



College List Builder

A series of activities to help you build a balanced college list

Top Priorities (Check 2-4)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic challenge | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus culture and environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific major or program | <input type="checkbox"/> Internship and career outcomes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost and affordability | <input type="checkbox"/> Support systems and advising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campus size | <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics or extracurriculars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location or distance from home | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Academic Fit

- **Your GPA:** _____
- **Your Best Standardized Test score** _____
- **Your Rigor Rating (1-5):** _____ *1 – Minimum available rigor, 2 – Some advanced/honors courses, 3 – About half of the rigor available, 4 – Most of the most rigorous classes available, 5 – Maximum rigor available at the school

For each college you are considering, ask:

- Is my academic profile within their typical admitted range?
- Would I feel challenged but capable?
- Does this school offer the major or academic direction I want?

Financial Fit

- What is the estimated net cost after aid?
- Is this cost sustainable for four years?
- Are scholarships renewable? Under what conditions?
- Would loans be required? How much?

If affordability is unclear, use the Net Price Calculator before adding the school to your “final” list.

Environment, Culture, and Experience

- Do you prefer small discussion-based classes or large lecture halls?
- Do you prefer urban, suburban, or rural?
- Do you prefer close to home or further away?
- Do you prefer a competitive atmosphere or collaborative?
- Do you prefer a structured campus life or independent feel?

There is no universally “best” environment or college. There is only best fit for you.



Build a Balanced College List

Every college on this list should be one you would genuinely be happy to attend and that aligns with the priorities you identified on Page 1. If you would not seriously consider enrolling, it does not belong on your list.

Reach / Aspirational Schools (at least 1):

(Admission is less predictable based on current academic profile)

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Realistic/Target/Match Schools (at least 2):

(Your academic profile closely aligns with typical admitted students)

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Likely (“Safety”) Schools (at least 2):

(You are likely to be admitted based on your academic profile)

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Final Checklist/Questions

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have at least 2 Likely schools | <input type="checkbox"/> I would attend any school on this list |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have at least 2 Realistic schools | <input type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed affordability for each school |

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