

## Make your own Top 10 list

It's hard to believe that when you choose a college, you have the possibility of 3,500 two- and four-year colleges and you'll have to select just one to attend. Here are some tips on narrowing down your choices and making your own Top 10 list to work with.

- **Start early** and do a broad college search. You can register for free to use the college search at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). Start thinking about what you like and don't like in a college.
- **Think about** how colleges differ: Four-year, two-year, number of students, location, tuition, majors offered, type of school, student activities, and student support services. What's important to you?
- **Narrow down** colleges by how close or how far away they are from home, by average student GPA, even by majors offered. If you know what you want to study, finding a school that offers a strong program in that major can be more important to you than the prestige of a certain school.
- **Visit** different types of schools so you understand what it's like to be on a campus with 5,000 other students or 25,000 other students, or what it's like to be in the middle of a city or in a small town.
- **Make** your college visits when school is in session. Visit a classroom, talk to professors and students, eat in the cafeteria, stay in a dorm room—experience the college.
- **Take charge** of the search. Work with your parents as a team, but lead the effort, take responsibility, and determine what would be the best choice for you.
- **Be realistic**. Use your time wisely and look only at colleges you think you would really want to attend.
- **Ask** someone working in the field that interests you which schools offer a good foot in the door when starting that career. It's a great way to find out about some colleges you may never have considered.