

12



12th Grade Checklist

**NEXT
STEPS**
I D A H O

This is YOUR year. There's still a lot to do, but this is the year it all pays off. Soon enough, you'll have an exciting decision to make about what comes next.



FALL

Organize your senior year calendar.

Use a tracking tool to stay organized. Include application deadlines for college (admissions, financial aid, and scholarships), apprenticeship, or other training opportunities you are pursuing. Note when you submit each form and ask your counselor to help confirm you've submitted everything properly, and on-time.

Look for your college acceptance letter in the mail.

In September, the Idaho State Board of Education will notify you of the Idaho colleges and universities where you have already earned placement, based on your GPA and SAT or ACT scores. You'll still need to apply but can do so using the Next Steps Idaho website to send your information to the Idaho schools you may want to attend, for free.

Visit schools this fall and finalize your college list.

Now is a great time to plan a campus visit because classes are in session and you are better able to meet and talk with students and professors. Call ahead to schedule tours, appointments, and even an overnight stay.

Ask for letters of recommendation.

Letters of recommendation may be required for college and scholarship applications and will also come in handy for apprenticeship and job applications. Think about who knows you best: your accomplishments, the challenges you've faced, your unique strengths and personality traits. Decide whom you're going to ask and give them plenty of notice (as well as your resume) to write a thoughtful letter.

Tackle the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) .

Completing the FAFSA is the first step to getting grants or loans from federal or state governments and colleges and universities. It is also required for many scholarship opportunities. Your parents will need to have their previous year's tax filing handy before you begin filling out the FAFSA, since you'll need that information to complete the application which opens October 1. Submitting your application as soon as possible will give you the best chance to get money for college.



WINTER

Focus on financial aid opportunities.

The downtime after college and training applications have been submitted and you've completed the FAFSA is a great time to seek out extra money for school.

Meet with your counselor.

Whether you're going on to a two- or four-year college, a career technical training program, an apprenticeship, or choosing another route altogether, your counselor can help make sure you have taken the necessary steps to get where you want to go following graduation.

Think about where you'll live next year.

Now is the time to look into housing options near where you'll study or work next year. Connect with colleges for information about on- and off-campus options and make sure you understand the benefits, costs, and rules for the schools you may attend. If you'll be looking for an apartment that's near school or work, talk to your family and counselors about reliable resources for starting your search.



SPRING

Complete the financial aid process.

Remember to think about the net cost of college: the difference between the "sticker" price (full cost) to attend a specific college, minus any grants and scholarships you've been awarded.

Decision time!

After you receive acceptance letters from colleges or training and apprenticeship programs, decide which you'll attend and then follow through on your post-acceptance tasks, which will be outlined by the school or employer you'll be joining next fall.

Reflect. Be proud. Celebrate!

Go out feeling good about your senior year with good grades and great memories.