

## The Miss Hall's School College Timeline

The college process is highly individualized. The below timeline and to-do items vary, depending on the student's situation, as well as each college's policies. Careful research into each college of interest is vital to a successful process.

### 9th grade:

- **Fall:** Adjust to MHS classes, opportunities, and community. Consider, what do you want to do more of vs. less? How can you develop strong [studying habits, time management, and organization skills](#)? Learn the [culture and values](#) of Miss Hall's School and how you connect with them. Identify areas of school life (academic [and beyond](#)) that challenge you, and develop a growth plan with advisors and teachers.
- **Spring:** Director of College Counseling sends newsletter introduction to families & meets with the 9th grade.

### 10th grade:

- **Fall:** Director of College Counseling sends newsletter regarding college preparation and [PSAT interpretation](#).
  - **Academics:** [What is your personality like? What are you good at? What do you like doing?](#) Practice [asking for extra help or feedback](#), even if you don't think you "need" it. Work with academic counseling on [junior year class selection](#) - challenge yourself, since [grades aren't everything](#)!
  - **Career ideas:** If there are adults you admire, [how did they get there? What was their educational path?](#) Is there any volunteering or job shadowing you can do during vacation times? What paid jobs, Horizons experiences, have you liked or disliked and why?
  - **Activities:** Athletics, clubs, theater, music, leadership - try some new things, and try to stick to at least one or two things long-term. [Colleges like quality of involvement, not quantity](#).
  - **Testing:** [You will take the PSATs](#). Consider creating a new email address just for [college marketing emails](#). The Director of College Counseling will briefly meet with class prior to PSATs.
- **Spring - Summer:** Opportunity for student & family to meet with Director of College Counseling
  - **Finances:** Start having [college money talks as a family](#). [Will loans be involved?](#) It's never too early to use a [Net Price Calculator](#) or learning [what to expect financially](#).
  - **College tour:** Pick a college or two to [visit with your family](#) (even if you don't think you'll apply, just tour them) to get a feel for the visit process. Know the [basic vocabulary](#) and [what college is all about](#).

### 11th grade:

- **September:** Consider taking the [Method Test Prep](#) 8-week class at MHS (\$125), and/or [free Kaplan courses](#).
  - Attend at least three of the [college admission visitor sessions](#) at MHS (Sept-Nov)
- **October:** Take [PSATs](#) for a second time
- **November:** Talk more with family about location & [finances](#) (two big issues you need to agree on!) Research [College Board](#), [Princeton Review](#), student newspapers & college websites and think about size and type of school.
- **December:** The earliest we recommend signing up for ACT and SAT tests (\$65). Take free practice tests at MHS to [determine which you prefer](#). Miss Hall's recommends final testing no later than August before senior year. [Research has proven](#) that results are unlikely to increase significantly after three standardized test attempts.
- **January:** Begin meetings and advisory groups with college counselor
  - Continue your own research! Be aware of methodologies behind [popular rankings](#): [U.S. News](#), [QS World](#), [Washington Monthly](#), [Princeton Review](#) (*reputation and wealth may matter more than academic quality*)
  - Create a [comprehensive resume](#) to list everything you've done in high school - paid/unpaid work, clubs, athletics, expressive arts, leadership, summer programs, awards won (you'll create one for Horizons).
  - Learn [how admission offices make decisions](#), especially what [holistic admissions](#) refers to.
  - Take SAT or ACT at least once, with writing (\$65). Research SAT [Subject Test recommendations](#).
- **February - March**
  - Plan to [visit](#) at least one college with family or MHS so that you develop an understanding of the process and begin to understand your own priorities - register online for tours in advance. With counselor, start a [preliminary college list in](#) Naviance system (complete [net price calculators](#) for each school in your list)
  - Start a [Common App](#) account and begin completing it
  - Work with Academic Counselor to plan [senior year courses](#) - colleges want to see you continue to challenge yourself!

