

Open DOORS

Finding the Perfect College



Most students want to find the “perfect” college. The truth is, there’s no such thing. You can find many colleges where you can be happy and get a great education. The college search is about exploring who you are and what you want and then finding colleges that will meet your goals.



Before searching, consider these 8 factors

- Size
- Available majors and classes
- Distance from home
- Housing options
- Location
- Available extracurricular activities
- Makeup of the student body
- Campus atmosphere



Questions to consider

- Which of these aspects are things you feel you must have to be comfortable at a college?
- On which factors are you flexible?
- What do you want to accomplish in college?
- Do you want to train for a specific job or get a wide-ranging education?
- If you have a major in mind, do the colleges you are considering specialize in that major?



Next Steps

Bigfuture.org is a great option to sort through the many options out there, based on your preferences.



More to Consider: Finding Colleges Where You Will Thrive

Keep an open mind

Although it’s good to have some ideas in mind about what sorts of colleges will be good for you, stay open to all the possibilities at the beginning of your search.

Talk to people who know you

Tell family, teachers, relatives, friends, and your school counselor about your goals, and ask if they can suggest colleges that may be a good fit for you.

Don’t limit your search

At the start of this process, you may rule out colleges because you think that they are too expensive or too hard to get into, but this may not be the reality. Remember that financial aid can make college more affordable, and colleges look at more than just grades and test scores

Do your homework

Once you have a list of schools, it’s time to do some research. To learn more about the colleges you’re considering, check out college guidebooks and websites.

Jot down your questions and get answers by:

- Talking to your school counselor or teachers
- Checking out colleges’ student blogs, if available
- Contacting college admission officials
- Asking admission officials to recommend current students or recent graduates with whom you can have conversations
- Visiting college campuses or viewing virtual college tours, if possible
- Using each college’s net price calculator to compare the sticker price to what you’d actually pay.