

# College Advising Essentials

BigFuture Edition



Handouts



Resources





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# What is BigFuture?

BigFuture® is a free online planning guide to help all students take the right first step after high school. Students can explore careers, plan for college, and learn about paying for college using the resources and tools available on bigfuture.org.

BigFuture helps students personalize a plan for life after high school by providing access to...

## free guidance on college, career and financial planning:

- Free, online resource that helps high school students plan the right first step for them after high school.
- Students can find colleges and career and technical education programs.
- Students can explore hundreds of career options.
- Students can discover ways to pay for college with scholarships and financial aid.

## incentives that motivate students to plan:

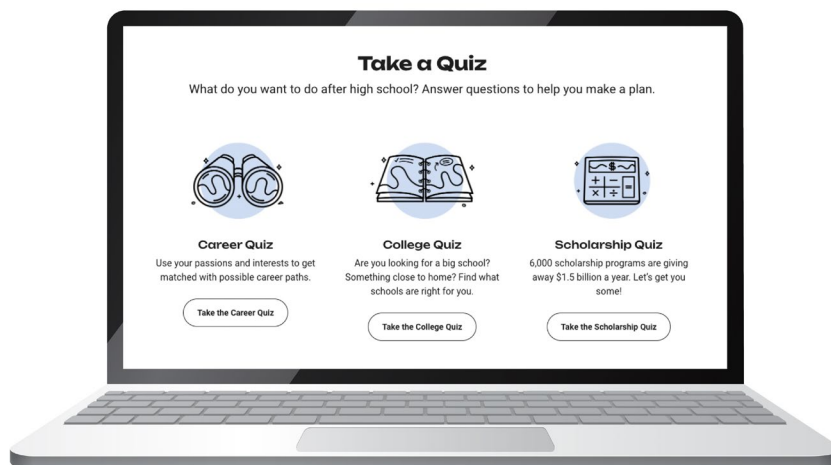
- Personalized dashboard encourages students to take action.
- Completion of key actions automatically qualifies students for a \$40,000 or \$500 BigFuture Scholarship.
- All students benefit from completing planning milestones, even if they don't win.

## college and scholarship providers that are a good match:

- A way for colleges and scholarship programs to find students.
- Relevant communications and updates to discover the right school.
- Proven impact on college enrollment and graduation rates.

## communities that make planning relevant:

- Virtual events give students the chance to have their questions answered.
- Events that highlight the experiences of peers and diverse industry leaders.
- Guidance that celebrates and affirms specific communities.





# What's BigFuture School?

BigFuture School is a free mobile app that gives students control over their college and career planning. It's available to students who take certain College Board assessments during the school day (SAT® School Day, PSAT/NMSQT®, PSAT™ 10) to spark their interest in planning for the future the moment they get their scores.

## The Power to Plan—in the Palm of Students' Hands

BigFuture School mobile app provides students with the power to:

- Hear from nonprofit colleges, scholarship providers, and government agency education programs through Connections™.
- Access scores from the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and SAT School Day.
- Explore customized college and career planning guidance.

BigFuture School and Connections (when available) puts privacy first. No personal information is shared with any institutions unless a student chooses to connect and share information directly with them, giving students and their families more control over the college recruitment process.

## Visibility

BigFuture School provides you with visibility into your students' planning actions. Inside the K–12 Score Reporting Portal, you'll find reports on:

- Students with access to the app and list of who is using it.
- Students who opted in to Connections and list of which students are reading their messages.
- A list of organizations that have reached out to your students.

## How It Works

**Provide a mobile number:** During the exam setup for the digital SAT School Day, PSAT/NMSQT, and PSAT 10, students can choose to provide a mobile number. The mobile number is only used to access and authenticate the app.

**Access BigFuture School:** Students can view their scores and explore customized content in the app. And, when they opt in to Connections, they can begin hearing from colleges and nonprofit scholarship and educational organizations. Districts and schools may choose not to provide access to Connections.

## SAT Suite Score Reporting

Students who don't provide a mobile phone or don't download the app have other ways to access their scores and planning information. Schools will continue to receive PDF score reports.

As always, students can log in to their personal accounts at [studentscores.collegeboard.org](https://studentscores.collegeboard.org) to get additional insights about their scores and explore BigFuture.

Students who take the SAT on the weekend will continue to receive their scores through their College Board account.

# Introducing BigFuture School

Getting high school students to focus on planning for their future can be hard. BigFuture School is a free mobile app that gives students control over their college and career planning. It's available to students who take certain College Board assessments during the school day (SAT School Day, PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10). It provides college and career guidance the moment students get their scores and offers the primary way for them to be recruited by nonprofit organizations.

## Students Control the College and Career Planning Process

**BigFuture School** meets students where they're comfortable consuming information: on their phones. It provides trusted information and customized guidance they can access anywhere, connecting them to more college and career opportunities without sharing any personal information.

## Students Can Discover Hundreds of Diverse Organizations

**College connections are powerful, and with Connections™** students can choose to hear from nonprofit colleges, scholarship providers, and government agencies offering education programs. If students opt in, they can see institutions that are interested in students like them—and the students' privacy is protected. Connections is the primary way for students who test in schools to be recruited\*. No personal information is shared, and the student chooses if and when to connect with an organization directly.

### How It Works

**Provide a mobile number:** During the exam setup for the SAT School Day, PSAT/NMSQT, and PSAT 10, students can choose to provide a mobile number to access and authenticate BigFuture School. We won't use your phone number for any other reason.

**Opt in to Connections:** If available, students can opt in to Connections during exam setup or when they download the app. It's optional, and they can opt out any time.

