



# YOUR COLLEGE VISIT CHECKLIST

Taking Advantage of  
Your Trips to Campus

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## Taking Advantage of Your Trips to Campus

### Before Your Visit

- Pick a strategic date to visit
- Make travel arrangements
- Explore the school's admissions page
- Sign up for tours, Q&A, and information sessions
- Create a detailed itinerary
- Draft a list of questions to ask
- Look at the school's application requirements
- Schedule an interview with the admissions office
- Explore the school's website and blogs
- Prepare for your interview

### During Your Visit - Gather Information

- Speak with current students
- Take part in an information session
- Attend a class in your field of interest
- Meet a professor in your field of interest
- Write down the names of people you speak with
- Meet with school employees: advisors, coaches, etc.
- Visit the financial aid office
- Interview with an admissions officer
- Read the student newspaper
- See what the career center has to offer

## During Your Visit - Explore the Campus

- Take a general campus tour
- Take a major-specific campus tour, if possible
- Explore the city
- Eat in the dining hall
- Check out the dorms
- Go to a campus event: game, concert, play, etc.
- Tour the campus facilities: gym, libraries, bookstore, etc.
- Attend a student group meeting or sports practice
- Take pictures!

## After Your Visit

- Journal your thoughts
- Rate the campus
- Send thank you follow-up emails
- Talk to your counselors!

## Questions to Ask During Your Visit

Once you've stepped inside campus, you might not know where to start. You probably have a lot of questions, ranging from academic opportunities to how social life works, from what professors are like to career counseling options. Generally, when developing these kinds of questions, you want to ask something focused, but not too specific. At the same time, they should be general, but not too broad. It is also important not to ask a question you can answer by simply searching the school website. It can be hard to strike this perfect balance! You should ask questions that require more than a yes/no answer. This is important for a couple of reasons. First, you get to learn more about a given college and whether it's the type of school you want to attend from your first-hand experience. And second, some schools monitor demonstrated interest, and take your enthusiasm during college visits and information sessions into account. So before you embark on your visit, conduct the necessary research so that you know which questions to ask!

"Is the food good?" or "Do you like the food?" are examples of questions that can be answered by reading student reviews and they are very subjective. Not everyone likes the same kind of food and what you think is great, someone else will hate. Instead ask "Where are your favorite places to eat on or near campus and why? What do you order there?" This is still a bit subjective, but you will get far more information by asking the question this way.

Each of the following questions has been developed with this in mind. You may still get basic answers, but they will require the person you're talking with to think about their answer, and more often than not they'll give you a more thoughtful response.

## Ask Tour Guides/Students - Academics

Why did you choose major X?

Who is your favorite professor and why?

What is it like to transition from high school to this college?

How accessible are professors typically?

Generally, do you feel that professors are engaged in their students' education? Can you tell me how one of your professors has supported you or someone you know?

How hard do you have to work to get good grades?

What was the most impactful or meaningful course (academically or personally) that you have taken so far?

What's the academic vibe like on campus?

How often do TAs teach classes?

What are midterms and finals like?

What reputation does my major have?

Could you describe a day in the life of a student in the \_\_\_\_\_ department at this university?

What student-faculty research opportunities exist for undergraduates?

What kinds of mentoring and advising relationships do students and faculty have?

How many students are in the typical freshman classes? What about upper-level classes?

Is the teaching innovative, discussion-based, and project-oriented? Or is it mostly lectures?

How involved are academic advisors?

What tutoring services are available to students?

Are there any academic "extras" like an honors college, learning communities, first-year interest groups, and academic achievement-related fraternities and sororities? How many students participate in these "extras"?

## Ask Tour Guides/Students - Campus and Social Life

What is your typical Tuesday like?

What is your typical Friday night like?

Why did you choose this college?

How would you summarize the campus culture?

What are the best reasons to go to this college?

What do you do in your free time? Over the weekends?

What do you love about this college?

What is it like to live in this city/town?

What are your favorite and least favorite things about attending this college?

How friendly and welcoming is the campus?

What are 3-4 things you would like to change about the school?

How easy is it to get around campus or off campus?

Are there places within walking distance or do you need a car?

What is the relationship between the college and neighboring community like?

