

10 Unusual Questions to Jump-Start Your College Search

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By Collegewise



The counselors at Collegewise have always thought it unfair to ask high school students what they're looking for in a college. It feels like asking people to explain what they're looking for in a car when they haven't actually driven one yet.

But while you may not know what you're looking for in a college yet, you do know yourself better than anyone else. Here are 10 not-so-typical questions that can be a good starting point to get you thinking outside the box about what you might like from your college experience. Your responses can help you focus your initial college search.

Related: [5 Easy Ways to Start Your College Search](#)

1. Why do you want to go to college?

It's good to consider why you're doing all this, and your answer to this question can impact your college search. If you answer, "Because I want to be a journalist," it makes sense to look at schools that offer a Journalism major. If it's "Because I've lived in the same place my entire life and want to experience something different," you'll want to pay attention to where your schools are located and the diversity of their student populations.

2. Do you think you're ready to go to college?

Some schools are a lot more demanding than others. We've met students who say they want to go to Cornell but don't want to take four AP classes during their senior year of high school because of the workload.

Those students shouldn't apply to the school with a reputation as "the hardest Ivy to get out of." We don't think you're bad if you admit you don't want to overdo the academic intensity in college, but it's worth considering before you pick your colleges.

When you're researching schools, pay attention to what the students say about their experiences. Students at MIT, Carnegie Mellon, University of Chicago, and Middlebury will bring up how much they study. It's like a badge of honor. Swarthmore College even has T-shirts that read, "Anywhere else it would have been an A...really." (That's a clue.)

6. Do you have any idea what you want to do with your life?

It's not a problem if you can't answer this question yet. But if you already have a future career in mind, it should probably be a key criterion to consider when picking colleges.

Do a little career research and find out where people who are successful in the field you want to join went to college and what they studied. You might be surprised by what you find. For example, Google and Apple employ more graduates from San Jose State than they do from Berkeley, UCLA, or MIT.

7. What would you like to do on a typical night or weekend in college?

We think this is a fun question because it's not necessarily the same as "What activities do you want to do in college?" The answers to this one draw out everything from the types of students you want to be around to where the campus is located to what you want to major in.

When we ask our Collegewise students this question, we get answers like, "Play video games with my new friends in the dorms," "Talk politics in the coffee shop," "Head into the city to do something fun," "Build a working robot with the other engineers," and "Go to the big football game."

This question also gets at how comfortable you are with the idea of students drinking and doing other things they may not tell their parents about. With some notable exceptions, like military academies and strict religious colleges, a certain percentage of kids at every school are going to find a way to party. Just how prevalent do you want that kind of extracurricular to be?

You're only in class for a couple hours a day at most in college. The rest of the time, you'll be living your life on (or off) campus with your fellow students. Think about what you'd like to do in your free time and look for where that will be possible.

Second, don't automatically eliminate any college that's over your family's budget. You won't know the amount of your financial aid package until you're actually admitted. You can estimate it, but the package could be influenced by other factors, like your strength as an applicant. It's not a good idea to apply to a long list of schools your family couldn't possibly afford, but don't cross every school that exceeds your family's budget off your list either.

Start your college search today on CollegeXpress!

Note: Did you know you could win a **\$10,000 scholarship** for college or grad school just by registering on CollegeXpress? This is one of the quickest, easiest scholarships you'll ever apply for. [Register Now »](#)



Junior Post-High School Planning Night February 6, 2020

Welcome: Mrs. Moody, Mr. MacKenzie, Ms. Pindara

- Junior Year Goals
- Standardized Testing: www.collegeboard.org
www.act.org
- Naviance: student.naviance.com/lynnfield
- College Board: bigfuture.collegeboard.org
- Campus Visits
- Important Items
 - a. Interviews
 - b. auditions/portfolios
 - c. athletics/NCAA
 - d. extracurricular activities
 - e. social media (STOP POSTING!)
 - f. academic support on campus
 - g. strength of schedule - course selection planning
 - h. Teacher recommendations
 - i. Financial Aid
- Next Steps: **Make an appointment in Guidance!**

Upcoming programs:

Friday, February 7th: *Breakfast with Guidance The SAT vs. ACT*

Thurs., May 14th: *College Rep Panel Night*

SAT/ACT

2019 - 2020

LHS SCHOOL CODE/CEEB# 221-287

SAT

Test Date	Regular Registration	Late Registration (fee) Phone/online
August 24, 2019	July 26, 2019	August 13, 2019
October 5, 2019	September 6, 2019	September 24, 2019
November 2, 2019	October 3, 2019	October 22, 2019
December 7, 2019	November 8, 2019	November 26, 2019

March 14, 2020 (SAT only)	February 14, 2020	February 25, 2020
**May 2, 2020	April 3, 2020	April 21, 2020
June 6, 2020	May 8, 2020	May 27, 2020

****LHS TEST SITE**

ACT

Test Date	Regular Registration	Late Registration
September 14, 2019	August 16, 2019	August 17-30, 2019
October 26, 2019	September 20, 2019	September 21-Oct 4, 2019
December 14, 2019	November 8, 2019	November 9-22, 2019

February 8, 2020	January 10, 2020	January 11-17, 2020
April 4, 2020	February 28, 2020	Feb 29-March 13, 2020
June 13, 2020	May 8, 2020	May 9-22, 2020
July 18, 2020	June 19, 2020	June 20-26, 2020

PSAT

TEST DATE: WEDNESDAY, October 16th at LHS (all 10th and 11th grade students)