**Receive texts:** Through the mobile number provided, students will be texted to download the app. They'll receive an authentication code to sign in, and they'll be notified when they can view their scores.

**Use BigFuture School:** Students can view their scores and explore customized college, scholarship, and career content in the app.

\*A school, district, or state may choose to not provide access to Connections for students.

# BigFuture School: What to Know Before Test Day

If you're taking the SAT School Day, PSAT/NMSQT, or PSAT 10, you'll be able to access your scores on BigFuture School, a free mobile app that gives you control in planning for life after high school.

## Here's how to access BigFuture School when you're preparing for test day:

**1. Decide how you want to get your score.**

With the BigFuture School app, you don't have to wait to view your scores as soon as they're ready. You'll see the option to access BigFuture School when you log in to Bluebook™ and complete the digital exam setup. Chat with your family or caregivers before test day about whether BigFuture School is a good option for you.

**2. Know your mobile number.**

If you decide to get scores through the BigFuture School app, note that when you complete exam setup you'll be asked to provide your mobile phone number to download the app, to get a code to sign in, and to receive an alert when scores are ready to view. Your mobile number won't be used for any other purpose.

**3. Consider opting in to Connections**

When you download the app (or during the exam setup process), you can choose to opt in to Connections™\* to receive messages from nonprofit colleges, scholarship providers, and government agencies offering education programs that may be a good match—without sharing any personal information. If you're interested in a particular college or program, you decide if and when to reach out to learn more. Connections is exclusively available for test takers age 13 and over.

*\*Note: your school, district, or state may choose not to provide access to Connections for its students.*

## Notes



# College and Career Planning on BigFuture and BigFuture School

Students can make informed choices about life after high school when they understand their career and postsecondary education options. And knowing *what* tools to connect your students to and *when* is a necessary first step.

## 5 Reasons to Use BigFuture School

**Reaches students on mobile.** BigFuture School is a mobile app that connects domestic, in-school test takers, age 13 and older, who take the PSAT 10, PSAT/NMSQT, and SAT School Day to their score and guidance for the future.

**Offers college and career planning.** Guidance in the app inspires students to continue to plan for what's next as soon as they get their PSAT-related assessment and SAT scores.

**Protects students' privacy\*.** Connections™ gives students opted in the ability to hear from hundreds of nonprofit colleges and scholarship programs. No personally identifiable information about students is shared, and students decide when and if to contact these programs.

**Delivers new, relevant guidance.** In-app messages are curated and updated often, so students receive timely and personalized college, career, and financial planning guidance when they need it.

**Provides visibility to students' actions.** The K–12 Reporting Portal removes the guesswork by giving counselors access to their students' engagement in the app so they can support them in more meaningful ways.

## 5 Reasons to Use bigfuture.org

**Available any time to any student.** All students can access the free website for actionable guidance and personalized tools to explore careers, plan for college, and pay for college.

**Explore careers.** Students can find 1,000 career options. They can also start from a curated list of 30 careers based on their interests and skills using career quiz to discover their best fit.

**Plan for college.** Students can learn more about 4,400 institutions—including four-year and two-year colleges and technical education programs—to help them decide on a postsecondary and college pathway.

**Pay for college.** Students can find ways to make college more affordable with 25,000 scholarships, helpful videos and articles, and monthly BigFuture scholarships.

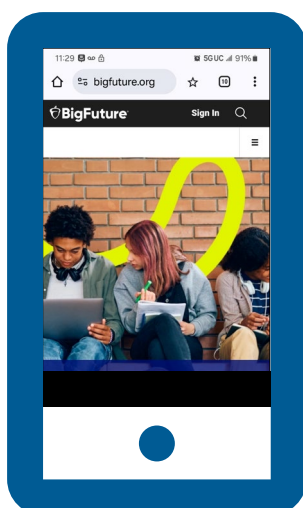
**Incentivizes students to plan.** When students take action on BigFuture for college, career, and financial planning, they are entered into a scholarship drawing. Every month, two \$40,000 and many \$500 scholarships are awarded.

\*Note: your school, district, or state may choose not to provide access to Connections for its students

# 4 Steps to Conduct a College Search Using BigFuture

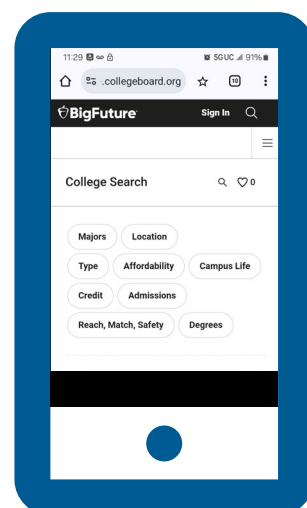
Researching colleges can be an overwhelming and daunting task for students and families. The BigFuture College Search tool has over 4,000 four-year, two-year, and certificate program profiles and several filters to help students learn more about what they are looking for in their college experience that might be a right fit for them. Below are the steps that students can follow to begin their college exploration journey.

## 1 Go to [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org).



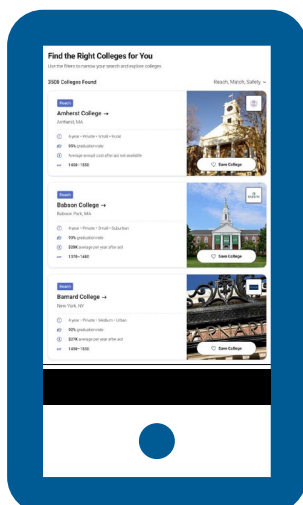
## 2 Under Plan for College tab, select College Search.

