What's Applying to College Like?

Applying to college can be both exciting and daunting. You'll need to manage several components, including filling out applications, writing essays, submitting standardized test scores, and securing recommendations. The process demands organization and attention to deadlines, typically beginning in your junior year and extending into your senior fall.

What Should I Start Doing Now to Prepare for College Applications?

To prepare, start by:

- **Researching Potential Colleges**: Identify colleges that match your academic and personal preferences.
- **Preparing for Standardized Tests**: Schedule and prepare for the SAT or ACT.
- **Building a Strong Academic and Extracurricular Profile**: Maintain good grades and engage in activities that interest you.
- **Drafting a Resume**: Compile your academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and any work or volunteer experience.

How Do Teacher Recommendations Work, and When Should I Start Asking for Them?

Teacher recommendations are crucial as they provide colleges with insights into your academic abilities and character. Choose teachers who know you well and can speak to your strengths. Ideally, ask for recommendations at the end of your junior year or the very beginning of your senior year, giving teachers plenty of time to write a thoughtful letter.

What are College Visits Like? What Questions Should I Ask?

College visits are your opportunity to get a feel for the campus culture and environment. They can be structured with guided tours, information sessions, and sometimes class visits. When visiting, ask questions like:

- **What are the strengths of your academic programs?**
- **What support services are available for students?**
- **How do students typically spend weekends?**
- **What are the housing options and policies?**
- **Can you tell me about internship or employment opportunities post-graduation?**

Asking these questions can help you determine if the college fits your academic and personal needs, making the application process more targeted and effective.