

Applying on the Common App:

Making the Common
App Work for You.

Margaret A. Rice, PGHS
Counseling, 18 August 2026





Exploring College Options Presentation★
Class of 2027

Class of 2027: SAT/ACT UPDATE



- UC and CSU campuses **are test blind for** SAT or ACT scores for current and future freshman admissions.
- All 116 California Community College campuses, to include MPC, **are test blind for** SAT or ACT test scores for freshman admissions.
- While some private colleges no longer require the SAT or ACT for admissions, **others still require standardized test scores.**
- Students should check the websites of the individual private or out-of-state colleges they are interested in attending to confirm if the SAT or ACT test is considered for admission.

Confirmed 2026–2027 SAT Test Dates

- The College Board has released the September- December SAT dates for registration.
 - Note the testing dates and be prepared to register for your preferred date as soon as the registration window opens.
 - Popular testing dates in August, September, and October fill quickly.
 - Seaside HS currently has seats available for the September 2026 exam.
- August 22, 2026 (closed)
 - September 12, 2026
 - October 3, 2026
 - November 7, 2026
 - December 5, 2026
 - March 6, 2027
 - May 1, 2027
 - June 5, 2027

Testing 'Glossary'

- Standardized Tests Required: To have your application reviewed you must submit an ACT or SAT test score with your application or your application is incomplete.
- Test Blind: Colleges will not review your test scores until after they have made admissions decisions.
- Test Optional: You can submit test scores or not without prejudice.
- Super Score: You submit your best section-level scores, even if they're from different tests.

Planning to Take the SAT or ACT?

- To see available testing sites, go to: [SAT Test Center Search](#) ★
- To register for the SAT, go to: [Online SAT Registration](#) ★
- To register for the ACT, go to: [ACT Registration & ACT Testing Dates | The ACT Test](#) ★
- If test scores are required by the colleges you plan to apply to, consider taking the SAT or ACT test in Summer or Early Fall.
 - These test dates should allow your scores to be received by most colleges in time for admission.



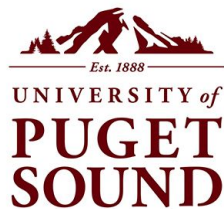
Applying to College: What Are the Options?



- California Community College
- California Public University
 - University of California campuses (UC)
 - California State University (CSU)
- Private College
- Out of State Public University
- International University

Private Colleges and Universities

- Admissions requirements are similar but not exactly the same as the UC/CSU.
 - Do research on each of your schools to ensure you have the required coursework.
- Private colleges and universities are located throughout the United States.
- They tend to have smaller campuses.
- They are more likely to have smaller class sizes.
- **Tuition is not based on residency.**



Western Undergraduate Exchange

Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) - Tuition Savings★

Out-of-state tuition is always more than in-state tuition at public state universities; however, many colleges have programs that bring down the cost of out-of-state tuition for **eligible** students such as:

The **Western Undergraduate Exchange, WUE**, gives a discount to California students that meet specified GPA and major requirements so that the tuition is closer to in-state. WUE is available in:

*Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho,
Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon,
South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming*

- Check the WUE website to see if one of the schools you are interested in offers a WUE discount and what the requirements are to apply.
- Even schools that don't have WUE typically have some type of discount program so if the school you are interested in is not listed as a WUE institution, call the admissions office to see if they have another discount program in place.

Early Action (EA)

Early Decision (ED)



General Information about ED & EA

- Roughly 450+ schools in the US offer an Early Action (EA) or Early Decision (ED) option (about 10% of US colleges and universities).
 - **The UC/CSU do not offer ED or EA.**
 - Private or out-of-state schools are more likely to offer ED and EA options.
- ED and EA have earlier application deadlines and admissions notifications.
- **ED is best for students who have completed their college research and are confident in their first choice college or university.**

[Early Decision and Early Action – Counselors | College Board](#) 

Early Decision (ED)

- Students can only apply for ED to one school.
- ED applications are typically due in November. Students should check the deadline for each school they are considering for Early Decision as the deadline varies school to school.
- ED applicants receive admissions decisions in December.
- There can be higher admissions rates at some selective schools applying ED, especially for ED I admissions.
- While students can apply regular decision or EA to other schools, if admitted to their first choice school *Early Decision*, they must withdraw their applications to all other schools.
- Because an ED application is binding, colleges typically require ED applicants, their parents, and the school counselor sign a form stating the student understands the application is binding. Binding means the student agrees to enroll if accepted. **Ensure you make time for this step before you application is due.**

[What to Know About College Early Action and Early Decision | Applying to College | U.S. News.](#)



Early Decision I vs Early Decision II

- The primary difference between Early Decision I and Early Decision II are the deadlines and notification dates.
- For **Early Decision I**, the application deadline is typically early November, and you'll receive an admission decision in mid-December.
- In contrast, **Early Decision II** has a deadline in early January and notification comes in mid-February.
- Admissions rates are often more generous in the Early Decision I cycle.
- Early Decision II allows students more time to submit their applications as well as submit Semester 1 senior grades.

What does Binding mean?

- A binding agreement in college applications refers to a commitment to attend a school if accepted through an Early Decision (ED) application plan.
- Binding agreements are not legally binding.
- However, if a student chooses to break an Early Decision agreement with a school, it may impact other admissions offers as schools share their ED lists with each other.
- Carefully review the ED agreement. Financial aid offers may include more loans than gift/grant aid than your family can afford.
- In cases with legit reasons, such as family illness, extenuating circumstance, change in financial circumstances, etc. the agreements *may* be broken.

Early Decision Pros and Cons

Pros

Students receive an admissions decision earlier.

There *can be* increased admissions rate for ED applicants, especially in ED I.

Applications are completed and done early in the school year.

You will need to submit your FAFSA as early as possible after October 1.

Cons

Binding contract: You must attend the school if admitted ED.

You may not know the financial aid offers from other schools before you are accepted ED to your number one school.

You can only apply ED to one school.

You will need to submit your FAFSA as early as possible after October 1.