Students can indicate their preferences using one or more of the following filters:



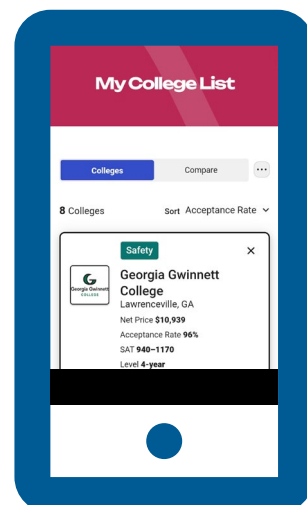
## 3 Review your list of colleges compiled by BigFuture.

BigFuture compiles a list of colleges that match the preferences indicated by the student in step two.



## 4 Save colleges to your list.

Students can export and share their list with their counselor, parents, or other caring adults. By saving at least three colleges, students earn entries for BigFuture Scholarships.





# Lesson Plan: Building a College List on bigfuture.org

## Objectives

Counselors will:

1. Outline the factors students should consider when researching colleges by using the College Search tool on BigFuture.
2. Provide guidance about building and saving a college list on BigFuture.

- BigFuture will compile a list of colleges based on students' preferences.
- Have students review the colleges on their list and save colleges to their list.
- When students save at least three colleges in BigFuture, they'll automatically be entered into monthly drawings for hundreds of \$500 scholarships and two \$40,000 scholarships. [Learn more at bigfuturescholarships.org](https://bigfuturescholarships.org).
- To save their list of colleges or to earn entries for the BigFuture Scholarships, students must log in to their College Board account or create one.

## Before the Lesson

Materials needed:

- Computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone
- Internet access
- Sticky notes
- BigFuture College Search Worksheet (to share with students)

## Overview: How to Build a College List Using BigFuture

- Have students go to the college search tool at BigFuture. Students begin the College Search by choosing a category to indicate their preferences and start exploring:
  - ♦ Location
  - ♦ Major
  - ♦ Type
  - ♦ Affordability
  - ♦ Campus Life
  - ♦ Credit
  - ♦ Admissions
  - ♦ Reach, Match, Safety
  - ♦ Degrees

## In-Person Activities

### Hand Raiser

Have students raise their hand when you call out their preference.

### Sticky Note Share Out

Place signs for the preferences for one of the filters around the room on the walls. For example, for the settings filter, post signs labeled "Urban," "Suburban," "Rural," and "No Preference." Each student will place their sticky note under their preference. Students may return to their seats or remain in groups to discuss. This activity allows students to see commonalities they share with other students. Students can share the reasons for their preference. Challenge students by asking them to name a college that fits that criterion.

### Rep Your College

Have students wear paraphernalia from their favorite college

### Scavenger Hunt

In advance of this lesson plan, have teachers post the names and logos of the colleges that they attended outside their door. On the day of the lesson, they can wear their college gear. During that day, students can find teachers who attended the colleges on their list.

## Virtual Activities

## Rep Your College

Have students run and locate some college paraphernalia in their home. They can display their paraphernalia on their screen.

## Screen Time

Have students change their screen background to a picture of their favorite college or its logo.

## Discussion Questions

It's important for students to be able to verbalize why a college is on their list or why they have removed a college from their list. Have students share their reasons for adding or removing a college.

Suggested questions:

Why is the research process important when building a college list?

What are the most important criteria to you as you research colleges and build your college list? Why?

## Challenges

## Student Challenge

Create a competition between classes to see which one has the largest number of students with three saved colleges by the end of a specified time period. You can also create competition between homerooms, juniors and seniors, and other schools.

## Spread the Word

Have students encourage one another to build their college list by saving three colleges in BigFuture.

## Resources

You can find a variety of videos such as **BigFuture: Plan for College** and **POV: You're an overwhelmed high school student** on the BigFuture YouTube channel.

## Notes

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# BigFuture College Search Worksheet

The college search is about exploring who you are, identifying what you want in your college experience, and then finding colleges that will match your interests and preferences. This worksheet matches the categories on BigFuture College Search. Explore these criteria, and enter them on [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org) to find colleges that are a good fit for you.

## Location

I'm interested in colleges in the following states/territories:

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I want to be within this distance from zip code \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ 2 miles (walking distance)
- ☐ 20 miles (short drive)
- ☐ 50 miles (moderate drive)
- ☐ 200 miles (long drive)
- ☐ 500 miles (short flight)
- ☐ 2000 miles (long flight)

I'm interested in colleges outside the U.S. in the following countries:

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## Major

I'm interested in the following major(s):

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## Type

### College Level

- ☐ 4-Year (bachelor's degree)
- ☐ 2-Year (associate degree, certificates)
- ☐ Less than 2-Year (certificate)

### College Type

- ☐ Public ☐ Private
- ☐ Career and Technical ☐ International

### Special Mission

- ☐ Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- ☐ Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs)
- ☐ Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)
- ☐ All women
- ☐ All men

### Study Options

- ☐ Distance learning
- ☐ Double major
- ☐ English as a Second Language
- ☐ Honors Program
- ☐ Weekend college

### Religious Affiliation

I'm interested in colleges with the following religious affiliation(s):

---

# Campus Life

## Size

- ☐ Less than 3,000 students
- ☐ 3,000–8,999 students
- ☐ 9,000–14,999 students
- ☐ More than 15,000 students

## Setting

- ☐ Urban (located in cities)
- ☐ Suburban (small cities, large towns)
- ☐ Rural (near farms, wilderness areas, in small town)

## Sports

I'm interested in colleges with the following sport(s):

---

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## Activities

I'm interested in colleges with the following activities:

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## Campus Services

- ☐ Alcohol/substance abuse counseling
- ☐ On-campus day care
- ☐ Services for low-income students
- ☐ Services for minority students

## Disability Support Services

- ☐ Blind/visually impaired
- ☐ Deaf/hard of hearing
- ☐ Learning disorders
- ☐ Speech or communication disorders
- ☐ Wheelchair accessibility

# Affordability

## Financial Need Met

- ☐ 65% or more
- ☐ 75% or more
- ☐ 90% or more
- ☐ 100%

## Application Fees

- ☐ Application fee waivers offered
- ☐ Free to apply

## Aid for International Students

- ☐ Colleges that offer aid for international students.

