

College Readiness

Everything You Need to Know



Access this
informational
packet digitally!



SHELTON STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



UWA

The UNIVERSITY of
WEST ALABAMA



College Readiness

Everything You Need to Know

01 Thinking About Your Future

02 College Options

Explore college options like trade school, community college, and university.

03 Application Resources

Plan for college by understanding the application timeline, setting up your College Board accounts, and gathering your application materials.

04 Scholarships and Financial Aid

05 Charting Your Course

Create a plan that you can use for the rest of high school. Make your own personal map for your future.



Helpful Links QR Code



**Its Time to
Begin Thinking
About Your
Future!**



Thinking About Your **Future**

College isn't for everyone, but it might be right for you! There are so many options to choose from, such as traditional four-year universities and community colleges. Here are a couple questions to ask in order to determine if college might be a good option for you:

HOW DO I KNOW COLLEGE IS RIGHT FOR ME?

- 1.** What am I interested in studying?
- 2.** Do I want to stay close to home or travel a bit away?
- 3.** How can I afford college?
- 4.** What steps do I need to take to apply and be accepted into college?



CHAPTER 02

College **Options**

Your **Secondary Education Options:**

Community College/ Trade Schools:

- Often more affordable than traditional four-year universities and offer a wide range of degree and certificate programs, including transfer programs to four-year colleges and universities
- Offer flexible schedules, making it easier for students to balance work and family obligations while pursuing their education
- Trade schools typically offer shorter, more focused programs than community colleges or universities, which allows students to enter the workforce more quickly
- The training and education provided by community colleges and trade schools can lead to in-demand jobs with good salaries and benefits, making them an excellent option for individuals looking to enhance their career prospects

Traditional, 4-Year University

- Provides students with a comprehensive education in a wide range of subjects, from the humanities to the sciences, and allows them to explore their interests and passions
- Earning a bachelor's degree from a reputable university is highly valued by employers and can lead to higher-paying jobs and career advancement opportunities
- Provides students with opportunities to develop essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork, which are highly valued in the modern job market.
- Universities offer students the chance to network with other students, professors, and industry professionals, which can lead to valuable connections and career opportunities
- Attending a four-year university can be a transformative experience that helps students grow and develop both personally and academically

Community College & Trade Options



SHELTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- Tuscaloosa, AL
- Online & evening degrees offered
- Popular Majors: Liberal Arts & Nursing



MARION MILITARY INSTITUTE

- Marion, AL
- Online courses offered
- Degrees Offered: Associate in Science & Associate in Arts



CENTRAL ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- Prattville, AL
- Online & evening degrees offered
- Popular Majors: Liberal Arts, Welding, Machine & Metal Working



JEFFERSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- Birmingham, AL
- Online & evening degrees offered
- Popular Majors: Liberal Arts, Nursing, Engineering Technician

Traditional Four-Year University Options



STILLMAN COLLEGE

- Tuscaloosa, AL
- Historically black college
- Online degrees offered
- Popular Majors: Business, Physical Education Teaching, Psychology, Biology



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

- Tuscaloosa, AL
- Online degrees offered
- Popular Majors: Finance, Marketing, Business, Nursing, Engineering, Accounting



THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST ALABAMA

- Livingston, AL
- Large selection of online courses
- Popular Majors: Engineering Technician, Biology, Business