Early Action (EA)

- **Non-Binding:** Students are not required to attend the college if they are accepted. This allows you to weigh your options and compare offers from other schools.
- **No Limit to Early Action Applications:** This is true for all Early Action options except for *Restrictive Early Action*.
- **Shows Demonstrated Interest:** By applying early, you're demonstrating to the college that you're serious about attending and invested in their program.
- **Earlier Admissions Notifications:** Receiving a decision earlier in the Spring can relieve stress and allow students to have more time to focus on other aspects of senior year.
- **Financial Aid:** With Early Action, students may receive their financial aid and scholarship information sooner, which can help them make a more informed decision about which college to attend.

Restrictive Early Action (REA)

- Also can be referred to as “**Single Choice Early Action.**”
- Is a non-binding way that students can demonstrate that a school is their number one choice.
- The caveat to REA, is that, typically, you may not apply to any other private college/university under their Early Action, Restrictive Early Action, Early Decision, or Early Notification plan.
 - **Ensure you carefully review each Restrictive Early Action agreement before you apply.**

Non-Restrictive Application Plans

Regular Decision

Students apply by a specified deadline and receive a decision by a designated date, usually in late March or early April. UC/CSU application deadlines: Nov. 30 2026.

Non-Binding

Rolling Admission

Students submit applications once the window opens and schools review applications as they 'roll-in'. Schools make admission decisions throughout the admissions cycle.

Non-Binding

Early Action (EA)

Students apply earlier in the admissions cycle and receive a decision well in advance of the school's regular decision date. Students have until May 1 to make a decision.

Non-Binding

Restrictive Application Plans

Restrictive Early Action (REA)

Like EA, but students are likely restricted from applying ED, EA, or REA to more than one school. If offered REA, students still have until May 1 to make a decision.

Non-Binding

Early Decision (ED)

Students commit to a first-choice school. If admitted to the school, you **MUST** enroll. If the student applied to any other school's regular decision, they are required to withdraw their applications.

Binding!

You are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider your options and confirm

You are responsible for following all restrictions for your admissions plan

Interesting Articles about Early Decision & Early Action

- [15 Colleges Where Early Applicants Have an Edge](#) (US News & World Report) ★
- [3 Reasons to Skip Applying to College Early](#) (US News & World Report) ★
- [Early Decision Schools That Double Admission Odds - College Kickstart](#) ★
- [Early Action and Early Decision Deadlines](#) (List of Schools) ★



University of Vermont	Early Decision and Early Action	93.7% (ED)	65.3%	132 (tie), National Universities
Moravian University (PA)	Early Action	92.10%	54.2%	38 (tie), Regional Universities (North)
Augustana College (IL)	Early Decision and Early Action	89.8% (ED)	62.8%	96 (tie), National Liberal Arts Colleges
Southern Methodist University (TX)	Early Decision and Early Action	87.4% (ED)	63.3%	88 (tie), National Universities
Providence College (RI)	Early Decision and Early Action	85.5% (ED)	50.9%	2, Regional Universities (North)
Santa Clara University (CA)	Early Decision and Early Action	80.1% (ED)	48.0%	59 (tie), National Universities
Fairfield University (CT)	Early Decision and Early Action	79.8% (ED)	33.3%	139 (tie), National Universities
Illinois Wesleyan University	Early Action	69.60%	39.3%	2, Regional Colleges (Midwest)
Tulane University (LA)	Early Decision and Early Action	58.9% (ED)	14.0%	69 (tie), National Universities
University of Miami (FL)	Early Decision and Early Action	48.8% (EA)	18.9%	64 (tie), National Universities

Source: 2026 U.S. News Best Colleges

*Some colleges defer some applicants to the regular admissions pool, where they have an additional chance of admittance, so the percentage of early applicants who are eventually accepted may be higher.

Transcripts:
A vital tool in the
application process.

Always have a **copy of your transcript** next to you when checking/completing the Academic History section of your college applications.

- Your self-reported Academic History must exactly match the official transcripts you will send to the ONE school where you submit your Statement of Intent to Register (SIR).

Pacific Grove High School uses Parchment.com, an online transcript service that allows students to view, and order official and unofficial transcripts electronically.

All PGHS 12th-grade students should have a Student Parchment account so you can view/order official or unofficial transcripts this year and in the future.



SSID or State ID

Student Name [Redacted]		 PACIFIC GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT A PARTNERSHIP IN EXCELLENCE Challenging every student with exceptional learning opportunities		Official PGUSD Transcript Pacific Grove High School August 20, 2024 https://pghigh.pgusd.org/	
Perm ID [Redacted]	State ID [Redacted]			Grd 12	Gen [Redacted]
Birth Country United States of America		Date Of Birth [Redacted]		School Address 615 Sunset Ave Pacific Grove, CA 93950-4827	
Home Address [Redacted]		Phone [Redacted]			