## Credit

- ☐ Colleges that offer advanced placement, credit, or both for AP
- ☐ Colleges that offer credit for CLEP
- ☐ Colleges that accept transfer credits from 2-year colleges

## Admissions

### SAT Range (400–1600)

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### GPA Range (0–4.0)

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## Acceptance Rate

- ☐ Most selective (0%–10% accepted)
- ☐ Very selective (10%–25% accepted)
- ☐ Selective (25%–50% accepted)
- ☐ Less selective (50%–90% accepted)
- ☐ Not selective (90%–100% accepted)

## Open Admissions

- ☐ I'm interested in colleges with open admissions.

## Application Deadline

- ☐ More than a month
- ☐ Less than a month
- ☐ Less than a week

## Application Types Accepted

- ☐ Common App
- ☐ Coalition App
- ☐ Universal College App
- ☐ Common Black College App (CBCA)

## GED

- ☐ I'm interested in colleges that accept a GED.

## Reach, Match, Safety

SAT score \_\_\_\_\_ GPA \_\_\_\_\_ ACT score \_\_\_\_\_

Show me:

- ☐ Reach schools
- ☐ Match schools
- ☐ Safety schools



# Lesson Plan: Strengthen Your College List

## Objectives

Counselors will:

- Share the criteria for the Strengthen Your College List scholarship
- Outline how to build a well-balanced college list (reach, match, and safety schools)

**Provide examples of safety, match, and reach for Ima Student.**

- Ima Student scored 1000 on her SAT.
- The average SAT score for College A is 800. College A is a safety school for Ima.
- The average SAT score for College B is 1300. College B is a reach school for Ima.
- The average SAT score for College C is 1050. College C is a match school for Ima.

## Lesson Plan Content

*Optional Toolkit Resource: Strengthen Your College List [PowerPoint]*

### Overview of Strengthen Your College List

- Students can earn entries for monthly BigFuture scholarship drawings by updating their college list in BigFuture to include 1 safety, 2 match, and 3 reach colleges.

### Provide definition of safety, match, and reach colleges

Whether a college is a good fit for a student is based on many factors. This lesson, however, focuses on fit based on test scores or estimated grade point average.

- **Reach**—Your SAT score, ACT score or estimated GPA is lower than the average score range of last year's freshman class.
- **Match**—Your SAT score, ACT score or estimated GPA is solidly in the same score range as last year's freshman class.
- **Safety**—Your SAT score, ACT score or estimated GPA is higher than the average score range of last year's freshman class.

## Action Item

**Have students log into BigFuture at [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org) and add their SAT score.**

- Under the **My BigFuture** tab, students should select **My College List**. There they will see a list of colleges that they've saved along with how many are in the reach, match, and safety categories.

**Have students review their list and identify the safety, match, and reach colleges on it.**

- Students can share their college list with you, a parent, or caring adult. They can also export their college list as a .csv file.

**Students must save a minimum of one safety, two match and three reach colleges on their list to earn an entry for BigFuture Scholarships.**

## Supplemental Activities

## Discussion Questions

- Why is important to have safety, match, and reach schools on your college list?
- What factors other than test scores determine if a college is a good academic fit for you?
- Were there colleges that ended up under a different category than you expected?
- Why do you think those colleges ended up in a different category?

## Activities

## My College Short List

- Have students write a post on their social media about each college they're thinking about and why that college made their short list.
- What factors placed those colleges on their list?
- What makes them most excited about those colleges? What is something they would like to know more about regarding those colleges?

- Encourage students to tag the college and their admissions office in the post as this may develop a dialogue between the student and the college.

## On Their Own

Encourage students to continue to explore BigFuture and fine-tune college application list.

## Resources

**BigFuture Toolkit for Counselors** (<https://counselors.collegeboard.org/bigfuture-toolkit>)

*BigFuture Scholarships—Strengthen Your College List  
[PowerPoint]*

You can find the [Overview of Strengthen Your College List](#) on BigFuture.org under Pay for College/BigFuture Scholarships/Scholarship Details.

BigFuture articles under Plan for College/Find your Fit

## How to Finalize Your College List

## College Fair Checklist

## Choosing the Right College Major for You

## Notes

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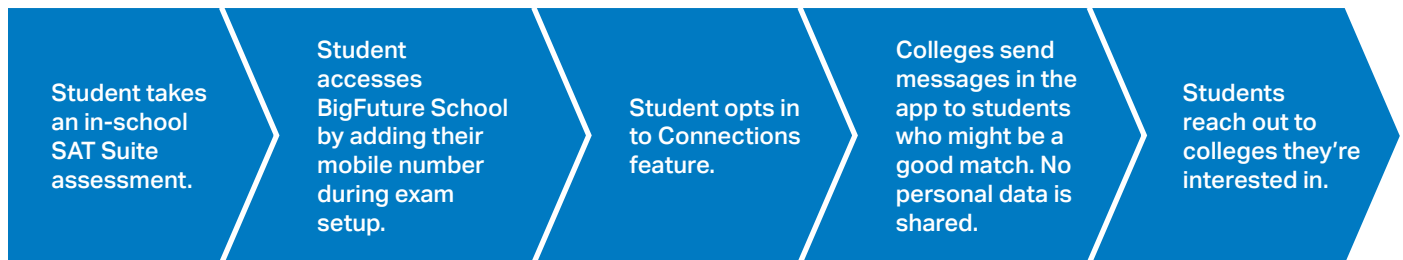




