

**Topic:** Ambassador-Life Skills

**Badge:** College Knowledge

**Suggested Supplies:**

- Coloring and Decorating Materials
- Access to the internet
- A planner or paper calendar
- paper



**Helpful websites:** (Have adult permission to go online)

**CollegeLab-**

[https://girlscouts.collegelab.org/?utm\\_campaign=CollegeLab&utm\\_medium=Web\\_GirlScoutsatHome&utm\\_source=GirlScoutsatHome](https://girlscouts.collegelab.org/?utm_campaign=CollegeLab&utm_medium=Web_GirlScoutsatHome&utm_source=GirlScoutsatHome)

**Big Future-** <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>

**Girl Scout Scholarships-** <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/our-program/scholarships.All.All.html>

**Scholarships-** <https://www.scholarships.com/>

## Step 1: Explore the Options

There are many different schools in the country and even more internationally and each one provides a different experience than the next. Your goal is to find a handful that best align with your wants and needs.

Maybe you have a few colleges in mind, maybe you are just starting this journey. In this activity, you will research at least 3 colleges you are interested in attending. Visit CollegeLab-[Click Here](#) (Free Access for Girl Scouts) or Big Future to complete this search.

On a piece of paper, create a 3-column chart for each school. The first column will be designated for pros, the second for neutral interesting facts, and the second for cons. Spend time combing through each of the schools' websites and other affiliated information to put together as complete of a picture as you can. During your search make sure you include information such as tuition costs, University vs. Community College, In State vs. Out of State, majors that they support, etc. Through this process, you will be able look past your initial impressions and be able to compare schools based on what you want out of your college experience

For more information on how Collegelab works watch this video. <https://fb.watch/1Z5gN51FLq/>

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At our meeting you will share your top 3 choices/matches and what you like most about that school.

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## Step 2: The Admissions Process

Now that you have looked at what colleges we might want to attend, let's look at the admissions process.

There are several steps to the application and again, each college requires different things. What you will need is your high school transcripts and to fill out the basic application form that can be found on the school's website.

Those are the base requirements, but some schools may ask you to write an essay and some also ask for interviews.

Colleges use essays and interviews to gain the same information from you, just in different formats. An interview has the benefit of giving you the chance to ask questions about the university to get a better idea if it is the right fit for YOU. Interviews are primarily used by highly selective or small private colleges.

Now you will practice how an interview would go. Find a friend or family member and have them ask you the questions below.

Tell me about yourself

Why are you interested in this college?

What are your academic strengths?

What are your academic weaknesses? Have you addressed them?

What would you change about your high school?

What do you want to major in? Why did you choose that major?

What do you plan to contribute to this school?

What do you expect to be doing 10 years from now?

Whom do you admire?

Why do you want to go to college?

What do you like to do for fun?

What is your favorite book?

What is an obstacle you have faced and how did you get through it?

What makes you unique?

While you may not every have an in-person interview, it is still a good skill to have in your back pocket. Essays also typically ask similar questions, just in written format

### **Step 3: Make a Financial Plan**

Higher education is exciting and beneficial in many ways, but it can also be very expensive. The full "sticker price" of a four-year college or university is out of reach for many families. The good news is the that some schools cost less than others- and there are ways to save money and help pay for tuition and other expenses. In this step, look into the cost of higher education and find out how you might receive financial assistance.

The cost of a college education can look overwhelming at first, but there are many options available for financial aid. Financial Aid is a blanket term used to describe money that can help pay for college. It included money that comes from the government and other organizations in the form of grants, scholarships, loans or work study programs.

## **Financial Aid 101**

**Grants** do not have to be paid back. This money comes from the state or federal government or the college itself. The amount is usually need-based, meaning it is awarded based on the student's financial circumstances.

**Scholarships** awarded by governments, colleges or private organizations. Like grants, they do not have to be paid back. They may be given to students who excel in academic or athletics or are part of a particular organization or demographic. Scholarships may be a one-time gift or ongoing throughout your education.

**Loans** are borrowed money. When you take out loans, they must eventually be paid back-with interest. (That means you end up paying back more than you borrowed.) Students with financial need may be awarded low-interest loans from the federal government.

**Work-Study** programs are paid part-time jobs (typically on campus) provided to students based on financial need. These funds are usually shared directly with the student as a paycheck.

Regardless of your family's financial circumstances, you'll want to start the financial aid process by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) You can submit it starting October 1 of the year before you'll be attending college. This application covers state and federal grants, work study, and loans. Individual colleges and universities may have their own forms that you'll need to submit, too.

## **Scholarship Activity**

Are you highly ranked in your class? Are you an athlete? Are you the daughter of a veteran? Can you make a prom dress out of duct tape? There are special scholarship opportunities available just for Girl Scouts, too.

Look over the lists on a few scholarship websites and apply for at least one scholarship. Have a family member or teacher look over your application before you submit it.

### **Step 4: Get Set for Success**

Maybe you're an honor student who always prioritizes studying over fun, or maybe you have some room for growth in the study habits department. Either way, you'll be starting with a fresh academic slate on your first day of college, and the changes in your environment can challenge you in unexpected ways.

**Plan for academic integrity.** As a Girl Scout, you know all about being "honest and fair." However, college academic demands and deadlines may tempt even the most honest student to cut corners. Academic integrity means *never* plagiarizing, cheating or, misquoting information. Colleges and universities take this very seriously. Choose one of the schools you are interested in and review their Academic Integrity Code. Talk about what you've read with a teacher, troop leader or another adult. Was any information new or surprising to you? How would you handle it if you saw a fellow student going against the code of your new school?

## Step 5: Building Healthy Habits

College is a different ball game than high school because you are your own advocate. You set your own schedule, and no one is going to hold you to that except you. Plan to succeed by creating a practice calendar. Look at a traditional freshman student course load then create a mock calendar for yourself.

- Choose an area of Study (<https://www.uco.edu/programs>)
- Look at University Core (<https://www.uco.edu/academic-affairs/files/ug-catalog/university-core.pdf>)
- Look online for an example of a course catalogue to help you schedule your classes. (<https://ssbstureg.uco.edu/StudentRegistrationSsb/ssb/registration>)
- Schedule yourself as though we are going to school full time with a 15 credit hour load.

### Things to Remember:

- On the course catalogue, the school will have listed what time each class meets as well as how many credit hours it is worth. When scheduling, make sure you leave enough time between your classes to make it from one building to the next. Don't stress yourself out by forcing yourself to run from one side of campus to the other in a 5 minute window.
- Include time for lunch during midday
- Block out some homework time in the afternoon
- Schedule some time to do things you enjoy and help you keep calm
- Do you have a job? When will you work?

**\*Once completed, this badge can be purchased at the GSWESTOK Girl Scout shop for \$3.00.**