Course Title	Mark	Cred Att	Cmp	Course Title	Mark	Cred Att	Cmp	Course Title	Mark	Cred Att	Cmp
Pacific Grove High Yr: 2018 Term: S1 Grade: 09				Pacific Grove High Yr: 2019 Term: S2 Grade: 10				Pacific Grove High Yr: 2021 Term: S2 Grade: 12			
Honors English 1	A	5.00	5.00	Spanish 2	A	5.00	5.00	AP English Lit.	A	5.00	5.00
AP Human Geography	A	5.00	5.00	Culinary 1, Intro to Culinary Arts	A	5.00	5.00	Economics	A+	5.00	5.00
Integrated Math 2	A	5.00	5.00	Cred Att: 37.50 Cred Cmp: 37.50 GPA: 4.20				AP Calculus B/C	A	5.00	5.00
Biology	A+	5.00	5.00	Pacific Grove High Yr: 2020 Term: S1 Grade: 11				AP Physics C: Mech.	A	5.00	5.00
Phys. Ed. Core 9	A+	5.00	5.00	AP English Language	A	5.00	5.00	Tennis	P	2.50	2.50
Spanish 1	A	5.00	5.00	AP U.S. History	A	5.00	5.00	Soccer	P	2.50	2.50
Cred Att: 30.00 Cred Cmp: 30.00 GPA: 4.20				AP Calculus A/B	A	5.00	5.00	CSIS 9	P	5.00	5.00
Pacific Grove High Yr: 2019 Term: S2 Grade: 09				Honors Chemistry 1	A	5.00	5.00	Cred Att: 30.00 Cred Cmp: 30.00 GPA: 4.75			
Honors English 1	A	5.00	5.00	AP Computer Science A	A	5.00	5.00	Graduation Requirements - Credit Summary			
AP Human Geography	A	5.00	5.00	Spanish 3	A+	5.00	5.00	Subject Area	Req'd	Comp	WIP
Integrated Math 2	A	5.00	5.00	Cred Att: 30.00 Cred Cmp: 30.00 GPA: 4.83				Additional A-G Courses/CTE	10.00	10.00	
Biology	A	5.00	5.00	Pacific Grove High Yr: 2020 Term: S2 Grade: 11				Electives	70.00	112.50	
Phys. Ed. Core 9	A+	5.00	5.00	AP English Language	A	5.00	5.00	English	40.00	40.00	
Soccer	P	2.50	2.50	AP U.S. History	A	5.00	5.00	Fine Arts / World Language	10.00	10.00	
Track	P	2.50	2.50	AP Calculus A/B	A	5.00	5.00	Life Science	10.00	10.00	
Spanish 1	A	5.00	5.00	Honors Chemistry 1	A	5.00	5.00	Mathematics	20.00	20.00	
Cred Att: 35.00 Cred Cmp: 35.00 GPA: 4.20				AP Computer Science A	A	5.00	5.00	Physical Education 9-12	20.00	20.00	
Pacific Grove High Yr: 2019 Term: S1 Grade: 10				Soccer	P	0.00	0.00	Physical Science	10.00	10.00	
Honors English 2	A	5.00	5.00	Spanish 3	A+	5.00	5.00	Social Studies	40.00	40.00	
AP World History	A	5.00	5.00	Cred Att: 30.00 Cred Cmp: 30.00 GPA: 4.83				TOTALS	230.00	272.50	0.00
Honors Integrated Math 3	A	5.00	5.00	Monterey Peninsula Yr: 2021 Term: S1 Grade: 12				Achievements			
Physics	A	5.00	5.00	PROG. METHODS II: JAVA	A	10.00	10.00	Name	Date	Sch Yr	
Phys. Ed. Core 10-12	A	5.00	5.00	Cred Att: 10.00 Cred Cmp: 10.00 GPA: 0.00				Monterey Peninsula	08/07/2019	2020	
Spanish 2	A	5.00	5.00	Pacific Grove High Yr: 2021 Term: S1 Grade: 12							
Culinary 1, Intro to Culinary Arts	A+	5.00	5.00	AP English Lit.	A	5.00	5.00				
Cred Att: 35.00 Cred Cmp: 35.00 GPA: 4.20				AP Calc.	A	5.00	5.00				
Pacific Grove High Yr: 2019 Term: S2 Grade: 10				AP Calculus B/C	A	5.00	5.00				
Honors English 2	A	5.00	5.00	AP Physics C: Mech.	A	5.00	5.00				
AP World History	A	5.00	5.00	AP Computer Science A	A+	5.00	5.00				
Honors Integrated Math 3	A	5.00	5.00	Cred Att: 25.00 Cred Cmp: 25.00 GPA: 4.83							
Physics	A	5.00	5.00	Monterey Peninsula Yr: 2021 Term: S2 Grade: 12							
Phys. Ed. Core 10-12	A	5.00	5.00	CSIS 9	A	10.00	10.00				
Soccer	P	0.00	0.00	Cred Att: 10.00 Cred Cmp: 10.00 GPA: 0.00							
Track	P	2.50	2.50								

DE College Classes

GPA

AP = Advanced Placement		NA = Non-Academic		H = Honors		RC = Repeated Course / No Credit	
Grade Point Legend		GPA Summary		NOTES			
Mark	Normal	Honors	Unweighted	4.00			
A	4.00	5.00	Weighted	4.51			
B	3.00	4.00					
C	2.00						
D	1.00						
F	0.00	0.00					
Leave Date		Enter Date	Leave Date	Leave Date	Graduation Date		

H = Honors		NA = Non-Academic		DE = Dual Enrollment		H = Honors		RC = Repeated Course / No Credit	
Grade Point Legend			GPA Summary			NOTES			
Mark	Normal	Honors	Unweighted		3.79				
A	4.00	5.00	Weighted		4.33				
B	3.00	4.00							
C	2.00	3.00							
D	1.00	1.00							
F	0.00	0.00							
Leave Date			Enter Date		08/08/2012	Leave Date		Leave Date	
								Graduation Date	
								Class of 2025	

- While Dual Enrollment (DE) Community College Courses are included on the PGHS transcript, on the UC/CSU application ensure you enter your CCAP and General MPC classes as college course work, not as high school a-g course work.
- For the Common App, **follow the directions for adding DE classes with your high school classes and ensure you add the appropriate DE label.**
- Traditional Dual Enrollment classes will be listed under a Monterey Peninsula heading (previous example).
- CCAP DE will be listed under PGHS and have a DE label before the course title.

Common Application (App)

Common App ★



FIND COLLEGES

About ▼

Plan for college ▼

Apply to college ▼

Pay for college ▼

Sign in

Create an account

College is for anyone

Apply to college for the first time or transfer to complete your degree. Common App helps you discover colleges, submit applications, and navigate every step of the college admissions process.

Start your application



What is the Common App?

- Online platform that students use to apply to multiple colleges and universities with a single application.
- An estimated 1000 colleges and universities worldwide participate, making it a widely used application system.
- Allows students to fill out standardized information like name, address, academic history and extracurricular activities only once.
- Opens on August 1st each year
 - Students can create and explore the website before it opens for applications.

