

EFF UNIVERSITY TAKE-WITH-YOU TOOLKIT

College Application Roadmap

From exploration to enrollment - with a clear next step at every stage.

USE THIS TOOLKIT TO

build a balanced college list, track application requirements, prepare strong materials, compare decisions, and enroll without losing a deadline.

1. Build a balanced pathway list

Include colleges and other education options that fit your goals, support needs, and financial reality.

- ☐ Choose at least one likely, possible, and stretch option based on published requirements.
- ☐ Compare four-year colleges, HBCUs, community colleges, certificates, apprenticeships, and workforce pathways.
- ☐ Review major availability, location, housing, transportation, student support, and total cost.

My goal

Pathways to compare

Non-negotiable support

2. Create your application tracker

Requirements differ. Confirm every item on each institution's official admissions page.

- ☐ Application and deadline
- ☐ Transcript or school report
- ☐ Essay or short response
- ☐ Recommendation request
- ☐ Fee or fee-waiver process
- ☐ Test-score policy
- ☐ Financial-aid forms and priority date

School

Application deadline

Aid deadline

Portal login saved where

3. Submit and protect your proof

Review names, dates, email addresses, essays, and uploads before submitting.

- ☐ Save the confirmation page and email.
- ☐ Check the applicant portal weekly.
- ☐ Read every school email carefully.
- ☐ Follow up on missing items early.
- ☐ Never email passwords, Social Security numbers, or verification codes.

4. Compare decisions and enroll

An acceptance is only one part of the decision. Compare the complete financial and support picture.

- ☐ Separate grants and scholarships from work-study and loans.
- ☐ Ask what aid renews and what requirements apply.
- ☐ Confirm the enrollment and housing deadlines.
- ☐ Decline offers respectfully after choosing.
- ☐ Complete orientation, advising, placement, and registration tasks.

My chosen pathway

Enrollment deadline

First three next steps

NEED SUPPORT? Visit portal.estherfundsfoundation.org for the EFF Student Help Center, scholarships, FAFSA support, school-balance advocacy, and Emergency Grant/Name Your Need resources.