

EARLY DECISION (ED) AND EARLY ACTION (EA)

From College Board:

ED applicants

- Apply early (usually in November) to first-choice college.
- Receive an admission decision from the college well in advance of the usual notification date (usually by December).
- Agree to attend the college if accepted and offered a financial aid package that is considered adequate by the family.
- Apply to only one college early decision.
- Apply to other colleges under regular admission plans.
- Withdraw all other applications if accepted by ED.
- Send a nonrefundable deposit well in advance of May 1.

EA applicants

- Apply early.
- Receive an admission decision early in the admission cycle (usually in January or February).
- Consider acceptance offer; do not have to commit upon receipt.
- Apply to other colleges under regular admission plans.
- Give the college a decision no later than the May 1 national response date.

Who should apply early?

Applying to an ED or EA plan is most appropriate for a student who:

- Has researched colleges extensively.
- Is absolutely sure that the college is the first choice.
- Has found a college that is a strong match academically, socially, and geographically.
- Meets or exceeds the admission profile for the college for SAT® scores, GPA, and class rank.
- Has an academic record that has been consistently solid over time.

Applying to an ED or EA plan is not appropriate for a student who:

- Has not thoroughly researched colleges.
- Is applying early just to avoid stress and paperwork.
- Is not fully committed to attending the college.
- Is applying early only because friends are.
- Needs a strong senior fall semester to bring grades up.