[5 Things You Need to Know About the Common App - College and Career Readiness | ACT](#) ★

Common App Additional Options & Requirements

- Letters of Recommendation (LOR)
 - While the UC/CSU do not generally require Letters of Recommendation, many private schools do require LORs.
 - Students will need to complete and submit their PGHS Brag Sheets to each teacher/counselor they are requesting LOR from.
- Common App Personal Essays vs UC Personal Insight Questions
 - Not all schools on the Common App require a Personal Essay, but many do.
 - While often exploring similar themes, the writing style and expectations for the Personal Essay and UC Insight Questions are different.
- **Supplemental Questions/Essays, in addition to the Personal Essay, for Individual Schools**
- Offer Regular Decision, Early Action, and Early Decision Options

Common App Organization

My Common Application

- This portion of the application includes all the personal information about you.
- You will complete your Profile, Education, Testing, Activities and Experiences, Writing, and Academic History in this portion of the application.
- You will use the [Common App Education Section Information Guide \(2026-27\)](#) to ensure you enter the correct information.

My Colleges

- This portion of the application contains the colleges you would like to apply to.
- You must read the **ENTIRE** application for each college. Each college has an individual application with specific requirements for their college.
- EXPAND DROPDOWN MENUS.
- Treat reviewing each application as if you are reading the full recipe before you cook a meal.
- You will invite your recommenders through this section of the application.

READ NOT THE DIRECTIONS



FAIL TO IMPRESS WILL YOU

What is a Common App Fee Waiver?

Common App and member colleges want to make sure that application fees do not pose a barrier for any student. If you meet certain qualifications, you can request Common App Fee Waivers.

- You are enrolled in or eligible to participate in the federal free or reduced price lunch program (FRPL).
- Your annual family income falls within the income eligibility guidelines set by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

- To complete the PGUSD Free and Reduced Meal application, please use the secure form:
<https://lingconnect.com/public/meal-application/new?identifier=5762A8>
- The Common App, UC, and CSU use the same criteria, eligibility in the National School Lunch Program, for college application fee waivers.



commonapp

My Common Application

Profile

Personal Information

Address

Contact Details

Demographics

Language

Geography and Nationality

Common App Fee Waiver

Family

Education

Testing

Activities and experiences

Writing

Courses & Grades

2 college(s) require

⚙

🔍

👤

⚠️ This is a practice account. It cannot submit applications to colleges. If you'd like to change your account type, please review our [practice account FAQ](#) for more information.

Complete your Common Application

Common App Fee Waiver

In progress

Preview

You may be eligible for application fee waivers using Common App if you meet one or more of the following criteria:

- You are enrolled in or eligible to participate in the federal free or reduced price lunch program.
- You have received or are eligible to receive an SAT or ACT fee waiver.
- Your annual family income falls within the income eligibility guidelines set by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.
- Your family receives public assistance.
- You are enrolled in a federal, state, or local program that aids students from low-income families (e.g., GEAR UP, TRIO such as Upward Bound or others).
- You live in federally subsidized public housing, a foster home or are homeless.
- You are a ward of the state or an orphan.
- You have received or are eligible to receive a Pell Grant.
- You can provide a supporting statement from a school official, college access counselor, financial aid officer, or community leader.

Do you meet one or more of the [Common App fee waiver](#) eligibility criteria?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Clear answer

UStrive is a Common App partner that connects you with free, qualified mentors online. UStrive mentors can help you:

- Apply to college
- Navigate the financial aid process
- Transition into college
- Get your degree
- Find a job after graduation

Would you like to connect with a UStrive mentor?

- The Common App Fee Waiver is located under the Profile tab in the *My Common Application* section of the Common App.
- Your School Counselor has to verify your enrollment in the FRL Program.

Letters of Recommendation



Letter of Recommendation

- A Letter of Recommendation is a letter written by someone who can speak to the student's work or academic performance.
- The Letter of Recommendation should give a picture of the candidate's personal characteristics, performance and experience, strengths, capabilities, and academic promise.
- The recommender should be someone who has experience with the student.
- Many colleges and universities require a counselor Letter of Recommendation. Your grade-level counselor, [Mrs. Rice](#), will write your counselor letter.
- **All students applying on the Common App need the Counselor to submit a School Report.**
- The college selection committees rely on these letters to assist in making final admissions decisions. LOR provide a more complete picture of the student.

Requesting a Letter of Recommendation

1. Confirm you need a Letter of Recommendation (LOR) for your school(s).
 - *Please note that Community Colleges, the UC, and the CSU do not require LOR.*
2. Confirm you have selected the deadline(s) so your recommender knows when your (LOR) must be submitted.
3. **Always, request your letter in person or via email before sending your recommender an official request.**
4. If your school use the Common App for admissions, be sure to request your counselor and or teacher LOR through the Common App.
 - Mrs. Rice and most teachers will not start your LOR until they receive official notification from the Common App or official school website.
5. Ensure you request your letter **at least two weeks, preferably 3 weeks** before the deadline.
 - **Account for breaks, holidays, and weekends.**

Selecting a Recommender

- Request Letters of Recommendation from:
 - At least one teacher who teaches a core subject: English, mathematics, science, or social studies
 - A teacher who teaches the subject you plan to study or major in
 - Who has a positive impression of you as a student
 - Has taught you recently or has current experience working with you
 - For example, a teacher who has taught you in class and/or is an advisor for a club or activity you participated in
 - Your grade-level school counselor, Mrs. Rice, will submit your School Report (School Profile + Transcript) and counselor letter of recommendation, if required.
 - ***Subject Area Teacher as requested on the application***

Do you waive your
FERPA rights to view
your Letter of
Recommendation?

What does that mean!?



- It is simply asking if you waive the right to read your LOR before or after it is submitted to the colleges.
- Selecting to waive your rights lets colleges know that you are not reading your recommendations, which can help them trust that the letters are honest and candid.



