in advance; many also come with a chat with an admissions representative.
- Be sure to get a map of the school. You don't want to spend half your day trying to park or find the admission office.
- Plan on visiting no more than 2 colleges per day.
- If an interview is suggested, make an appointment. Also, consider meeting with the financial aid officer.
- If you're curious about a club, program, or a sport, arrange to attend a practice, rehearsal, or meeting.

Pack a Phone/Camera and Notebook

- Was it X College or Y University that had that excellent exercise equipment in the gym? Where did I talk to that cool psychology professor? You think you'll remember everything, but you'll be surprised how colleges start to merge after you've seen a few.

What's Important to You?



- Make a list of what college characteristics are most important to you, so you know what to evaluate. Do you feel overwhelmed in a large lecture hall? Check out the class size. Do you have your heart set on joining a sorority or fraternity? See what the Greek system is like on campus. Is there a particular major that you want to pursue? Talk to current students or professors in that department.
- Develop a list of your preferences. Take this list to the schools that you plan to visit and compare them when you get back home.
- Use SuperMatch in Naviance to select your “Must Haves” and “Nice to Haves” and review these to recall your preferences.

When to Visit

- You need to see the college when classes are meeting, and day-to-day activities are taking place. Plan your trip when the college is in session.
- Monday through Thursday are ideal since campuses are generally in full swing. Since junior and senior years can be busy for you, though, it's important not to let visits interfere with your schoolwork. If possible, try to visit during high school holidays that fall on Mondays, when most colleges are in session.
- Late summer and early September before senior year are convenient times to visit since many colleges begin their fall semester as early as mid-August. But generally, fall through winter and sometimes early spring are the seasons when seniors should conduct their explorations.
- Juniors who have researched colleges should consider using spring vacations for college visits. Spring is also a good time of year if you



play fall sports or are considering early action or early decision with application deadlines in November of senior year.

When Not to Go

- Check specific dates with each college so you don't arrive when the campus is deserted.
- Try not schedule a visit when colleges aren't in session including Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas week, winter and spring breaks, and of course, summer.
- Avoid visiting when classes aren't meeting such as: university reading period, exam weeks, and Saturdays and Sundays.
- When the admission office is closed to visitors

CAMPUS VISITS: QUESTIONS TO ASK

Questions For Students:

- What do you like most about this college?
- What's the worst thing about it?
- What do you wish you had known when you were making your own decision?



- What are the students like here?
- What are the classes like? Lots of small discussion groups? Mostly large lectures?
- Do graduate students or professors teach introductory classes?
- How often in the last semester have you participated in class or met with a professor outside of class?
- Where do students study? Where do students hang out on campus? Off campus? On the weekend?
- How central are fraternities and sororities to campus social life? What about sports?

Questions For Administrators:

- What percentage of students go on to graduate or professional schools?
- What percentage of students graduate in four years? What percentage of first-year students return for sophomore year?
- What was the average tuition increase over the past five years?
- When must you declare a major? Can you design your own major?
- (If applicable) Can you take classes at other schools in the area?
- Who serves as a student's adviser? Do advisers change each year?
- What are the living options on campus? Off campus?
- What percentage of students study abroad at some point during their four years?

Contact information for students and administrators I met:

