

Your Common App Checklist

Everything to double-check before you hit submit, and what to do after.
It's all in the details!

Please read these reminders **carefully**. They are the most common mistakes our team catches on applications, and each one takes only a minute to fix.

1 Order What Others Send For You

- ☐ **Official test scores.** Check each college's testing policy. If a college requires official scores, send them from the [College Board](#) (SAT) or [ACT](#) early. Reports can take a week or more to arrive.
- ☐ **Transcripts.** Complete your school's transcript request (often through Naviance, SCOIR, or your counselor) for *every* college. Took dual enrollment? Some colleges also want that college transcript.
- ☐ **Recommendations.** Invite each recommender inside the Common App, then send a thank-you note with the deadline date.

2 Profile & Testing

- ☐ Your **GPA** matches what is on your resume.
- ☐ If you enter your **Social Security Number** (it's optional), double-check every digit.
- ☐ **Applying test-optional to some schools?**
Remove your scores from the Testing section *before* submitting to those colleges, then add them back before submitting to colleges that will see your scores. Edit this school by school.

3 Resume & Activities

- ☐ Your **GPA** is accurate on your resume.
- ☐ Your **LinkedIn** link sits at the top of your resume, right after your email address.
- ☐ Each **activity description** fits within 150 characters, so no sentences get cut off.
- ☐ Your **Activities list** is in a thoughtful order and flows nicely.

4 Writing

- ☐ **Proofread every essay** before pasting it in. Tools like Grammarly help, and so does reading it out loud.
- ☐ **Check formatting after you paste.** The Common App adds a space between paragraphs on its own, so delete extra blank lines. Tabs don't work, and stray bold or italics can carry over, so clean them up.
- ☐ **TRIPLE CHECK every supplement** for the right college: school name, course names, and any school-specific details.

5 Before You Hit Submit

- ☐ **Preview each application.** Use the preview in each college's Review and Submit step. Read the PDF closely: essay spacing, cut-off sentences, and accuracy in every section.
- ☐ **Answer every college-specific question** in the application itself. Some colleges ask their own questions that are easy to skim past.
- ☐ **Get 2 to 3 people** to look over your application. The more eyes, the better!
- ☐ **Pay the fee or confirm your fee waiver**, and submit at least one day early. Deadline-night tech glitches happen.

6 After You Submit: Keep Going!

You've made it this far. Don't drop the ball now!

- ☐ **Set up every applicant portal.** Colleges email login details within days to a couple of weeks. Check your spam folder, and keep logins in one secure place.
- ☐ **Check portals every week** for missing items: recommendations, test scores, and transcripts. Still missing after a couple of weeks? Email admissions politely with your full name, date of birth, and application ID.
- ☐ **Watch for additional supplements** like honors programs, scholarships, portfolios, and interviews. Add each deadline to your calendar the day it arrives.
- ☐ **Confirm financial aid forms and deadlines** for each college: the [FAFSA](#), the [CSS Profile](#), or a school's own form.
- ☐ **Finish senior year strong.** Colleges see your senior grades in the mid-year report.

Parents: a 15-minute portal check on the same day each week works wonders. Let your student do the clicking.

★ Helpful Free Resources

Common App Help Center

Answers to the most common questions, plus a contact form for support. commonapp.org/help-center

AXS Companion

Free step-by-step videos for every Common App section, featured by NACAC. [theaxscompanion](https://theaxscompanion.com)

Want a team in your corner?

Emerging Educational Consulting helps students and families through the college search, the application, and the executive function skills to get there. [Tell us your story at emergingconsulting.com/contact](https://emergingconsulting.com/contact).