My Colleges

Overview

^ California Institute of Technology
(Caltech)

College information

APPLICATION

General

Academics

 Optional Supplemental
Material

Family

Ethical Guidelines

Caltech Essays

Recommendations and
FERPA Review and submit
application

Recommendations and FERPA

In progress

Recommendations are people who will submit forms to colleges on your behalf. This page shows which recommendation types this college needs. Each college will have different requirements.

FERPA Release Authorization

[View Details](#) ▾

Invite recommendations

Use this section to invite and then [assign recommendations](#) to this college. You'll need to assign recommendations for each college on your list.

[Invite Recommendations](#)

Counselor

You must invite a school Counselor who will complete the School Report and other forms for you.

[Invite Counselor](#)

Teachers

Please select and assign the Teacher(s) below whose recommendation will be submitted to this college on your behalf. You must invite a teacher with the Invite Teacher button before you can assign them to this college.

Required: 2 Optional: 1

Help & support

Search FAQs

Search takes you to the student
solution center

**Can I submit my application
before my recommendations
submit their forms?**

You are allowed to submit your
application before your...

[▾ Read full answer](#)**Why am I unable to assign an
Other Recommendation to a
school?**

You will only be able to assign
an Other Recommendation if a...

[▾ Read full answer](#)**What do I do if I'm an
international student and
don't have a counselor?**

If there is no counselor at your
school, the recommendation...

[▾ Read full answer](#)



Students



Profile



Resources

MR Student info
FERPA waived School report
In progress Fee waiver
In progress Counselor
recommendation
In progress Optional report
Not yet available Optional report 2
Not yet available Mid-year report
Not yet available Final report
Not yet available

Settings



Sign out

Margaret's information

CAID: 44428738

August 13

Notifications

No new updates

Common App progress

Profile
IncompleteFamily
CompleteEducation
IncompleteTesting
IncompleteActivities
IncompleteWriting
IncompleteC&G
Incomplete

This student has not enabled application preview.

Sort by: College name (A to Z) ▼

**California Institute of Technology (Caltech)**

No deadline selected

**Penn State**

No deadline selected

**Stanford University**

No deadline selected

- My Recommender informed me my deadlines are not showing in the Common App. How do I fix it?

commonapp

My Colleges

Yale University

College information

APPLICATION

General

Academics

Contacts

Family

Short Takes and Essays

Additional Questions

Recommenders and FERPA

Review and submit

⚠ This is a practice account. It cannot submit applications to colleges. If you'd like to change your account type, please review our [practice account FAQ](#) for more information.

Apply to Yale University

General

In progress

The questions on this page are being asked by Yale University.

Preferred start term*

- Choose an option -

Do you intend to pursue need-based financial aid? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

Clear answer

Do you wish to submit an arts or science/engineering supplement as part of the admission process to Yale University? If so, please read the instructions at <http://admissions.yale.edu/supplementary>.

commonapp

My Colleges

University of Puget Sound

University of Washington

Yale University

College information

APPLICATION

General

Academics

Contacts

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Short Takes and Essays

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Review and submit application

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Apply to Yale University

General

In progress

The questions on this page are being asked by Yale University.

Preferred start term*

Fall 2027

Preferred admission plan*

- Choose an option -

Restrictive Early Action

Regular Decision

☐ No

Clear answer

Do you wish to submit an arts or science/engineering supplement as part of the admission process to Yale University? If so, please read the instructions at <http://admissions.yale.edu/supplementary>.

- Choose an option -

Pacific Grove High School Brag Sheet

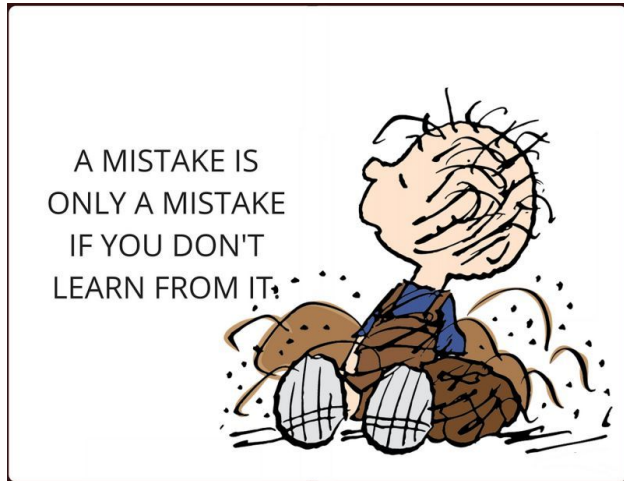


- A brag sheet is a document that lists a student's accomplishments, experiences, and other information that can help recommenders and admissions officers learn more about the student.
- Is less formal and contains more 'personality' than a resume.
- Provides the student an opportunity personally highlight their accomplishments, extracurriculars, and goals as suggestions to a letter writer of what they might showcase in the letter.
- Can be an opportunity for the student to organize their thoughts and ideas for their college applications.
- Is a **key tool recommenders use** to write an individualized Letters of Recommendation.

Tips for Completing Your Brag Sheet

- Provide Concrete Examples
 - **Show, don't just tell.** Include additional details that illustrate how the characteristic, trait, or adjective describes you.
- Proudly share your accomplishments
 - It might feel uncomfortable (or a little liberating!) to talk about the wonderful things about yourself, but sharing the information helps your recommender write a letter that reflects the true you!
- **Be organized and use proper grammar.** The Brag Sheet is another opportunity to show your academic skills.
- Remember, you are young. You do not need to be Doogie Howser to have valuable experiences, contributions to your community, and characteristics that will enhance any college campus. Share your personal experiences with sincerity and honesty.

Brag Sheet Pitfalls



- Handwriting the document
- Grammar, spelling, etc. errors
- Adding links to other documents instead of answer the question
- Copy and pasting your Personal Insight Questions or Personal Essay instead of answering the questions
- Limited responses that lack substance
 - I.E. Why do you want to study this field?
 - To make tons of money.

