

Questions about getting your money's worth

Questions that help you picture your years in college

A big question about how many years you might spend in school

Insights and info from College Money Matters – a non-profit organization dedicated to helping high school students and their families make informed decisions about applying, choosing and paying for college.



Some less obvious things you might want to think about when choosing a college

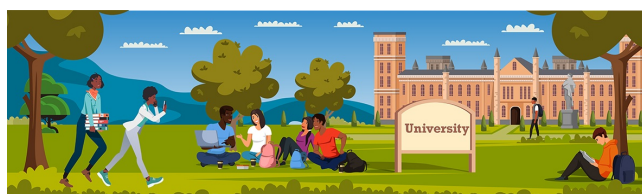
There's a lot that goes into deciding which college is best for you. Maybe one has a great location, another a big name, and yet another was the choice of friends or family. And of course, there's the matter of how much it costs for tuition, room and meal plan.

It's a major decision, and while you may know some of the big questions to ask, we've put together a list of important questions that go beyond the obvious ones. More than that, we've also provided some good places to start finding the answers.

So take a good look through this month's newsletter – and learn more about what you need to know *before* you make that big decision on where to attend.

Topic 1: Will I get my money's worth?

| Questions to ask yourself | Where to find the answer |
|---|---|
| What kind of financial aid might I qualify for? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit: www.tuitionfit.org Talk with students who graduated from your high school in the past few years |
| I know I should avoid for-profit colleges, but how do I know if I'm applying to one or not? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_for-profit_universities_and_colleges |
| Am I choosing a college for the right reasons? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit: www.collegemoneymatters.org/are-more-expensive-schools-really-better/ |
| Will I have to work in order to afford this school? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit: www.collegemoneymatters.org/does-it-pay-to-work-while-youre-in-school/ |
| Will I make more with a degree from this college than the average high school grad? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit: www.thirdway.org/graphic/rating-colleges-by-economic-mobility |




Topic 2: What will my years in college be like?

| Questions to ask yourself | Where to find the answer |
|--|---|
| What if I need tutoring services or other academic or social support while I'm attending this school? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While you're visiting a college, talk with any or all of the following: students who go there, your tour guides, the admissions officers. Visit: the college website |
| Will I feel comfortable there? <i>This is a bigger issue than you might think. The two main reasons people drop out of college are because they either run out of money or they feel they don't fit in.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk with students who live on campus or people who recently graduated from the school. Find out how they spend their spare time... and if they have any spare time |
| How safe is it to go to this school? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit: nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator, type in the name of the college, then click on Campus Security and Safety. |
| Does the school have the programs I want? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit the College Scorecard Programs Page here, and choose the type of program in the "Search by Field of Study" search bar. All the schools offering that program will appear. You can then arrange them by using the Sort button next to Results. |



Topic 3: How long will it take to graduate?

| Questions to ask yourself | Where to find the answer |
|--|---|
| <p>How many students get their undergraduate degree in 4 years?</p> <p><i>The more years you spend in college, the more years you'll have to pay for. So it's in your best interests to choose a college where 60% to 100% of the students graduate within 4 years.</i></p> | <p>For the statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go to the College Navigator site and enter the name of the school. When the page opens, click on the school name, then click on "Retention and Graduation rates." Go to the College Scorecard site here, and enter the name of the school at "Search by Name." Then scroll down in the white column and select "Graduation Rate." <p>For background information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit: www.collegemoneymatters.org/the-more-years-you-spend-in-college-the-more-you-have-to-pay/ Visit: www.collegemoneymatters.org/will-your-college-help-you-finish-in-4-years/ |



No interest but yours

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Your contribution will help more families take a more affordable approach to college.

Click here to donate now.

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