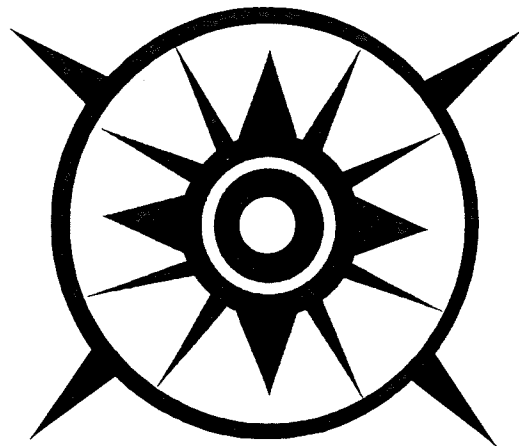


The College GPS

*A guide for juniors on navigating the
college application process.*



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TAKING OWNERSHIP OF THE COLLEGE PROCESS JUNIOR YEAR

JUNIOR TIMELINE (WINTER)

- Attend Junior Counseling Seminars and set up a meeting with your School Counselor.
- Continue to **focus on grades and academics!**
- Use Naviance to develop a potential list of colleges to visit.
 - Check Admissions websites for tours, information sessions, and alumni interview options. Visit colleges over February or April vacation.
- Begin the Counselor Questionnaire and Resume on Naviance
- Have a conversation with your parents about junior seminars and the junior parent events.
 - Junior Parent Night is scheduled for Wednesday, January 18th at 6:30 p.m. in the SHS library
 - Counselors will meet with Juniors in junior seminars at the end of January or beginning of February
- Know which standardized tests the colleges require and then register for these tests at www.collegeboard.org or www.actstudent.org.
 - Keep aware of registration deadlines for SAT and/or ACT, SAT Subject Tests.
 - **Identify four schools to send scores to for free.**
- Think about which teachers you will ask to write your recommendation letters.
 - You should pick two academic teachers. E.g. Math/Science and English/History
- Research scholarships and financial aid - discuss with parents/guardians

JUNIOR TIMELINE (SPRING to end of SCHOOL YEAR)

- Choose a **challenging schedule** of courses for senior year
 - Colleges strongly consider your senior course load
 - Dropping classes is against SHS policy and unless exceptional circumstances dictate, colleges do not like to

see students leaving courses that they had originally committed to taking.

- **Double and triple check that your graduation requirements are complete!**
- Consider Senior Project

- Schedule a meeting with your school counselor to discuss possible college choices if you haven't already.
 - Review transcript and any standardized test scores with counselor

- Research, Register, and Take Standardized Tests SATs/ACTs
 - **MAY SAT**
 - **Given here at SHS on the first Saturday of the month**

 - Spring SATs **not** at SHS
 - January
 - March
 - June

 - Summer – ***NEW - anticipated***
 - **August –not at SHS**

 - Take SAT Subject tests in June if you are in an Honors/AP class, e.g. AP US History
 - Highly selective colleges will require these (usually two or more).
 - Discuss these tests with your school counselor. Some students will take Biology, Chemistry or World History before their junior year

- Develop a resume and complete Counselor Questionnaire
 - Resume on Naviance Family Connection: Include all activities, awards, accomplishments, proficiencies since the fall of 9th grade
 - Counselor Questionnaire on Naviance Family Connection

- Have an **in- person** conversation with one or two teachers about writing your recommendation letter.
 - Provide teachers with a copy of your resume **by the end of the school year**

- Reach out to college coaches at schools you are interested in.
 - If you are planning to play Division I or II sports, you need to register with the NCAA clearinghouse
 - Leverage your contacts through your current sports

- Explore summer internships, courses, programs, jobs, or community service opportunities

- Visit Schools on April vacation
 - Saturday Tours for Juniors, Alumni network

- Continue to keep up with your academic accomplishments and stay focused! ***Junior year is arguably the most important year!***
- Develop a file for each school you are interested in. Being organized makes the process much easier to manage
 - Keep track of deadlines (admissions and financial aid)
 - Write down admissions counselors' contact information
 - Keep record of all of your online usernames and passwords- you will accumulate many
- Register to take AP exams (in May) if you are enrolled in AP courses
- Start to think about a topic for your college essay
 - You can get ideas from looking at the current Common Application topics
- Thoroughly prepare for final exams
 - End the school year on a very strong note

JUNIOR TIMELINE SUMMER

- If you have the option, participate in an enriching summer opportunity- work, internship, community service, etc.
- **Continue to visit colleges over the summer.** Try to meet students on campus (sometimes you can organize through the admissions office).
- Register for September ACT* if you plan on taking this test
- **Finalize a very strong first draft of your college essay.** You will be very happy you have done this over the summer. Senior year is extremely busy and the application process will be another major project to manage on top of everything else you have going on!
- **After August 1st**
 - **Logon to Commonapp.org, set up an account. WRITE DOWN your username and password as you will need this to allow the release of records (your transcript) from SHS.**

JUNIOR (now SENIOR!) TMELINE

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER Welcome to Senior Year!

- Get off to a strong start academically!
 - Colleges look at your Quarter 1 grades! (and all quarter grades for that matter!)

