

# The Common Application

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Source: [CA Application Guide](#)

# What is Common App?

Each year, more than 1 million students apply to more than 900 [Common App](#) member colleges worldwide through their online college application platform. Learn more by following their step-by-step guide below. Not sure which application(s) your college uses? Each college lists their application platforms under the admission tab on their website.

## Steps to the Common App:

- ▶ 1. Gather materials
- ▶ 2. Create an account
- ▶ 3. Add colleges
- ▶ 4. Engage supporters
- ▶ 5. Understanding requirements
- ▶ 6. Plan essays
- ▶ 7. Submit your application



# Step One: Gather Materials

Gather the information you'll need to complete your applications. Filling out your application takes time. And if you have to keep interrupting your progress to find information, like a certificate for a continuing education course or the address of your last internship, it can take even longer. Get a head start by collecting this information before you begin.

- ▶ A copy of your high school transcript (Sapphire)
- ▶ Senior year schedule (Sapphire - August 15, 2022)
- ▶ A list of your activities, work, and family responsibilities (Naviance)
- ▶ Test scores and dates from your college entrance exams (SAT's, ACT's, etc.)
- ▶ Parent/Legal guardian information
- ▶ Academic honors and achievements

# Step Two: Create An Account

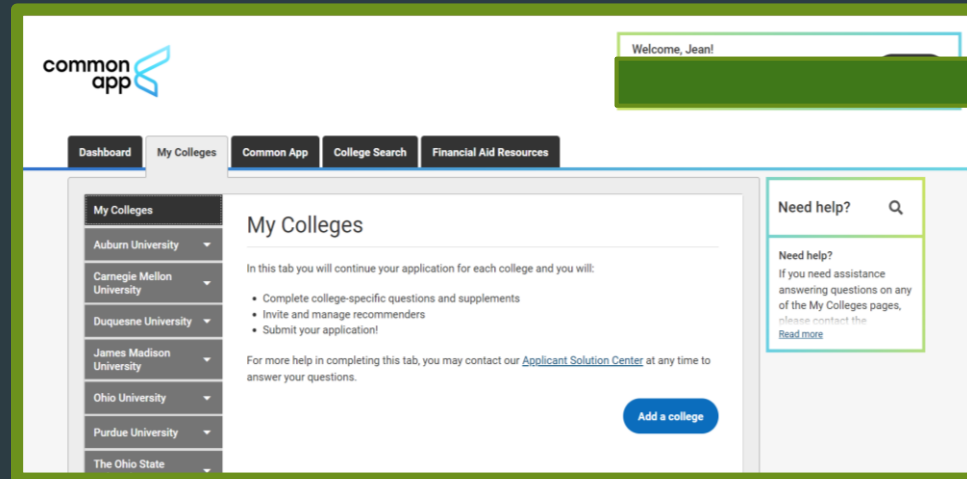
Create an account: <https://apply.commonapp.org/createaccount>

- ▶ Choose your registration type.
  - ▶ If you are applying to college for the first time you'll select the "First Year Student".
- ▶ Provide your login credentials.
  - ▶ Make sure you use an email address you check often. This is the email the Common App and colleges will use to get in touch with you. **DO NOT USE YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT EMAIL.**
- ▶ Complete your registration information.
- ▶ The CA will need some basic information about you like your name, home address, phone number, and date of birth.
- ▶ Be sure to use your legal name as it appears on official school documents and standardized tests. This will make sure colleges can match documents to the correct person.
- ▶ At the end, you will adjust your communication preferences and accept the Common App privacy policy.
- ▶ Select "Create Account" to complete your account.

# Step Three: Add Colleges

The College Search tab is where you will search for and add the colleges you want to apply to. If you have a school in mind you can search by name. If you want to keep exploring, you can use the more filters button. Some filters include:

- ▶ State or country
- ▶ Distance from a zip code
- ▶ Enrollment term
- ▶ Application deadline
- ▶ Application fees\*
- ▶ Writing requirements
- ▶ Standardized testing policy
- ▶ Recommendation requirement
- ▶ Adding a college is easy! You may add a college using the add button in the search results list. You can also select a college and add them using the "Add to My Colleges" button from their info screen.
- ▶ Once you've added colleges, you can see them on your Dashboard and in your My Colleges tab. Keep in mind you may only add up to 20 colleges. You may adjust your list of colleges at any time. Once you've submitted, you will not be able to remove those schools from your My Colleges list.



