

How to Find Out What a College Wants

Before you apply, it's smart to learn what a college wants in a student. The more you can show you are that student, the better your chances.

"Do I have what it takes to get in?" Answers to this question might seem tough to find. But clues are sitting out in plain view. You just need to know where to look and who to ask.

Ask the College What it Wants

Contact your college rep. Most colleges have admission staff who interact with potential applicants. These representatives can look at your qualifications and talents and see how you match up with the qualities they look for in an applicant. To get the name of your representative, call the college or ask your counselor.

Reach out via social media. Check out blogs and Facebook pages the college admission office maintains. You can post questions for admission staff and current students. Many admission offices are raising the curtain on the admission process and are happy to provide answers—and get to know you.

Ask People Who Have the Inside Scoop

Meet with your high school counselor. A visit to the counseling office might yield information about the qualifications that specific colleges consider important, especially colleges often attended by students from your high school. Your counselor can also help you interpret information you have received from a college and suggest ways to improve your qualifications.

Talk to current college students. Students attending your favorite campuses can help you understand what it takes to thrive at those colleges. To find these people, ask your counselor, family friends, and your own friends who may have siblings in these colleges.

Ask CollegeData

Look at the facts about who gets in. Each of CollegeData's [College Profiles](#) display priority admission factors and average GPA and test scores from recently admitted classes. Looking over the college's admission requirements will also give you a sense of what it takes to get admitted.

Find out more about admitted students. Using the [Admissions Tracker](#), you can check out the test scores and GPAs of students who were accepted, denied, and waitlisted to many colleges.

What's Next?

- Learn more about the top priorities of college admission offices from [What Matters Most to Colleges](#).
- Visit our [Road to College Student Stories](#)—true stories as told by recently admitted college students. Learn how they found out what their colleges wanted most in applicants.



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