

College Visits

“One look is worth a thousand words.”

~Fred R. Barnard

Once you have a list of colleges that seem to match your criteria on paper, it is time to hit the road and visit them. Each college campus has its own personality and it is highly recommended you visit to see how well it matches yours. We cannot tell you how many times students have come back from a college they really liked on paper and then listed all the things that they did not like about it in person. Then, there are many times that students visit a college not even on their list or last on their list, only to find that they loved it when they visited! It is a unique experience for everyone. Although your intuition will be important as you walk around campus, there are still many things you need to do to get the most out of your college visit. After all, this is a place where you will be spending A LOT of time over the next two or four years, and you wouldn't buy a car without test driving it, would you?

There are many things that you can do on a campus visit – sometimes so many things that you may want to go back a time or two to really get a feel for the college. Obviously, this is easier the closer the college is to you but no matter the distance, we still recommend that you visit. Something to consider if you are saying that you can't afford to visit a school on your list: If you can't afford to visit now, how will you be able to afford to come home for holiday breaks (the dorms are usually closed), or for an important weekend? These are all things to consider when looking at colleges.

OK, before you just hop in the car and start visiting, do some planning.

Things to Consider When Planning Your Visits and Interviews

- Visit even if you are undecided about a major.
- Go onto each college's website and see if they have Open House Dates or Tour Times listed (probably on the Undergraduate Admissions or Prospective Students page).
- Does the college require an interview?
- Are two of your schools close enough to each other to visit in one day or at least over two days with just one night away?
- Do you want to sit in on a class or meet individually with anyone on campus i.e. an Admissions Counselor, Financial Aid Advisor, Coach (see pg 38 for NCAA info), Faculty Member or Department Head for your major?