# Help Your Students Be Recruited by Colleges Through Connections and Student Search Service

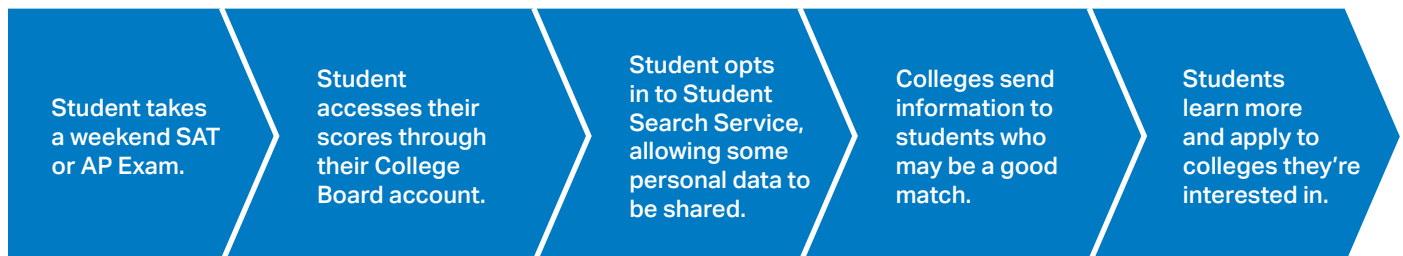
## Connections:

Connections is the primary way for in-school test takers to be recruited and provides educators with insights on their students' planning actions. It's available exclusively for students 13 and older who take the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10 and SAT on a school day. It delivers messages in the BigFuture School app and by mail from organizations that are interested in students based on information students, schools, districts, or states provide when taking an in-school assessment—including score range—to make connections that are relevant to students. With Connections, no personal information is shared with institutions unless a student chooses to connect and share information directly with them. This gives students and their families more control over when, or whether, they raise their hands to be seen. Connections also provides educators like you with insights via the K-12 Reporting Portal on student usage of the app and nonprofit colleges, scholarship providers, and government agencies administering education programs reaching out to your students.



## Student Search Service:

Student Search Service™ is a free, voluntary College Board service available to all students to help nonprofit colleges and scholarship providers reach out to students that might be a good match. When a student takes SAT Weekend or an AP Exam or signs in to their College Board account on BigFuture, they can choose to participate in Student Search Service. Students who agree to opt in can discover over 1,900 colleges and scholarship programs.





# College and Career Planning Checklist—9th-Grade Tasks

Keep track of key steps to take during each grade of high school to help you plan for college and career. Find a digital checklist at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist).

## First Semester

<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your PSAT 8/9 scores	If your school offers the PSAT 8/9, you may take it either in the fall or the spring. Your score report includes detailed information about how your PSAT 8/9 scores relate to specific academic skills and provide customized feedback on how to improve in these subject areas. This can help you choose high school courses, show you which AP® classes may be a good match for you, and get you started thinking about college or career plans.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Talk to your school counselor	Connect with your school counselor. They're there to help you and can offer valuable advice on college preparation and financial aid as you progress through high school.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Explore extracurricular activities	Get involved in extracurricular activities, school clubs, and community service. Participation in these activities can enhance your college application and scholarship opportunities.

## Second Semester

<input type="checkbox"/>	Take the career quiz	It might feel early to start thinking about a career path, but now is a great time to start! Take an easy, 15-minute quiz to get matched with careers based on your likes and dislikes at <a href="https://bigfuture.org/careerquiz">bigfuture.org/careerquiz</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decide which AP courses to take next year	It's time to start planning for 10th grade. You'll work with your counselor, teachers, and/or parents to select courses. Be sure to look at which AP courses you might be able to take. AP isn't just for juniors and seniors. In fact, some of the most popular courses are often taken by 9th and 10th graders. Check out the most popular AP courses for younger students.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your GPA	Now that you've completed your first semester, review your grade point average. This is an important factor most colleges will look at when you apply to college.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stay motivated over the summer	Summer is a great time to explore interests and learn new skills—and colleges look for students who pursue meaningful summer activities. Find out ways you can stay motivated this summer.

\*Complete checklist can be found at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist/9th-grade](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist/9th-grade)



# College and Career Planning Checklist—10th-Grade Tasks

Keep track of key steps to take during each grade of high school to help you plan for college and career. Find a digital checklist at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist).

## First Semester

<input type="checkbox"/>	Start a college list	There are many factors to consider when building your college list, such as campus size, location, and cost. Use BigFuture College Search to help you narrow down your search and create the right list for you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take the PSAT/NMSQT	If your school offers the PSAT/NMSQT to 10th graders, you'll take it in the fall. The PSAT/NMSQT measures the skills and knowledge that are most important to college and career success. It can help you learn your strengths and areas you need to improve so that you can stay on track.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take the career quiz	It might feel early to start thinking about a career path, but now is a great time to start! Take an easy, 15-minute quiz to get matched with careers based on your likes and dislikes at <a href="https://bigfuture.org/careerquiz">bigfuture.org/careerquiz</a> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your PSAT/NMSQT score	When your PSAT/NMSQT scores are ready, access your scores on the BigFuture School mobile app if you provided your mobile number on test day. You'll see details about where you excel or need to improve.
<input type="checkbox"/>	See if you'll do well in AP	If you've taken the PSAT 8/9, PSAT 10, or PSAT/NMSQT, explore your likelihood to succeed in AP by using the AP Potential™ tool. Learn which AP courses you're ready for by reviewing your personalized list.

