



Anne's Advice for Juniors

1. Work hard and do as well as you can academically because colleges will look beyond your grade point average to determine trends. Needless to say, high grades are more important in core subjects than in electives, and an upward trajectory will be viewed more favorably than a downward one or even a steady record for two students with the same GPA.
2. Get to know some of your teachers, and let them get to know you, especially in subjects of particular interest to you or subjects in which you are having difficulty and could use their extra help. Many colleges specifically request recommendations from junior and senior year teachers. The best recommendations come not only from teachers of the subjects that really excite you, but also from teachers who write about how hard you worked in a class you found challenging.
3. Get involved in activities if you haven't yet done so. Depth is more important than breadth here, so spending more time on fewer activities is more impressive than spending a little bit of time on lots of them. College applications require you to specify how many hours you spend on each activity per week and how many weeks you spend on it per year. (Don't think you can fabricate this; admissions officers cultivate relationships with high school guidance counselors who could catch you in a lie.)
4. Colleges frequently like to see evidence of leadership, so you might think about how you can position yourself to assume a leadership position senior year if you don't already have one.
5. Prepare for standardized tests, and aim to take your first SAT or ACT no later than this spring. Most students take them two or even three times, so you may be retaking them in the fall of your senior year.
6. If you will be applying to competitive colleges, you may also need to take one or two SAT Subject tests, which are administered on all the same dates as the regular SAT except for March. However, you can't take both the regular SAT and a Subject test on the same day, so you need to plan accordingly. See the

College Board website for which subject tests are administered on which dates.

7. Begin exploring colleges that might appeal to you. Start the process online, and then try to visit at least a few actual campuses this year. The fall of senior year tends to be very busy, and it's best to see colleges when they're in session so you can get a feel for what the students are like and whether you think you'd fit in. You may end up visiting additional schools over the summer and next fall, but life will be much easier for you if you've already begun the process and have some kind of standard for comparison and sense of what you're looking for.
8. Prior to visiting a college, look at the admissions office website to find out when information sessions and tours are offered and to sign up if advance registration is required. Many private schools favor applicants who have demonstrated interest by visiting campus, especially if they live within driving distance, so whenever you visit, be sure to sign in at the admissions office.