AUBURN UNIVERSITY

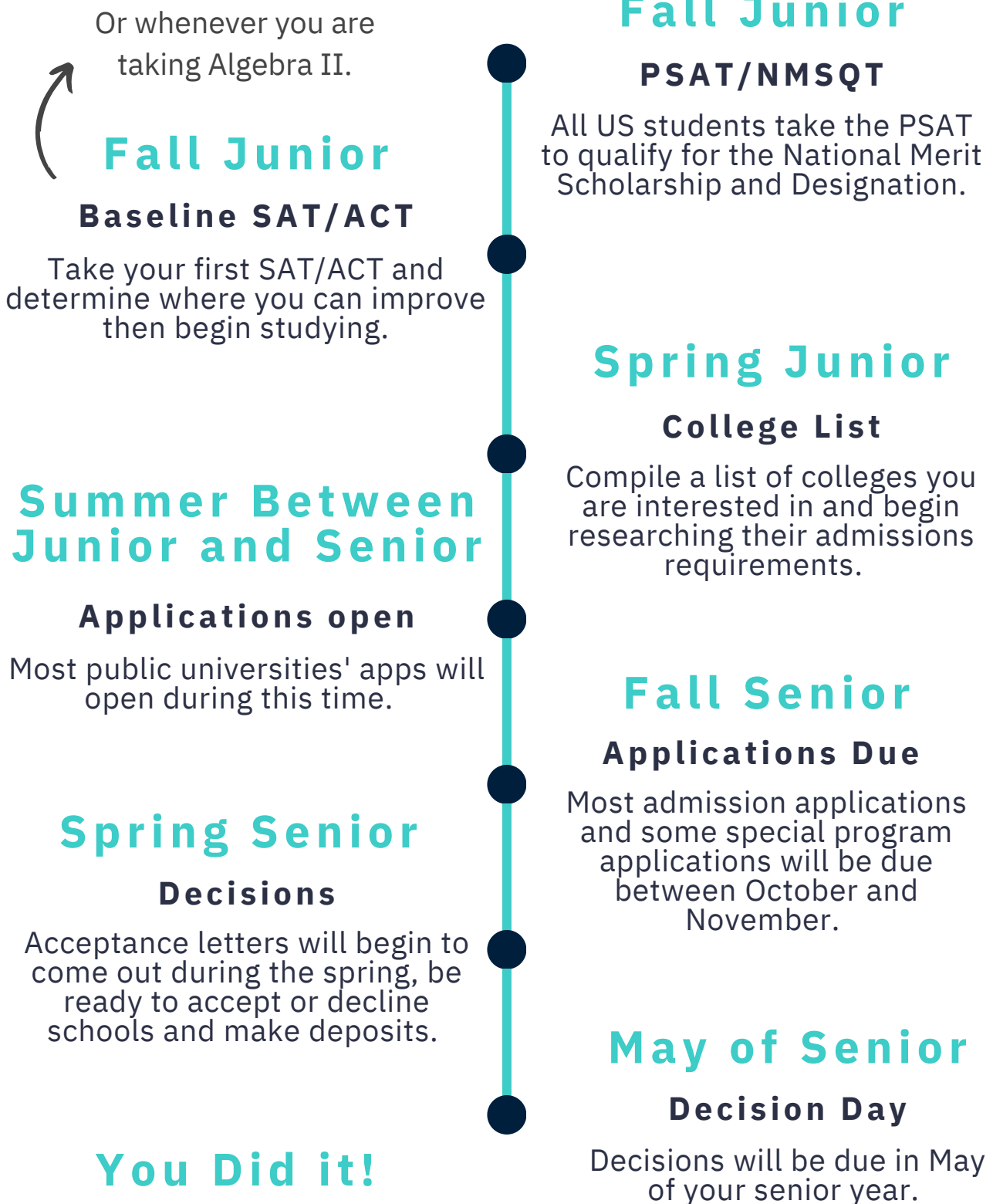
- Auburn, AL
- Online degrees offered
- Popular Majors: Business, Biomedical Sciences, Finance, Marketing



Everything You
Need to Know
About the
**Application
Process**



Your Application Timeline:



Application Resources

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PARTS OF YOUR APPLICATION PROCESS WILL BE SETTING UP YOUR COLLEGE BOARD ACCOUNT

Why create an account?

Access your SAT and AP scores, and send them to colleges. Register for the SAT and CLEP exams. Connect with college and scholarship opportunities. Save and update your college list and scholarship searches.

Anyone 13 or older can create a College Board account. Just follow the Helpful Links QR code and select "Create Your College Board Account." This will take you to a form created by College Board. Once it is complete, verify your email and password and sign in!

YOUR APPLICATION MATERIALS CHECKLIST



Personal Statement:

This will be an essay based on a prompt provided to you by the school or university you will be applying to.



High School Transcript:

All colleges, trade schools, and universities will require an official or unofficial high school transcript. This will give them an idea of the rigor of your classes as it relates to your GPA.



Admissions Test Scores (ACT/SAT):

Your admissions test scores will be accessible through your College Board account and act.org



FAFSA Financial Aid Application:

FAFSA is an important part of the application process as it determines how much financial aid you are eligible for in college. More information under [Scholarships and Financial Aid](#).

CHAPTER 04

Scholarships and Financial Aid

Test Score	GPA	Yearly Value
32-36 ACT or 1420-1600 SAT	3.50+	\$28,000
30-31 ACT or 1360-1410 SAT	3.50+	\$24,000
29 ACT or 1330-1350 SAT	3.50+	\$15,000
30-36 ACT or 1360-1600 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$15,000
28 ACT or 1300-1320 SAT	3.50+	\$10,000
27 ACT or 1260-1290 SAT	3.50+	\$8,000
28-29 ACT or 1300-1350 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$8,000
25-26 ACT or 1200-1250 SAT	3.50+	\$6,000
27 ACT or 1260-1290 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$6,000

AUTOMATIC MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

Universities use Standardized Testing scores to determine access to general scholarship funds. ACT and SAT results can be exceedingly useful in making college more affordable.

GENERAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

All universities will have some form of alumni association scholarship fund. Searching through an individual university's scholarship portal and finding applicable scholarships can be a great way to assess what options make the most sense for you.

II. Automatic Diversity Scholarships

National Recognition Scholarship Package

First-time freshmen who are recognized by the National African American, Hispanic, Indigenous or Rural & Small-Town Recognition Programs who have submitted an application and all supporting documents **by May 1, 2023** will be selected for our National Recognition Scholarship package and receive:

- Value of tuition for up to four years or eight semesters for degree-seeking undergraduate and graduate or law studies
- \$1,000 per year supplemental scholarship for four years
- First year of on-campus housing at regular room rate* (based on assignment by Housing and Residential Communities)



Steps to a Successful College Scholarship Search

Conduct a Free Scholarship Search at Scholarships.com

This personalized process only takes a couple of minutes and will tailor your scholarship matches to your qualifications. Your profile will determine which scholarships you qualify for and have the potential of winning. Best of all, it's totally free!



Organize your Favorite Scholarships

Use Scholarships.com to organize all the scholarships you're matched with. Select your favorites, sort by deadline dates, amounts and more. Review and post comments on specific scholarships and share them with friends. Let Scholarships.com help you check off your application to-do list!



Choose a Method and Order

Decide which scholarships appeal and fit you most. Some could be really easy or fun projects that you can use for school as well. We recommend taking notes on your progress to help keep you organized and inspired.



EXTERNAL SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

100 million dollars in external scholarship money goes unclaimed every year. Whether merit or need based, it's almost always worth dedicating time to applications. Using external databases like Scholarships.com can be a great way to find additional financial aid in the college decisions process.

Government Assisted Financial Aid

FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, is a government regulated method of making college more affordable. If your family demonstrates a need for financial aid in paying for college, you may be awarded scholarship grants, or additional loan opportunities at generous rates. In some cases, the amount of financial aid awarded can completely cover the cost of your college education.

MILITARY SERVICE

There are benefits available for military families, as well as tuition assistance and financial aid opportunities for students who commit to serve in the military in varying capacities. Military service can potentially open the door to both educational opportunities, and job security, and is worth considering for many. For more information, go to todaysmilitary.com or visit the Helpful Links QR Code and see if your family qualifies for aid, or if service is a good path for you.



**FINANCIAL
AID**

How to complete FAFSA:

First visit the site below:
<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

Create an account to get your own FSA ID. This ID allows you to access your FAFSA application electronically.

Find more information on application requirements and materials by visiting the "How to Fill Out the FAFSA Form" on our Helpful Links QR Code.



Planning For Your Future!



Setting SMART Goals

How Do We Set Goals? Setting effective goals is the difference between a quickly-forgotten plan—versus a plan that works for you and guides you to a bright future!

Remember these 5 key features and set yourself 1-3 SMART goals for the short- and long-term!

S

SPECIFIC

What are the exact actions you need to take? Name the real steps that need to happen to reach the objective.

M

MEASURABLE

How do you know when the goal has been reached? Find fair indicators that anyone can use to check for success.

A

ATTAINABLE

How realistic is the goal? Make sure you select a goal and measures (see M!) that can really be reached.

R

RELEVANT

What does this goal mean to you? Check that this is a goal that you care about.

T

TIME-BOUND

How long do we have to reach the goal? Setting a reasonable time is critical to following through.

"MEASURABLE AND TIME-BOUND ARE CRUCIAL!"

Making Your List, Checking It Twice!

Make your own personal Future Plan for all the things you want to achieve before graduation! For every SMART goal, list out the goal itself and **Specific** steps that you must reach along the way.

Each step should be **Time-Bound** and success should be **Measurable** so you *know* when can check it off!

Finally, here's a summary of important steps that you might have missed!

IMPORTANT TO INCLUDE ON YOUR CHECKLIST

- ✓ **Select Your Desired Career/Major**
- ✓ **Determine your Target School(s)**
- ✓ **Complete campus visit(s) to your Target School(s)**
- ✓ **Complete FAFSA (October 1 of Grade 12)**
- ✓ **Taking your ACT**
- ✓ **Have a meeting with your school counselor**
- ✓ **Determine the Expected Cost of College**
- ✓ **Plan for Affording School with Your Parents**
- ✓ **List Target Scholarships and Deadlines**
- ✓ **Apply for Target Scholarships**
- ✓ **Apply to School(s) before Application Deadlines**
- ✓ **Make your decision on where to go after graduation!**