## Second Semester

<input type="checkbox"/>	Review AP courses to take next year	It's time to start planning for 11th grade. You'll work with your counselor, teachers, and/or parents to select courses.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take the PSAT 10	If your school offers the PSAT 10, you'll take it in the spring. Taking the PSAT 10 is a great way to see how your knowledge and test-taking skills are progressing halfway through high school.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your PSAT 10 score	Access your scores on BigFuture School if you provided your mobile number on test day. Be sure to check out your Career Insights Snapshot for information on careers in your state.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter to win \$40K and \$500 BigFuture Scholarships	No essay, no minimum GPA or test score. No citizenship requirements. Just follow the steps for chances to win. The more steps you complete and the earlier you start, the more chances you have to win!

\*Complete checklist can be found at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist/10th-grade](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist/10th-grade)



# College and Career Planning Checklist—11th-Grade Tasks

Keep track of key steps to take during each grade of high school to help you plan for college and career. Find a digital checklist at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist).

## First Semester

<input type="checkbox"/>	Connect with colleges and scholarships	Want to hear from colleges and scholarship programs looking for students like you? Opt in to Student Search Service so they can contact you directly. You'll learn about campus life, scholarships, and financial aid.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attend college fairs	Attend college fairs and information sessions to learn more about different schools and their financial aid offerings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take the PSAT/NMSQT	If your school offers the PSAT/NMSQT to 10th graders, you'll take it in the fall. The PSAT/NMSQT measures the skills and knowledge that are most important to college and career success. It can help you learn your strengths and areas you need to improve so that you can stay on track.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Explore scholarships	Discover scholarship opportunities from over 6,000 different programs and organizations. You can find matches based on your intended major, cultural background, and other factors.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your PSAT/NMSQT score	When your PSAT/NMSQT scores are ready, access your scores on the BigFuture School mobile app if you provided your mobile number on test day. You'll see details about where you excel and where you need to improve.

## Second Semester

<input type="checkbox"/>	Meet with your school counselor.	Make an appointment to meet with your school counselor to learn about graduation requirements, the college application process, and other recommendations to help you plan for college and career.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review AP courses to take next year.	It's time to start planning for 12th grade. You'll work with your counselor, teachers, and/or parents to select courses.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan to take the SAT.	Most students take the SAT for the first time in the spring of their junior year. Ask your counselor or principal if your school offers the SAT on a school day. If not, plan to register for it on a weekend. Take a full-length practice test in the Bluebook™ app.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about the FAFSA.	Familiarize yourself with the FAFSA® application process. The FAFSA determines your eligibility for federal aid and some state-based aid programs. Even if you don't think you'll qualify for financial aid, it's essential to submit the FAFSA.

\*Complete checklist can be found at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist/11th-grade](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist/11th-grade)



# College and Career Planning Checklist—12th-Grade Tasks

Keep track of key steps to take during each grade of high school to help you plan for college and career. Find a digital checklist at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist).

## First Semester

<input type="checkbox"/>	Strengthen and finalize your college list.	A strong college list includes a mix of schools where you can thrive both academically and socially. Using your GPA and test scores, you can identify colleges on BigFuture that are a good fit for you. Incorporate at least three reach schools, two match schools, and one safety school.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meet with your school counselor.	Meet with the school counselor to talk through your final list of colleges to apply to. Review any tasks you need to complete before deadlines.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete the FAFSA.	The most common way to apply for financial aid is by filling out the FAFSA—the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decide if you want to retake the SAT.	Many students take the SAT a second time to improve their score. Ask your counselor if your school is offering the SAT on a school day this fall. If not, you can register to take it on a weekend at a test center near you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete and submit your college and scholarship applications.	Once you've reviewed your application(s), it's time to send them off to your chosen schools and scholarships. Include the required components, such as essays and test scores. Be mindful of the application deadlines.

## Second Semester

<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your college acceptances and financial aid offers.	Once you've received admissions decisions from your college applications, it is time to review your acceptances. Notify colleges that you're declining their offers of admission.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decide on your plans after high school.	After considering your acceptances, financial aid offers, and discussing them with your family, decide what your plans will be after high school.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit necessary documents to your college.	If going to college in the fall, notify the college that you'll be attending. Watch for emails from the college regarding documentation that will be needed to complete your enrollment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make necessary deposits	Secure your seat and housing, if applicable, by making the required deposits by deadlines indicated in correspondence from the college.

\*Complete checklist can be found at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist/12th-grade](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/checklist/12th-grade)

# BigFuture Scholarships FAQ

## What are BigFuture Scholarships?

BigFuture Scholarships help students start planning for their future. Starting in 10th grade, when students complete college and career planning steps on BigFuture, they're automatically entered into monthly scholarship drawings. Two \$40,000 scholarships and multiple \$500 scholarships are awarded every month. There's no required essay, minimum GPA, or test score.

## Who's eligible for scholarships from BigFuture?

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors are eligible for BigFuture Scholarships. They must have a College Board account and attend public, private, or home school in the United States, Puerto Rico, or any other U.S. territories, or be U.S. citizens and residents attending Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools outside of the U.S. and U.S. territories.