Completing the PGHS Brag Sheet

- The PGHS Brag Sheet is located on the PGHS website. You can find it under the SENIORS tab, the FORMS tab, or in the College and Career section.
- [MASTER PGHS Brag Sheet](#) (Live Link ★)
- You will be directed to make a Copy when you use the link.
- Please delete 'copy of MASTER' in the title and **rename the document as your LAST NAME, FIRST NAME PGHS Brag Sheet**. For example, Rice, Margaret PGHS Brag Sheet
- **When you have completed the Brag Sheet, share it with all of your recommenders.**
- Save the Senior Brag sheet in your Google Drive. You will be able to use it for other recommenders, to complete scholarship applications, and to create a resume.



Copy document

Would you like to make a copy of **MASTER PGHS Brag Sheet**?

Make a copy



When you make a copy of a Google Document, the title auto populates as Copy of Master Brag Sheet. Please delete 'copy of MASTER' in the title and rename the document as your LAST NAME, FIRST NAME PGHS Brag Sheet. **For example, Rice, Margaret PGHS Brag Sheet**



Pacific Grove High School Brag Sheet

Directions for Part #1: Please complete this form as accurately and thoroughly as possible. Your counselor, teachers, coaches, mentors, and supervisors will use this information to recommend you for scholarships, college admissions, summer programs, and other honors/awards. Letters of Recommendation need to be requested 2-3 weeks in advance. **PLEASE NOTE: UC and CSU do not require Letters of Recommendation unless they specifically request one.**

Student's First & Last Name		Current Grade Level	
Date of Request*		Deadline for Letter Submission*	
*Share/provide this Brag Sheet to the person from whom you are requesting the recommendation letter at least TWO WEEKS before your deadline, not including weekends, Breaks, or Holidays.			

STUDENT'S ACADEMIC HISTORY

Transcript

Please send or attach a PDF copy of your transcript with your PGHS Brag Sheet.

- Students can print or send free copies of their transcripts using their secure **Parchment Accounts**.
- To set up your free Parchment Account, see Mrs. Biondi, the PGHS Registrar in A-Wing.

GPA

PGHS Weighted GPA:	PGHS Unweighted GPA:
--------------------	----------------------

How many Honors, AP, and Dual Enrollment courses have you taken?

Honors:	AP:	Dual Enrollment:
---------	-----	------------------

List the courses you are currently taking this school year:

Period	Name of Class	Honors/AP/DE Course?	Name of Teacher
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

1. List your academic strengths (see page 4 for examples of strengths) and **give at least one example of how you demonstrated that strength.** *Be specific, i.e., problem-solving, writing, creative-thinker, collaborative, resilient, etc.*

Academic Strength	How have you demonstrated this strength?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

2. What types of courses interest you?

2a. Why do you find these courses interesting?

3. What is/are your proudest academic accomplishment(s)?

3a. Why are you proud of this accomplishment?

FUTURE PLANS

1. What are your career goals?

2. What major do you plan on selecting?

3. What interests you about that field of study?

List the colleges and universities you plan to apply to:

PERSONAL

1. Provide 3-5 characteristics/words (see page 4) that you or others use to describe you.

Characteristic	Why does this word describe you?
1.	
2.	
3.	

Common App Step by Step

My Common Application: Part 1

My Common Application: One Step at a Time

Step 1: Create a Common App account as a **First Year Student**.

Step 2: Complete the **Profile Section**.

Step 3: Complete the **Family Section**.

Step 4: Complete the **Education Section** using the Information Guide below.

- [Common App Education Section Information Guide \(2026-27\)](#)
- Most Recent High School: Pacific Grove High School
- Any other high schools you have attended
- Colleges & Universities: **ALL OF YOU WILL ADD** Monterey Peninsula College.



My Common Application



✓ Current or Most Recent
Secondary/High School



✓ Other Secondary/High
Schools



✓ Colleges & Universities



✓ Grades



○ Current or Most Recent Year
Courses

○ Honors

✓ Community-Based
Organizations



○ Future Plans



▼ ○ Testing

▼ ○ Activities and experiences



▼ ○ Writing

○ 0

● 1

○ 2

○ 3

Clear answer

College 1*

Monterey Peninsula College

980 Fremont St

Monterey, CA 93940-4799

USA

2-year or community college

CEEB Code : 4490

↻ Change

✕ Remove

Course details

☒ Dual enrollment with high school

☐ Summer program

☐ Credit awarded directly by college

College 1 from date*

August 2023



Date uses "month year" format (e.g. August 2002)

My Common Application: One Step at a Time

Step 4: **Education Section** Continued...

- Community-Based Organizations: *This is not Community Service*. Indicate the number of community programs or organizations that have provided you with free assistance in your application process. Examples might include AVID, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc.
- Future Plans: Indicate when you plan on start college.
 - For most of you it will be 2026-2027.

Step 5: Complete the **Testing Section**

Step 6: Complete the **Activities and Experiences Section**

- Take advantage of this section to share more of what makes you unique.
- Complete the Responsibilities and Circumstances prompt.
 - *'None of these' is a completely appropriate response.*

My Common Application: One Step at a Time

Step 4: **Education Section** Continued...

- Grades: Not your grades but how our school grades students. **Use the Information Guide.**
- Current or Most Recent Courses: Enter all your *Courses in Progress and Planned* for your **ENTIRE SENIOR YEAR.**
 - *Course schedule* indicates if the class is being taught Semester 1 or Semester 2.
 - If you are taking College Courses, the **level is Dual Enrollment.**
- Honors: Include up to 5 Honors/Awards related to Academic Achievements
 - Academic or Scholarly *Awards* such as AP Scholar, Extracurricular & Art *Awards*, and School *Honors* such as National Honor Society or Honor Roll are examples.
 - *Add Athletic Awards or Varsity designations in your Activities Section.*

common
app

My Common Application

Profile

Family

Education

Current or Most Recent Secondary/High School

Other Secondary/High Schools

Colleges & Universities

Grades

Current or Most Recent Year Courses

Honors

Community-Based Organizations

Future Plans

Testing

Activities and experiences

Writing

Courses & Grades

2 college(s) require

Complete your Common Application

Current or Most Recent Year Courses

In progress

Please list all courses you are taking this academic year. If you are not currently enrolled, please list courses from your most recent academic year. How many courses would you like to report?*

7

Please select the course scheduling system your institution is using.*

Semester

Trimester

Quarter

Yearly

Clear answer

Course 1 subject*

English

Course 1 name*

ENGL C1000 Academic Reading and Writing

Course 1 level*

Dual Enrollment

Course 1 schedule*

First Semester

- Enter all your 12th grade courses, Semester 1 and Semester 2, in the **EDUCATION** portion of the application.

