

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT APPLYING EARLY

Making Informed Decisions

If you find a college that you're sure is right for you, consider applying early. Early Decision and Early Action plans allow you to apply early (usually in November) and get an admission decision early (usually by December 15)

Early Decision Plans - Binding

You agree to attend the college if it accepts you and offers an adequate financial aid package. You can apply to only one college for Early Decision. You may also apply to other colleges through the regular admissions process, but if you're accepted by your first-choice college early, you must withdraw all other applications. This demonstrates interest and can improve your admission chances.

Early Action Plans - Non Binding

While the college will tell you whether or not you're accepted by early January, you have the right to wait until May 1 before responding. This gives you time to compare colleges, including your financial aid offers, before making a decision. You can also apply Early Action to more than one college.

Restrictive Early Action - Non Binding

Schools that use restrictive early action ask prospective students to apply early only at that institution. It is a nonbinding, noncommittal way in which students can demonstrate that a specific school, particularly one of the most selective private schools, is their No. 1 choice. Students can still apply to public universities.

Single-Choice Early Action is another option offered by a few colleges

This plan works the same way as other Early Action plans, but candidates may not apply early (either Early Action or Early Decision) to any other school. You can still apply for regular admissions to other schools and are not required to give your final answer of acceptance until the regular decision deadline.

If you need financial aid, Early Decision may not be a good idea

You shouldn't apply under an Early Decision plan if you think you'll be better off weighing financial aid packages from several colleges later in the Spring. While you can turn down an early acceptance if the college is unable to meet your need for financial aid, "need" in this context is determined by formulas, not by your family.

Not every college offers an early plan

More than 400 colleges offer an Early Decision plan, an Early Action plan, or both; but that is less than 20 percent of all colleges.