- **April - May**
  - [Brainstorm essay topics](#) and [start a draft](#) for college essay/personal statement (students will discuss personal narrative writing style in English class and complete exercises from the “College Essay Guy”)
  - Start a draft of at least one of your college supplemental questions (subject is often “Why This College”)
  - Start researching at least one of your college’s requirements and deadlines ([Testing policies?](#) [Admission interviews offered?](#) [Application other than Common App?](#) [Application fee?](#) [Allow Early Action?](#) [Allow additional portfolio material?](#) [Give merit aid?](#) [Financial aid application requirements?](#))
  - [Ask two teachers to write letters of recommendation](#)
  - Register for recommended final standardized test, no later than October. If test results are disappointing, consider applying to some [Test-Optional Colleges](#).
- **Summer**
  - [Visit more colleges](#), especially ones on your preliminary list
  - Complete all main sections of the [Common App](#)
  - Start Common App School Sections & Supplements ([Database of supplemental essay prompts here](#))
  - Write as close to final draft as possible of your personal statement (college essay)
  - Identify [how early you want to apply to schools](#) - are you financially, academically, emotionally, and logistically ready to apply to one school binding Early Decision (usually November 1)? Will your applications, grades, and test scores be ready to apply Early Action (usually November 1)?

## 12th grade

- **September - October**
  - Review & finalize Common App main section (or other required applications) with college counselor and other trusted adult. Review [Common App affirmations](#) to ensure you understand policies.
  - Review & finalize personal statement draft with college counselor & Writing Center or trusted adult
  - Review & finalize a [balanced list of schools](#) and [create a chart](#) to keep track of deadlines and policies.
  - Work on supplemental writing and Common App School Sections of colleges on your list
  - Work with family on beginning [financial aid applications](#) and tracking deadlines & policies [in your chart](#)
- **October - November: Start Applying**
  - **Student** updates their [college list](#) and application timeline in the Naviance system.
  - **Student** is prepared to submit a fully reviewed Common App (or other required application material), including personal statement and all School Sections, and including application fees ([\\$0-\\$90 per school](#)).
  - **Student** is prepared to submit and pay for all required official test scores from SAT or ACT if the school will not accept [self-reported scores](#) on the Common App (\$12-\$14 per school).
  - **Student and Family** are prepared to submit all financial aid application requirements (FAFSA, CSS Profile (\$16-\$25 per school), and other required financial and tax documents).
  - **Miss Hall’s School College Counseling** will refer to student’s list in Naviance system in order to send materials to the correct schools by the correct dates.
  - **Miss Hall’s School College Counseling** has collected teacher [recommendation letters](#), written a counselor recommendation letter, and is prepared to send on behalf of student.
  - **Miss Hall’s School College Counseling** has prepared to send school profile and student transcripts to colleges reflecting coursework and grades from [9-11th grades](#), plus [11th grade GPA](#) and [12th grade courses](#). Mid-semester grades in November are sent to colleges if the student is applying Early, and official grade updates will be sent to colleges if required or upon request until decisions are final.
- **October 15:** Earliest deadline by select few schools
- **November 1:** [Most Common Early Action & Early Decision Deadlines](#)
- **November 15 - December 1:** Less common Early Action & Early Decision Deadlines
- **December 16 (prior to Winter Break):** Miss Hall’s School deadline to submit all materials to remaining schools. *We can’t guarantee timely delivery of documents if a student changes the school list after this point.*
- **December - April:** Colleges Notify Student of Admissions (Accept, [Defer to Regular Decision from Early Decision](#), [Waitlist](#), Deny) & Financial Decisions ([Merit scholarships](#), [need-based grants](#), [work study](#), [loans](#)).
- **Student** seeks support from family & personal team and [keeps open perspective on their future](#).
- **May 1: Student must make a final decision & deposit** (\$100 - \$500)

## Citations (In order of appearance in timeline):

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