How do students engage in the broader community? (Do they stay on campus or do they participate in the community outside of school?)

What other dining options are there on and around campus?

What's the social vibe like on campus?

What do students do for fun - on campus and off?

What do you wish you had known before you started attending this university?

### **Ask Tour Guides/Students - Student Activities**

What is the most impactful or meaningful extracurricular activity that you have been a part of?

How involved are students in extracurriculars?

Which activities are most popular?

What's Greek life like, and how do students feel about it?

How active is the student body in terms of sports?

How popular are campus sporting events amongst fans?

Are any art or music practice spaces available to non-majors?

### **Ask Tour Guides/Students - Resources**

What has the school done to help you grow?

How does the university foster/encourage multiculturalism in daily life?

In what ways does the university support students with technology needs (tech support, access, discounted or free software, etc)?

In what ways does the university support students in need of educational support (disability services, writing centers, study groups, freshman interest groups/first year support, etc)?

What does the college do to ensure campus safety in general? What about in the event of an emergency?

How large is the campus security force? Does it patrol the campus regularly?

What services does the health center offer?

What kinds of counseling and/or mental health services are available?

What are the campus computer labs like? Is there IT assistance?

What quiet spaces are available for studying?

Does the school have access to any additional library collections (local or other school libraries)?

Would you describe students as having a well-balanced life (between school, jobs, extracurriculars, hobbies, and down time)?

What can you tell me about the students that I cannot learn from reading the school website?

### **Ask Tour Guides/Students - Residential Life**

What's the residential life vibe?

How are residence halls secured?

How many dorms are there, and how do they differ?

Are the dorms spread through the campus or clustered in one area?

What are the off-campus living options, and what do they typically cost?

### **Ask Tour Guides/Students - Career Services**

Where have students from your school interned? Are there any formal internship arrangements with companies?

How long does it typically take recent grads to find a full-time job in their career field?

What career advising services are offered, and how long are they available?

What networking or career fairs are held each year?

How accessible and involved are alumni?

What kinds of on-campus or local part-time jobs are available?

## Ask Professors

What are the best reasons to go to this college?

What has your experience mentoring other students been like?

How does the college help students access professors outside of class?

Do professors join students for lunch or work with student organizations at all?

How many students do research or other kinds of projects for a semester or more?

What does it take to be successful in your class?

What has been your favorite class to teach?

What have you noticed about the type of student at your school?

## Contacts

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

## Campus Ratings

School Name #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Factors to Consider	Please rate these criteria on a 1-5 scale (1 being terrible, 5 being awesome)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Campus					
Dorms					
Location/City					
Classes/Professors					
Food					
Campus Facilities					
Social Life					
Extracurricular Opportunities					
Overall Feel					
Can you picture yourself here? (Yes, No)					
Notes					

School Name #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Factors to Consider	Please rate these criteria on a 1-5 scale (1 being terrible, 5 being awesome)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Campus					
Dorms					
Location/City					
Classes/Professors					
Food					
Campus Facilities					
Social Life					
Extracurricular Opportunities					
Overall Feel					
Can you picture yourself here? (Yes, No)					
Notes					



## Campus Ratings

School Name #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Factors to Consider	Please rate these criteria on a 1-5 scale (1 being terrible, 5 being awesome)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Campus					
Dorms					
Location/City					
Classes/Professors					
Food					
Campus Facilities					
Social Life					
Extracurricular Opportunities					
Overall Feel					
Can you picture yourself here? (Yes, No)					
Notes					

School Name #4: \_\_\_\_\_

Factors to Consider	Please rate these criteria on a 1-5 scale (1 being terrible, 5 being awesome)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Campus					
Dorms					
Location/City					
Classes/Professors					
Food					
Campus Facilities					
Social Life					
Extracurricular Opportunities					
Overall Feel					
Can you picture yourself here? (Yes, No)					
Notes					

## Campus Ratings

School Name #5: \_\_\_\_\_

Factors to Consider	Please rate these criteria on a 1-5 scale (1 being terrible, 5 being awesome)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Campus					
Dorms					
Location/City					
Classes/Professors					
Food					
Campus Facilities					
Social Life					
Extracurricular Opportunities					
Overall Feel					
Can you picture yourself here? (Yes, No)					
Notes					