

MAKING YOUR COLLEGE LIST

There are five steps to making your college list:

1 Reflect on your preferences and needs.

There are over 4,000 colleges in the United States. To determine the colleges that might be a good fit for you, consider the general, academic, social, and financial characteristics that you want or need.

- **GENERAL:** Type of college, location, distance from home, size, etc.
- **ACADEMIC:** Type of degree, majors, online v. in-person, etc.
- **SOCIAL:** Housing options, student clubs, support services, student body, etc.
- **FINANCIAL:** Cost, availability of financial aid and part-time jobs, etc.

2 Explore college options online.

Search college databases using filters based on the needs and preferences you identified. Start at collegescorecard.ed.gov and/or bigfuture.collegeboard.org.

3 Make a list of colleges that might be a good fit.

Use the worksheet on the next page to help you keep track. Add additional attributes for each category based on the preferences and needs you identified in step 1. Highlight or star the items most important to you.

- Start with at least 5–10 colleges on your list.
- Consider a variety of different options: community colleges or career and trade schools, four-year colleges or universities, colleges in Oregon, and colleges out-of-state.
- Write down key facts and what you like and dislike about each college.

4 Find out more information.

Learn more about each option on your list. Go to each college's website and sign up to receive e-mails and an information packet. You can also follow college accounts on social media, take an in-person or virtual campus tour or attend an info session, and talk to students, staff, and alumni of a school.

5 Refine your list.

- Add or take off colleges as you do more research. Do steps 1–4 as many times as you like or need.
- Aim for a final list of 4–6 colleges to apply to. They should all be ones you would want to attend.
- Have a balanced list of options, including a backup plan. Include more and less selective options as well as ones you know you can afford and ones you think you may be able to with financial aid.

COLLEGE					
GENERAL	Type of college (<i>community college, university or trade school? public or private?</i>)				
	Location (<i>city, state</i>)				
	Distance from home				
	Setting (<i>urban, rural, etc.</i>)				
	Total number of students				

ACADEMICS	Degrees offered (A.A., B.A.)				
	Potential majors or programs				
	In-person, online, or hybrid				
	On track to meet minimum admissions requirements?				

SOCIAL	Student body characteristics				
	Types of housing				
	Clubs or activities				
	Support services				

FINANCIAL	Advertised cost				
	Financial aid offered				
	% who get financial aid				

OVERALL	What I like				
	What I dislike				