

Graduate School Timeline

First Year/Second Year

More than 2 years until start of grad school

- ✦ Select a major that interests you and pursue it with academic vigor.
- ✦ Get involved with student organizations that reflect your graduate interests.
- ✦ If you are interested in Law, make an appointment in Pre-Law advising with the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences.
- ✦ If you are interested in a health field (dentistry, medicine, occupational therapy, optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, podiatry, or other health career), make an appointment in Pre-Health Advising with the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences.
- ✦ Pursue student employment and summer jobs that have at least a loose connection to your graduate interests or that will help you network with faculty and professionals in your field of interest.
- ✦ Consider attending academic summer sessions that will help you refine your interests.
- ✦ Participate in campus internships or research projects aligned with your graduate school interests.
- ✦ Prepare a research paper and/or presentations on topics you would study in graduate school.

Junior Year

2 years until start of grad school

- ✦ Solidify interest areas and define your goals. Research types of programs and specific programs and make list of potential school possibilities along with their application procedures and deadlines.
- ✦ If standardized testing is required, create a realistic study plan. Plan to take your test well in advance of application deadlines.
- ✦ Address deficiencies. Many graduate programs prefer applicants with [research experience](#). Contact your department or college for research or lab opportunities.
- ✦ Research general financial aid information and location of school.
- ✦ Take practice admissions tests and a test prep class if feasible.

Summer after Junior Year

A bit more than 1 year until start of grad school

- ✦ Take required admission test in late spring or early summer.
- ✦ Meet with your [Academic Advisor](#) to review Advisement Report to confirm graduation is on track.
- ✦ Create your short list of schools to which you will apply.
- ✦ Identify faculty to request to write letters of recommendation for you.
- ✦ Some programs start accepting applications during the summer - deadlines vary by school.
- ✦ Pursue a summer internship or research aligned with your graduate school interests.

Senior Year, Fall

A bit less than 1 year until start of grad school

- ✦ Draft, rewrite and polish your personal statement.
- ✦ Work on application forms and financial aid applications. Keep a copy of all completed applications that you submit.
- ✦ Request letters of recommendation from faculty.
- ✦ Order official transcripts from every school where you have college credits.
- ✦ Follow up with schools to make sure your application file is complete.
- ✦ Programs with interviews conduct admission interviews in the fall through the spring.
- ✦ Take fall entrance exams if you want to improve your score.

Senior Year, Spring

About 6 months until start of grad school

- ✦ Evaluate your admissions offers.
- ✦ Evaluate any financial aid offers.
- ✦ Visit prospective schools, if possible.
- ✦ Inform schools of your decision; send in the deposit to your school of choice.
- ✦ Write thank-you notes to everyone who helped you.
- ✦ Complete your FAFSA to apply for financial aid.