

Finding the Right Fit

Don't pass up the chance to get an up-close-and-personal look at college life

By Lauren Cockburn

In trying to decide on a college, one of the most valuable experiences you will have in the process will be touring the different campuses.

When scheduling a campus tour, be strategic in your planning. Some colleges have specific visit weekends when they have special programs planned and arrangements made for visiting students. It is often easier to learn about all the different features a college highlights during one of these visits. However, dropping in on a college is also fine and can be just as productive if you know

Scheduling a Visit

It's best to visit colleges and universities during a normal school day in order to get a true reading for what a typical day is like. On the flip side, avoid major campus events (such as graduation) as well as three-day weekends and scheduled open houses, when it will be more crowded. If you have to visit on the weekend, plan in advance to make sure someone is available to give you a tour and provide access to campus buildings.

the correct questions to ask and things to do while you are on campus.

If you are planning to stay at a college overnight versus just touring the campus for a couple of hours, there are some important details that are crucial to keep in mind.

Always apply to stay in one of the dorms. Not only are you able to find out

Emily Harris



valuable information from your temporary roommates, but also you can discover the flavor of the college for yourself, forming your own opinion on whether or not you would be happy living there for the next four years of your life! Try not to eat out, but spend most of your meals in the college cafeteria. It may feel strange to be completely surrounded by a new environment, but you will receive the most benefit by immersing yourself in a college's campus life.

During the actual tour, visit classes you are interested in and meet the professors. Talk to an admission counselor about the different entry requirements. You don't want to be scrambling at the last minute to obtain credit hours in a subject that your high school did not emphasize, but that the college mandates. Come prepared with paper and a pen. Be ready to take notes and write down people's names that you might want to contact later. Also, if you know in advance that you are particularly attracted to a specific field of study, make sure you get a chance to tour that department and its facilities.

Above all, maintain an open, friendly attitude. Go expecting to learn more and leave ready to apply! 📌

Questions to Ask

Academics

- Does this school have strong programs in the areas that interest me? Are the programs accredited?
- Is it hard to change majors?
- What is the student/teacher ratio?
- How many students come back after their freshman year?
- What percentage of graduates find jobs in their field of study?

Campus Life

- Is there plenty of dorm space?
- Does the social scene revolve around fraternities and sororities? Does everyone evacuate on the weekend?
- What kind of meal plan is offered?
- Is the campus safe?
- What kind of recreational opportunities are available?
- What kind of health facilities and services does the college offer?

Finances

- What kind of financial aid does the school offer?
- How easy is it to find a job on campus? Are there work-study programs?
- What kind of refund can you get if you have to drop out?
- Where do freshmen/sophomores/juniors/seniors live?