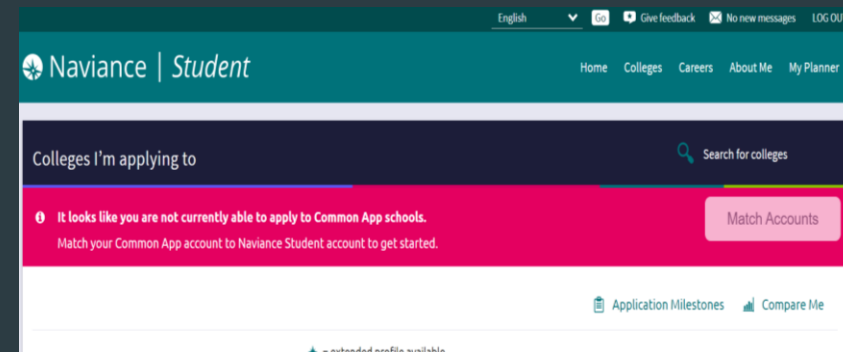
# Matching Common App and Naviance

After creating your Common App account:

- ▶ Complete the Profile, Family and Education section under Common App
- ▶ Add at least one college to your list using College Search
- ▶ Complete the FERPA Release under My Colleges

Naviance:

- ▶ Select “Match Accounts” under Colleges I’m Applying To
- ▶ Review matching [video](#) for help
- ▶ Click “I agree”
- ▶ CA colleges will appear in Naviance



# Step Four: Engage Supporters

All colleges need things like official school forms. Some colleges will also ask for letters of recommendation. Every college gets to choose their own recommendation requirements. You can find more details on each college's "College Information" page.

- ▶ Counselors, teachers, and recommenders will submit these kinds of forms on your behalf. PRHS uses **Naviance** to send counselor and teacher letters of recommendation to college. **DO NOT invite your counselor or teacher through the Common App!**
- ▶ Counselors: Counselors share their perspective using the context of the entire graduating class. They also submit the School Report and transcripts. Please follow our [directions](#).
- ▶ Parents: Parents will only need to submit a form if you apply using a college's early decision deadline. They will fill out part of your early decision agreement.
- ▶ Teachers: Teachers give a firsthand account of your intellectual curiosity and creative thought.
- ▶ Other Recommenders: Other recommenders are usually non academic recommenders like coaches, employers, and peers. They give insight into your interests and activities outside of the classroom. Invite other recommenders through the Common App.

# Step Five: Understanding Requirements

Each college needs you to complete common questions. Beyond that their applications vary. Each college can determine their unique requirements for:

- ▶ Deadlines
- ▶ Application Fees
- ▶ Personal Essay
- ▶ Courses & Grades
- ▶ Test Policy
- ▶ Portfolio
- ▶ Writing Supplements
- ▶ Recommendations
- ▶ Require completion of the SRAR (Self-Reported Academic Record)



# Step Six: Plan Essays

Organize and plan for your writing prompts. Sometimes writing essays can feel like the biggest part of your application. With a little bit of planning, organizing, and drafting, CA can help you make this task more manageable. As you work on your applications you can find essays or short answer questions in three sections:

- ▶ **Common App Personal Essay:** Colleges can either make the personal essay optional or required. In the writing section of your Common App tab, you will see a table that lists each college's requirements.
- ▶ **College-specific questions:** Many colleges include short answer questions or essay prompts within this section. You can find specific information about each college's individual writing prompts [here](#).
- ▶ **Writing supplements:** Some colleges use a separate writing supplement. Not all colleges have a writing supplement. Some colleges only request this supplement based on how you answer other questions. You can find more information about writing supplements on the Dashboard or your My Colleges tab.

# Essay Questions for 2022-2023

Essay Prompts: Click [here](#) to access essay prompts and help guide.

Optional question. Response length max is 250 words.

*“Community disruptions such as COVID-19 and natural disasters can have deep and long-lasting impacts. If you need it, this space is yours to describe those impacts. Colleges care about the effects on your health and well-being, safety, family circumstances, future plans, and education, including access to reliable technology and quiet study spaces.*

- ▶ *Do you wish to share anything on this topic? Y/N*
- ▶ *Please use this space to describe how these events have impacted you.”*

# Step Seven: Submit Your Application

Review and submit your application.

- ▶ Submission is a three-step process:
  - ▶ Reviewing your application.
  - ▶ Paying the application fee.\*
    - ▶ Your application is not complete without paying the application fee.
  - ▶ Submitting your application.

# Helpful Hints

- ▶ **Do not** use school district email
- ▶ Proof read your application
- ▶ Print out a copy
- ▶ Watch for different deadline dates for applications and scholarships
- ▶ Not every school will require the personal essay
- ▶ Most schools will require additional specific info
- ▶ You have to submit to each individual school in Common App
- ▶ Mobile friendly
- ▶ Schools will not know the other schools you have applied to
- ▶ Schools will not have access to your full info until you submit
- ▶ Schools do not read teacher letters until YOU have submitted your CA
- ▶ Don't procrastinate!
  - ▶ College admissions can tell when you procrastinate.
  - ▶ You might make a mistake.

# Resources

- ▶ Common App Help:
  - ▶ What are the hours for student chat?
  - ▶ You are able to chat with CA Help - Monday-Friday, 12pm-8pm Eastern Time\* (excluding holidays) from October - January.
  - ▶ Common App Family Resources: <https://www.commonapp.org/family>
- ▶ [Collegewise Guide to Common App](#)
- ▶ Common App Help Sheet
- ▶ College and/or school counselor
- ▶ College admission office (email, call or attend a PR visit)
- ▶ [Ms. Duffy](#) and/or [Mrs. Erlain](#)

Questions?