My Common Application: One Step at a Time

Step 7: Complete the **Writing Section**

- The main portion of the writing section is the Personal Essay. You can select from any one of the 7 prompts.
 - Not all colleges will require a Personal Essay. However, you will have the option to submit your Personal Essay to colleges/universities that do not require it.
- Complete the Additional Information prompt.

REMINDERS:

- The Personal Essay submission is included in the *My Common Application* portion of the Common App.
- Additional College Questions/Short Essays may be included under the Writing Requirements dropdown located under each individual college in the **My Colleges** portion of the application.
 - For example, Stanford has 8 additional required Questions.

My Common Application

- Profile
- Family
- Education
- Testing
- Activities and experiences
- Writing
 - Personal Essay**
 - Additional Information
- Courses & Grades
 - 2 college(s) require

⚠ This is a practice account. It cannot submit applications to colleges. If you'd like to change your account type, please review our [practice account FAQ](#) for more information.

Complete your Common Application

Personal Essay

Complete

Preview

Some colleges require submission of the personal essay with your application. You may submit a personal essay to any college, even if it is not required by that college. If not required by a college, you will be given the option during submission to include your essay or not for that college.*

☒ I understand

Here is the current list of colleges on your Dashboard and whether they require the Personal Essay.

Required

- California Institute of Technology (Caltech)
- Stanford University
- University of Puget Sound
- University of Washington
- Yale University

Not Required

- The University of Arizona

The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores? Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response. Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so. (The application won't accept a response shorter than 250 words.)

- ☐ Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- ☐ The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

Help & support

Search FAQs

Search takes you to the student solution center

I already submitted, can I change some of my answers?

You can return at any time and change your answer to...

[Read full answer](#)[All help topics](#)



My Colleges



Overview



▼ California Institute of Technology (Caltech)



Stanford University



College information



APPLICATION

○ General

○ Academics

○ Contacts

○ Family

○ Short Questions

○ Short Essays

○ Additional Background

○ Affirmations

○ Recommenders and FERPA

○ Review and submit application

▼ The University of Arizona

▼ University of Puget Sound



▼ University of Washington



▼ Yale University



+ [Add a college](#)

Application deadlines

Fall 2027

Restrictive Early Action - November 01, 2026

Regular Decision - January 05, 2027

Application fees and fee waiver

U.S. students: \$100

International students: \$100

[Common App fee waiver](#) accepted for all eligible students

Links

- [College website](#)
- [Admissions office](#)
- [Financial aid](#)
- [Virtual tour](#)
- [College Navigator](#)



Other deadline information

If you intend to submit an [Optional Arts Portfolio](#), your application **must** be submitted by October 15 for Restrictive Early Action (REA) or December 5 for Regular Decision (RD). Your School Report form, teacher/counselor letters of recommendation, and transcript(s) can be submitted by November 1 (REA) or January 5 (RD).

Please visit our [Requirements and Deadlines page](#) for more details.

Application information

Writing requirements

[Common App personal essay](#)

Required

[College Questions](#)

8 Required Questions

Additional Details

Applicants who have previously applied will be required to complete an additional writing question.

Writing Supplement

This college does not use a writing supplement for any additional writing requirements.



My Colleges

  [Ethical Guidelines](#) Caltech Essays Recommenders and
FERPA Review and submit
application

▼ Penn State

▼ Stanford University

▼ The University of Arizona

▼ University of Puget Sound

▼ University of Washington

▼ Yale University

Apply to California Institute of Technology (Caltech)

[Preview](#)

Ethical Guidelines

 In progress

The questions on this page are being asked by California Institute of Technology (Caltech).

Upon application, Caltech reserves the right to conduct verifications of submitted materials, including demonstrated mastery in required academic subjects and proficiency in English. Any discrepancies or falsifications may result in the rescission of your admission to Caltech.*

☐ To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in this application is accurate and honest.

All applicants must review [Caltech's guidelines on the ethical use of AI](#) before submitting their [supplemental essays](#). Failure to comply with the Ethical Use of AI guidelines may result in the rescission of your admission to Caltech.*

☐ I have reviewed and agree to comply with Caltech's guidelines on the ethical use of AI for Fall 2026 applicants.

[Continue](#)

My Common Application: One Step at a Time

Step 8: IF any of your schools are listed in the Required Box, complete the **Courses and Grades Section**.

- If ALL of your schools are in the **Not Used box**, you do not need to complete this section. If just ONE of your schools require them, you must complete this section.
- If required, you will manually enter all of your coursework from 9th grade to 11th grade.
- **ALWAYS, 100% of the time, use your transcript when completing this section.**

REMINDERS:

- Use the [Common App Education Section Information Guide \(2026-27\)](#).
- For Course Level, select the appropriate designation from the drop down menu.
- All A-G classes are **College Prep** courses.
 - Only PE, IPS, Class TA, etc would be Regular/Standard.
- Don't forget that MPC classes are Dual Enrollment even if they were taught at PGHS.



Courses & Grades

Courses & Grades – 9th grade

Use this grid to report your courses exactly as they appear on your transcript.

If any middle school courses appear on your transcript, you do not need to note the middle school's name. Please use the high school name where you received credit instead.

