

A black and white photograph of a young woman with long dark hair, wearing a graduation cap and gown. She is smiling and resting her chin on her hand. She is sitting on a stack of several books. The background is a plain, light color.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT COLLEGE MAJOR

A Checklist

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As you're applying to colleges, there are a lot of different decisions to make. One of these is thinking about what you want to major in. While the major you select on the Common Application isn't set in stone (unless you're applying to a specific school within a university, and even then you can change your major within the school itself), it's helpful for your admissions officers to see what you've chosen as your major so that they can evaluate your application accordingly.

Since it's a big decision, deciding on your major might be difficult. To guide you through the process, we've provided you with the checklist below with different points to consider as you choose the right college major.

	Consider your primary academic interests—think about which classes you've enjoyed the most and what subjects you can see yourself pursuing over the next four years.
	Think about where your talents lie. Are you particularly stronger in one area over others?
	Consider what kind of career you see yourself pursuing in the future. Are you motivated by a certain cause in your community, a passion for a certain group of people, or a desire to reach a particular goal?
	Think about your niche interest within the field.
	Look through the different departments, courses, and major offerings at each of the schools you're applying to.
	Understand how different colleges have separated subjects and topics within your chosen field. Feel free to list separate majors for your different schools. If one of your colleges has "Biology," but another has a more specific "Molecular Biology" and that's your specific interest, you should list the latter for schools where it's applicable.
	Think about whether you would still enjoy the topics within the subject years from now.
	Research the career options and employment rates for graduates of the different majors you're considering.
	Take a look at where alumni from the colleges on your list who graduated with the same major work or study now.
	If graduate school, law school, medical school, or an MBA is a future plan for you, consider what major would benefit you for succeeding in that route four or more years from now.

	Consider what the schools on your list are known for. If you're a humanities-focused student, don't apply primarily to STEM schools.
	Consider your application persona. If your profile demonstrates that you're a STEM-focused student, don't put "History" as your primary choice of major.
	Try to pick a major that captures the depth of your talents, for example don't just pick "Music" as your major if the school you're applying to has more in-depth categories such as "Music: Vocal" or "Music: Violin."
	Speak with your high school guidance counselor about your options and what they think might be the right plan for you.
	Don't select "undecided" when you fill out the Common App. Even if you might be undecided, you have certain areas which interest you. Depending on the school you will have the option to change your once you're in college, so don't worry too much.
✓	If you have two interests that don't seemingly connect to each other, such as creative writing and physics, consider a double major.
✓	If you have a subject you're slightly less interested in, you can always list it—or eventually pursue it—as a minor.

Remember, indecisiveness doesn't look good on an application. Even if you might not know exactly which school or which major the future holds for you, you definitely have your interests, strengths, and goals. Use these to guide you through finding the perfect major for you. Hopefully, your courses, activities, and essays support your choice and help admissions officers understand how you would fit into the classroom and contribute to the classroom. Good luck!