

12th Grade: The Decision Year

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Applications, financial aid, and final choices. The deadlines are real. Here is the year on one page.

**AUG
25****Confirm final college list**

Reach, match, safety schools confirmed. Use the app comparison tool together.

**SEP
1****Have the real budget conversation**

What can your family realistically contribute per year? Your student needs to know.

**SEP
15****Create your FSA ID NOW**

Go to studentaid.gov. You need your own login to co-sign the FAFSA. Don't wait.

**OCT
1****FAFSA OPENS TODAY — file immediately**

File FAFSA as early as possible. Earlier = earlier aid offers. Cal Grant deadline is March 2.

**OCT
1****CA Dream Act Application opens**

For undocumented students: CA Dream Act Application opens October 1. Deadline March 2.

**NOV
1****Early Decision/Action deadlines**

ED/EA applications due Nov 1-15. Discuss financial risk of ED before committing.

**JAN
1****Regular Decision deadlines (Jan 1-15)**

Most RD applications due January 1 or 15. Confirm your student's specific deadlines.

**JAN
15****File taxes ASAP**

Early tax filing = FAFSA verification = faster aid offers.

**MAR
2****CAL GRANT DEADLINE — TODAY**

California Cal Grant requires verified GPA + completed FAFSA by March 2. Do not miss.

**APR
1****Admission decisions arrive**

Most RD schools notify by April 1. Celebrate every acceptance.

**APR
5****Compare financial aid offer letters**

Look at: net price, grants vs loans, whether aid renews, total 4-year cost.

**APR
20****Appeal financial aid if appropriate**

Changed financial situation? Another school offered more? A polite appeal is often worth sending.

**MAY
1****NATIONAL COLLEGE DECISION DAY**

Enrollment deposit due at chosen school. Celebrate the decision!

**JUN
1****Set up student bank account + budget**

Before college: bank account, basic budget, and understanding of aid package.

**OCT
1****FAFSA renewal reminder (Year 2)**

Student must renew FAFSA every year of college. Set this reminder to repeat annually.