

Making the Most of Your College Visits

Name of College Night

Name
Title
Office
School



General

The college visit is an opportunity to learn about a college beyond what's advertised in its glossy brochures. It's also an opportunity to get a sense for the intangibles.

While the final decision as to where a student will go to college should involve the entire family, the college admission process should be led by the student. College visits, in particular, are a great way for the student to show his or her independence and readiness for college.



Types of Visits

- ❑ Admission interview
- ❑ Self-guided visit
- ❑ Off-campus reception
- ❑ Information session
- ❑ Campus tour
- ❑ Open house



When to Visit

- It is generally not best to visit campus...
 - During college breaks and holidays
 - Over the weekend
 - During finals
 - During summer
 - Right before an admission deadline
- It is generally best to visit campus...
 - During spirit week, a big game, or another big campus event
 - At the end of junior year or beginning of senior year
 - During cold-weather months (for winter-weather schools)



Local and Far-Away Visits

- Local
 - You should try visit every school to which you are applying that is within a three hour drive.
- Far-Away
 - It is sometimes best to wait until you have already been admitted to visit a far-away school.
 - If you are going to visit far-away schools pre-admission, plan to spend a whole week doing so (road trip!)
 - You should attend the school's reception in your area, if one is offered.
 - If you cannot visit a school or attend a reception pre-admission, show your interest with a brief email to your admission counselor.



Call Ahead

- Call ahead if you want to...
 - Attend a prospective student program
 - Schedule a meeting with an academic representative or admission counselor
 - Sit in on a class
 - Visit a dorm
 - Receive any special accommodations



Do Research

- Know the basic facts about the school including...
 - The location
 - The size of the student body
 - What type of school it is (private, public, liberal arts, research, etc.)
 - Whether it offers your major
 - Whether it has programs to support any special interests or special needs you have
 - Basic admission information



Get Organized

- He or she should also create a visit binder that includes:
 - Appointment confirmations
 - College information and evaluation form
 - College map
 - College mission statement
 - Directions

During the Visit

To Do

- ❑ Arrive early
- ❑ Wear comfortable clothing and shoes
- ❑ Ask lots of questions that show you are informed
- ❑ Be courteous and respectful
- ❑ Take pictures
- ❑ Pick-up business cards and literature on special programs

Not To Do

- ❑ Wear another college's shirt or sweatshirt
- ❑ Ask questions that are not relevant to the larger group (i.e. do you have an intramural all-women's ice hockey team?)
- ❑ Let your parents ask your questions for you
- ❑ Buy expensive apparel from each college you visit



Enhancing the Visit

- ❑ Visit the campus center
- ❑ Read the school newspaper
- ❑ Check-out the bulletin boards
- ❑ Meet up with a current student (spend the night?)
- ❑ Walk around separate from your tour
- ❑ Visit on-campus libraries, museums, or performance venues
- ❑ Eat in the main dining facility
- ❑ Visit the religious or multicultural center
- ❑ Attend an event (i.e. concert or lecture)
- ❑ Walk or drive around the neighborhood



After the Visit

- Fill out the evaluation form
- Send a thank you note, if appropriate
- Try not to compare your thoughts with friends



Final Thoughts

- ❑ Have fun but make sure you get all the information you need. This might be your one chance to do so.
- ❑ Focus on your connection with the school, not just with the professional staff members you encounter.
- ❑ Trust your gut. If it doesn't feel right, it's probably not the place for you.
- ❑ Always put your best foot forward.



Questions?

Name

Title

School

Email

Phone