[View walkthrough](#)[View FAQs](#)

Transcript #1 – Pacific Grove High School

School Name *

Pacific Grove High School

School Year *

2023-24

Grading Scale *

A-F

Schedule *

Semesters

Subject *

English

Course Name *

(H) English 1

Course Level *

Honors

Semester Grades *

S1

S2

Final

B+

A

Semester Credits *

S1

S2

Final

5

5

☐ N/A

Biology

Biology

College Prep

A

A

5

5

☐ N/A

Physical Education/Health

PE Ind/Dual Sports

Regular/Standard

A+

A+

5

5

☐ N/A[Add another course](#)

Choose "Add courses from another transcript" to add courses from another high school transcript, or any other courses that use a different schedule or grading scale.

[+ Add courses from another transcript](#)[Continue](#)



My Common Application



▼ Profile



▼ Family



▼ Education



▼ Testing



▼ Activities and experiences



▼ Writing

^ Courses & Grades

2 college(s) require

✓ Courses & Grades

✓ 9th Grade

○ 10th Grade

○ 11th Grade

○ 12th Grade

○ Other Courses

⚠ This is a practice account. It cannot submit applications to colleges. If you'd like to change your account type, please review our [practice account FAQ](#) for more information.

Complete your Common Application

Preview

12th Grade

○ In progress

Do you have 12th grade courses on your transcript with official grades? You can add 12th grade courses that are still in progress in the Education section.*

☐ Yes☐ No

Clear answer

Continue

- After you enter your grades from 9th, 10th, and 11th grade you reach the 12th grade screen. The prompt will ask if you have 12th grade classes with official grades.
- **Select No.**
- Enter all your current 12th grade courses in progress in the EDUCATION portion of the application.

My Colleges: Part 2



My Colleges



Overview



▼ California Institute of Technology (Caltech)

▼ Penn State



▲ Stanford University



College information



APPLICATION

○ General

○ Academics

○ Contacts

○ Family

○ Short Questions



Application information



Standardized test policy: ?

- Always required
- SAT without essay or ACT without science or writing
- [Test Policy Information](#)

Accepted English proficiency tests:

[See website](#)

Courses & Grades:

Required

Recommendations:

- School Report Required
- Counselor Recommendation Required
- Mid Year Report Required
- Final Report Required
- Teacher Evaluation(s): 2 Required, 0 Optional
- Other Evaluation(s): 0 Required, 1 Optional



Saves school forms after matriculation:

No

Portfolio Requirements:

If your application is submitted by the applicable early deadline, October 15 (REA) or December 5 (RD), you will be sent an email with instructions to access your Stanford portal within 48 hours of Stanford receiving your application.

Common App 'Glossary'

- **School Report Required:** Mrs. Rice is responsible for uploading the PGHS School Profile AND your transcript through junior year for every student that applies on the Common App.
- **Counselor Recommendation Required:** A Counselor LOR is required. Mrs. Rice will write your LOR. If the application does not require a Counselor Letter of Recommendation, Mrs. Rice will not write you a LOR unless you specifically request one due to an extenuating circumstance.
 - You only need to add the Counselor one time for all of your colleges.
- **Mid Year Report Required:** The Mid Year Report is your transcript with S1 grades. Mrs. Rice will upload your transcript once final grades are posted.
- **Final Report Required:** The Final Report is your final transcript with all of your grades from high school. Mrs. Rice will upload your transcript once final S2 grades are posted.
- **Teacher Evaluation(s):** The Teacher Evaluation is a Teacher Letter of Recommendation.



My Colleges



Overview

California Institute of Technology
(Caltech)

Stanford University



The University of Arizona



University of Puget Sound

College information

APPLICATION

- General
- Academics
- Activities
- Contacts
- Family
- Recommenders and FERPA
- Review and submit application

University of Washington

Yale University

+ [Add a college](#)

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Apply to University of Puget Sound

University of Puget Sound

admission@pugetsound.edu · Phone [\(253\) 879-3211](tel:(253)879-3211)1500 N Warner St #1062
Tacoma, WA 98416-1062
USA

Application deadlines

Fall 2027

Early Decision · November 01, 2026

Early Action · November 01, 2026

Regular Decision · January 15, 2027

Spring 2027

Regular Decision · November 01, 2026

Application fees and fee waiver

U.S. students: \$65

International students: \$65

[Common App fee waiver](#) accepted for all eligible students

Links

- [College website](#)
- [Admissions office](#)
- [Financial aid](#)
- [Virtual tour](#)
- [College Navigator](#)



Other deadline information

Application information

Writing requirements

X Remove college

Help & support

Search FAQs

Search takes you to the student solution center

Can a college see the list of colleges on the My colleges list?

A school cannot view any other schools on your My...

[Read full answer](#)

When is the deadline for my application submission?

To meet an application deadline, you must submit your application materials b...

[Read full answer](#)[All help topics](#)



My Colleges



Overview

California Institute of Technology
(Caltech)

Stanford University



The University of Arizona



University of Puget Sound

College information

APPLICATION

General

Academics

Activities

Contacts

Family

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 Review and submit
application

University of Washington

Yale University

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Other deadline information

Music Auditions: Audition registration deadlines for the School of Music are November 2 (Early Decision/Early Action) and January 25 (Regular Decision). Please visit the [Music Audition website](#) for more information.

Lillis and Matelich Scholarship Applicants: The deadline for Lillis and Matelich Scholarship applications is December 1, 2026. All materials for your application for admission must also be submitted by that deadline, and finalists for the scholarship must be available to interview online in late February.

Honors and Business Leadership: The deadline for Honors and Business Leadership applications is January 15, 2027.

Sound Scholars Program: The deadline for the Sound Scholars Program application is

Help & support

Search FAQs

Search takes you to the student
solution center

Can a college see the list of
colleges on the My colleges
list?

A school cannot view any
other schools on your My...

[Read full answer](#)

When is the deadline for my
application submission?

To meet an application
deadline, you must submit
your application materials b...

[Read full answer](#)[All help topics](#)



Questions?

Margaret A. Rice
PGHS Counseling
Grades 11 & 12
mrice@pgusd.org