## How do students qualify for entries for scholarship drawings?

Whenever a student completes one of the qualifying steps, they earn one entry into monthly drawings for \$500 and \$40,000. Unselected entries will automatically roll over to the next month's drawing. The more steps you complete and the sooner you start, the more chances you have to win.

## Are there family income requirements to earn scholarships?

No. These scholarships are open to students regardless of their family income. At least half of all the scholarships will be designated for students whose families earn less than \$60,000 per year.

## Are the scholarships only for tuition?

We want these scholarships to help students meet their expenses associated with attending college. Winners can use scholarships to cover tuition, fees, books, and other relevant educational expenses.

## What are the college and career planning steps for BigFuture Scholarships?

### Start your Career List

Save three or more careers on Career Search.

Opens: December of sophomore year

Deadline: By the end of February of senior year

### Start your College List

Save three or more colleges on College Search.

Opens: December of sophomore year

Deadline: By June 30 of junior year

### Start your Scholarship List

Save three or more scholarships on Scholarship Search.

Opens: July 1 before senior year

Deadline: By the end of February of senior year

### Strengthen your College List

Save one safety, two match, and three reach schools on College Search.

Opens: July 1 before senior year

Deadline: By October 31 of senior year

### Complete the FAFSA

Complete the FAFSA, submit a state aid form, or be legally ineligible to submit both the FAFSA and a state aid form.

Opens: December 1 of senior year

Deadline: By the end of February of senior year

### Apply to Colleges

Submit applications to at least two colleges.

Opens: October 1 of senior year

Deadline: By the end of February of senior year



# BigFuture Scholarships Worksheet

BigFuture awards hundreds of \$500 scholarships and two \$40,000 scholarships every month. Earn an entry for each qualifying step you complete on BigFuture. At least half of all the scholarships will be designated for students whose families earn less than \$60,000 per year. If you don't win, your entry rolls over for the next month.

## START YOUR CAREER LIST

List the three careers saved to your list using Career Search.

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☐ I've completed this task and earned an entry for BigFuture Scholarships.

## BUILD YOUR COLLEGE LIST

List the three colleges saved to your list using College Search.

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☐ I've completed this task earned an entry for BigFuture Scholarships.

## EXPLORE SCHOLARSHIPS

List the three scholarships saved to your list using Scholarship Search.

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☐ I've completed this task earned an entry for BigFuture Scholarships.

## STRENGTHEN YOUR COLLEGE LIST

Strengthen your college list by ensuring you have at least one safety, two match, and three reach colleges on your list.

Safety: \_\_\_\_\_

Match: \_\_\_\_\_

Match: \_\_\_\_\_

Reach: \_\_\_\_\_

Reach: \_\_\_\_\_

Reach: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I've completed this task earned an entry for BigFuture Scholarships.

## COMPLETE THE FAFSA

Indicate on your BigFuture dashboard that you have completed the FAFSA or that you are ineligible to complete the FAFSA.

☐ I've completed this task earned an entry for BigFuture Scholarships.

## APPLY TO COLLEGES

Indicate on your BigFuture dashboard two colleges to which you have applied.

College #1 \_\_\_\_\_

College #2 \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I've completed this task earned an entry for BigFuture Scholarships.

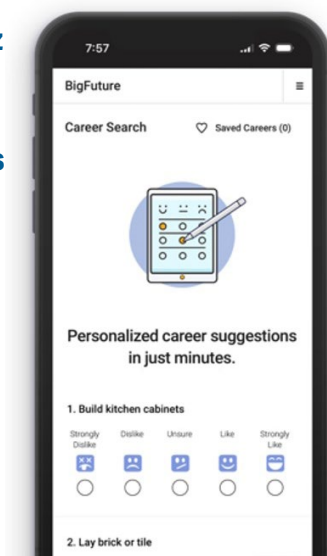
Earn entries for BigFuture Scholarships at [bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org)

# Ways to Explore Careers on BigFuture

Career exploration is a top priority of students, regardless of their pathway after high school. BigFuture® offers all students free, personalized tools to find careers and the education they need to reach them.

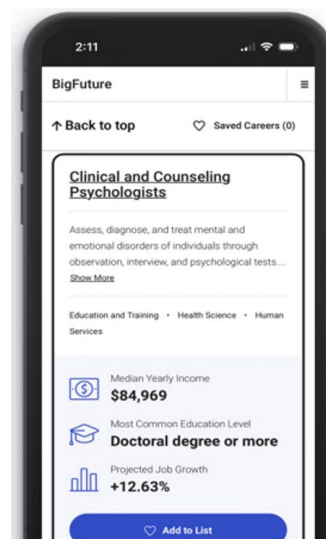
## 1 Take a Career Quiz Get Personalized Career Recommendations

Students can take a 10-minute career quiz about their interests and get matched to a list of 30 potential careers to explore.



## 2 Explore Over 1,000 Career Profiles.

Students can access detailed state and national information about income, job growth, and common education level.



## 3 Match Careers to Interests and Skills with Career Insights Snapshot.

Students receive information on careers that connect to their Math test and Reading and Writing test scores, and that are growing in their state.

