

A grayscale photograph of a young woman with dark hair and bangs, smiling broadly. She is wearing a plaid shirt over a white t-shirt and has a black backpack strap visible over her right shoulder. She is holding a stack of books in her left arm and has her right fist clenched in a celebratory gesture.

Are You Ready for Regular Decision Submission? A Checklist

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If you're on this e-resource, you either haven't applied early to colleges—or your luck didn't fare well with your early school. Regardless, don't spend too much time feeling anxious about where you went wrong or what awaits you. It's time to put all your nervous energy into completing your regular decision applications and making sure you present your best self. Follow the checklist below to cross off everything in order to ensure admissions officers see what makes you a wonderful candidate.

If you didn't get into your early decision/early action school, consider whether you aimed too high. Revise your school list and add a couple of safety and target options.
Don't spend too much time wondering why you didn't get in—concentrate on getting all your RD applications ready.
Read over your personal statement and make any small edits that you believe might have made a difference
Update your activities list to make sure it reflects the latest updates from your extracurricular involvements.
If you have received any honors since applying early, don't forget to include that in your application
Go over the supplemental requirements for your schools both on the college website and on the Common App—sometimes the Common App has hidden essays that don't always show up on the websites!
Make a spreadsheet to keep track of all the essays you have to write.
Don't forget to allow yourself time to research components of each school that you will highlight in your essays.
Give yourself internal deadlines so that you don't find yourself scrambling until the last minute.
Make sure that you have adapted each essay to fit the prompt for each individual school.
Triple check to make sure that you haven't mentioned the wrong school in your supplemental responses.
If a school tracks demonstrated interest, make sure that you've attended information sessions, campus tours, emailed regional representatives, etc.
If you have added information sessions and campus tours, adding them to your essays would be a good way to identify the ways through which you've made an effort to go the extra mile in learning more about the school.
Have a second set of eyes take a look at your applications. A parent or teacher could spot easily fixable mistakes that you might not have noticed.