

Tips for Visiting Colleges

- Set up the visit in advance. Pick a time that's convenient to you, but make sure the school is in session. That way, you can sit in on a lecture or stay in a dorm overnight. You'll only get a true feel for the campus if you're there on a day when classes are in full swing.
- Prepare a list of appropriate questions. Often, your questions tell an interviewer more about you than anything else. Asking how many students attend the college, for example, tells the admission officer that you haven't done your homework. On the other hand, insightful questions show that you've thought seriously about the college and your own needs. Here are a few examples of good questions:
 1. Who teaches classes to undergraduate students (professors or teaching assistants)?
 2. What kinds of research opportunities are available to undergraduates?
 3. What do current students seem to like most/least about this college?
 4. What percentage of students come back after freshman year?
 5. Can you tell me about _____program/major?
 6. What social options are available if I don't join a fraternity/sorority?
 7. What campus issues are students talking about this year?
 8. How involved are students in extracurricular activities? Do most students stay on campus during the weekends?
- Prepare your activities resume, transcripts, and test scores.
- Be specific about who you want to see while there. You may want to meet with a faculty member, admission representative, or financial aid counselor. If you're curious about a club, program, or a sport, arrange to attend a practice, rehearsal, or meeting.
- Get good directions to campus
- Review the school's literature before the visit. It's important to know something about the college before you arrive on its campus, especially if you have an interview scheduled. Review the school's view books, course catalogs, and any other information of interest. Spend some time surfing the college's website.
- Take your parents
- Be prepared to talk about yourself.
- Plan enough time between college stops.
- Wear good walking shoes and dress appropriately
- Learn about admissions, graduation, and placement rates.
- Use the College Scorecard to summarize your visit (collegescorecard.ed.gov)