- If you want/need to take the SAT or SAT Subject tests, register for the October test date
- Check Naviance daily to see the list of College Visits (Admissions Counselors come to SHS) and sign up through Naviance Family Connection
- Participate in the SHS College Visits. Come prepared with questions, do your research for each school (know about the programs that interest you), introduce yourself!
- Work with your school counselor to refine and finalize your list of schools
- Make sure you have a well balanced list in terms of “Likely”, “Matches” and “Reach” schools
- Consider carefully your responsibility for applying Early Action, Restrictive Early Action or Early Decision
 - These deadlines are much earlier and therefore require earlier preparation and organization
- Become familiar with the online application procedure through Common App
 - Remember that some schools have supplemental forms that need to be completed
 - Identify the schools that have a different process (not Common App)
- STUDENTS need to send standardized test scores **directly** from the College Board(SAT) or ACT organizations
 - If you apply to a school early, you need to do this as soon as your testing is complete
 - When you register, you get to send scores to four schools for free.

Remember- *One thing at a time, stay organized, stay positive, and be nice to your school counselor. 😊*

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

When registering for SAT, SAT subject tests, and/or ACT you will be asked for your school code. Swampscott High School is **222-100**

When taking the SAT and SAT subject tests at Swampscott High School (given here in November and May) our Test Center is **22-792**

* The ACT is ***not*** given at Swampscott High School

Essays that Worked from Johns Hopkins University

<https://apply.jhu.edu/apply/essays-that-worked/>

The Palate of My Mind—Meghna

A question that every high school senior is familiar with is: “What kind of college is the right fit for you?” My criterion doesn’t appear in the deluge of admissions pamphlets; that’s because I want my school to resemble my favorite dish: the hummus-tabouli wrap.

...and Johns Hopkins University is the creamiest, tangiest, most flavorful hummus-tabouli wrap in existence.

The secret to any savory wrap lies in how its flavor is contained. Regardless of what outside influences are imposed upon it, the pita bread expertly holds all of its ingredients without allowing them to spill. Hopkins opposes outside pressures, unapologetically supporting individuals who are unafraid to break tradition. The OUTlist, an online database for Hopkins affiliates who openly identify themselves as members of the LGBT community, revolutionized the visibility of LGBT individuals in higher education and created a support network at the university. For students who are struggling with their identity (due to the fear of coming out to their families or friends), I want to help them express themselves and understand that they are not alone. I want to serve as an advocate as well as a source of comfort, like a homemade pita that is warm and soft, yet tenacious.

Next on our wrap is the core layer of hummus, lathered on the pita and heavy with expectation. Being the most renowned staple of the Mediterranean diet comes with its pressures, but hummus handles it well, always stepping up to the plate, ready for any intimidating food critic. Similarly, Hopkins’s academic diversity lives up to its reputation and more. The Classics Department offers 83 different undergraduate courses, with varied paths that students can take in the pursuit of cultural and literary knowledge. I hope to study the interrelationship of modern literature and culture and its classical roots in Latin by examining international texts in courses such as Latin Literature Beyond Hermeneutics taught by Professor Butler. I intend to further facilitate international communication—a modern necessity—by researching how English is adapted by different cultures. I can imagine narrowing my research from World Englishes to the fundamentals of the English language that bring about its malleability under Professors Celenza or Roller of the Classics Department.

After the hummus follows the influx of diced tomatoes, onions, and parsley, all varied in taste, combining to form the tabouli sauce. Tabouli is accepting of its ingredients, which when combined, bring to it a taste that is unparalleled by any other ingredient of wrap. I hope to spend my next four years in the Hopkins community learning alongside students from backgrounds starkly different from my own, who, like each component of tabouli sauce, bring their varied perspectives to discussions, an invaluable trait when studying how English has been adapted by different cultures.

In this world of flavorful foods and people, the delectable allure of Johns Hopkins University entices the palate of my mind. And I hope to eat my fill.

Sourced from the Princeton Review, 2017
<https://www.princetonreview.com/college/sat-act>

SAT vs ACT

SAT or ACT? Do you know which test is right for you?

Colleges accept both tests equally, so the choice is up to you! The ACT and SAT generally test the same types of content. The biggest differences are that the ACT has a Science Test and the SAT has one Math section for which you cannot use a calculator.

Here's what you need to know to compare the exams.

	SAT	ACT
Why Take It	Colleges use SAT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.	Colleges use ACT scores for admissions and merit-based scholarships.
Test Structure	Reading Writing & Language Math Essay (Optional)	English Math Reading Science Reasoning Essay (Optional)
Length	3 hours (without essay) 3 hours, 50 minutes (with essay)	2 hours, 55 minutes (without essay) 3 hours, 40 minutes (with essay)
Reading	5 reading passages	4 reading passages
Science	None	1 science section testing your critical thinking skills (not your specific science knowledge)

	Covers:	Covers:
	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
Math	Algebra I & II	Algebra I & II
	Geometry, Trigonometry and Data Analysis	Geometry and Trigonometry
Calculator Policy	Some math questions don't allow you to use a calculator.	You can use a calculator on all math questions.
Essays	Optional. The essay will test your comprehension of a source text.	Optional. The essay will test how well you evaluate and analyze complex issues.
How It's Scored	Scored on a scale of 400–1600	Scored on a scale of 1–36

ACT vs SAT: How Do I Choose?

The best way to decide which test is right for you is to take a timed full-length practice test in each. Since the content and style of the SAT and ACT are very similar, factors like how you handle time pressure and what types of questions you find most challenging can help you determine which test is a better fit. For example, the pace of the SAT gives you a tad more time to think through problems, while the ACT can be more of a time crunch. Some students really thrive under the pressure of the clock, while others prefer the extra time to ponder a question.