Career Insights Snapshot					
Your skills are in demand! Consider exploring these growing careers in your state that need skills like yours. <b>These are examples, not recommendations</b> , to help jump-start your career exploration.					
INTEREST AREA*	CAREER EXAMPLES	MEDIAN YEARLY INCOME IN MI	NUMBER OF JOBS IN MI**	JOB GROWTH IN MI**	MOST COMMON EDUCATION LEVEL
Doers	Geothermal Production Managers	\$104,000	14,800	+3%	Some college
Creators	Fashion Designers	\$50,000	300	+19%	Associate degree
Helpers	Community Health Workers	\$45,000	1,900	+10%	Bachelor's degree
Organizers	Logistics Engineers	\$80,000	6,300	+12%	Bachelor's degree
Persuaders	Financial Managers	\$127,000	23,800	+13%	Bachelor's degree
Thinkers	Industrial Organizational Psychologists	\$110,000	40	+11%	Doctoral degree or more

\* For more information about career insights, including interest areas, visit [satsuite.org/whatsnext](https://satsuite.org/whatsnext).  
 \*\*Number of reflects the expected number of new job openings in 2028. Percentage reflects the expected growth in new job openings between 2023 and 2028. Data source: Lightcast.io

Don't see a career you're interested in? Learn more about almost 1,000 careers for free.

[satsuite.org/whatsnext](https://satsuite.org/whatsnext)





# 15 Ways to Support College Counseling with BigFuture and BigFuture School

- 1 Help students set up a College Board account at [collegeboard.org](https://collegeboard.org)
- 2 Students can learn about BigFuture Scholarships at [bigfuturescholarships.org](https://bigfuturescholarships.org)
- 3 Share with students that BigFuture Scholarships don't require a minimum GPA or SAT score. No application. No essay. No letters of recommendation. No citizenship requirement if attending high school in U.S., U.S. territory, or DoDea school. Half of the scholarships are awarded to students from families with income of \$60,000 or less.
- 4 Students can learn about **recent winners** at [bigfuturescholarships.org](https://bigfuturescholarships.org)
- 5 Students can save at least 3 careers using the **BigFuture Career Search** tool at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/career-search/](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/career-search/).
- 6 Students can save at least 3 colleges on the **BigFuture College Search** tool at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search/filters](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search/filters).
- 7 Encourage students to sign up for **BigFuture School** by providing their cell phone number when prompted prior to taking the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, or SAT School Day. Learn more at [bigfutureschool.org](https://bigfutureschool.org).
- 8 Students can complete the short, 10-minute BigFuture **career quiz** at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search/college-quiz](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search/college-quiz).
- 9 Students can deal with feelings of anxiety about life after high school at the BigFuture Wellness Hub at [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/communities-events/well-being](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/communities-events/well-being).
- 10 Conduct a lesson on selecting safety, match, and reach schools using BigFuture. Have students log in to their College Board account and save 1 safety, 2 match, and 3 reach schools.
- 11 Students can register for **BigFuture Live** and **Real Talk** events to hear from higher education professionals and college students on such topics as applying to college and finding scholarships under BigFuture's Communities and Events.
- 12 Students can get tips on writing essays for their college applications using the Ultimate Guide to Writing your College Essay at BigFuture under Plan for College/Apply to College.
- 13 Encourage students to check their BigFuture School app for information on college and career planning and for messages from colleges through Connections™.
- 14 Advise students to go to their BigFuture Scholarship dashboard to mark when they've completed their FAFSA or to indicate that they're unable to complete the FAFSA.
- 15 Advise seniors to go to their BigFuture Scholarship dashboard to mark when they've completed a college admissions application.

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# Resources

The College Board for Counselors website provides counselors with the resources and materials you need to help guide your students on their path to college and career. You'll also find professional learning opportunities curated specifically for counselors.

[collegeboard.org/counselors](https://collegeboard.org/counselors)

## BigFuture

BigFuture is a free online planning guide that helps students plan their next steps after high school. The free resources and actionable tools simplify a complex process by providing key actions that all students can take to explore careers, plan for college, and pay for college.

[bigfuture.org](https://bigfuture.org)

## BigFuture School Mobile App and Connections

BigFuture School gives students control over their planning. The free mobile app is available to PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and SAT School Day test takers 13 and older. Students can hear from nonprofit colleges, scholarship providers, and government agency education programs through Connections (when available); access their scores quickly from their mobile phone; and explore customized college and career planning guidance.

[bigfutureschool.org](https://bigfutureschool.org)

## Bigfuture Toolkit for Counselors

The BigFuture Toolkit for Counselors has ready-to-use resources such as lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations, and flyers that you can use to build your counseling curriculum for college and career guidance.

[counselors.collegeboard.org/bigfuture-toolkit](https://counselors.collegeboard.org/bigfuture-toolkit)

## SAT Suite of Assessments

The SAT Suite of Assessments, which includes the PSAT 8/9, PSAT 10, PSAT/NMSQT, and SAT, reflects what students are already learning in class and gives you benchmarks for assessing students' progress as they enter and move through high school. The tests share a common score scale, making it easier to measure growth. Research shows students can get ready for college and career and improve their SAT scores by taking assessments in the SAT Suite throughout their high school journey. All tests in the SAT Suite of Assessments are now administered digitally. (Paper accommodations are available.)

[sat.org](https://sat.org)

## American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, career, and social/emotional development so they can achieve success in school and be prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. ASCA provides professional development, publications, and other resources, as well as research, and advocacy to professional school counselors around the globe.

[schoolcounselor.org](https://schoolcounselor.org)

## Federal Student Aid

This comprehensive U.S. government site covers all information related to financial aid. It also has a "Prepare for College" section that details the financial benefits of attending college, explores career options, and provides academic and financial aid checklists.

[studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov)

### About College Board

College Board reaches more than 7 million students a year, helping them navigate the path from high school to college and career. Our not-for-profit membership organization was founded more than 120 years ago. We pioneered programs like the SAT<sup>®</sup> and AP<sup>®</sup> to expand opportunities for students and help them develop the skills they need. Our BigFuture<sup>®</sup> program helps students plan for college, pay for college, and explore careers. Learn more at [cb.org](https://cb.org).