

SENIOR CHECKLIST

Congratulations! You are officially a senior in high school, which means graduation is getting closer and closer! With that, comes the extra importance of staying on top of your to-do list and completing the necessary tasks to help make your Dakota Dreams come true.

Use this checklist to help get more prepared, and check tasks off your list — Our Dakota Dreams will be by your side every step of the way.



Start your year off right — Visit with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements.



Keep working hard all year — Second semester grades can affect scholarship eligibility.



Ask for personal references from teachers, school counselors, or employers early in the year or at least two weeks before application deadlines.



Follow your school's procedure for requesting recommendations.



Visit with admissions counselors who come to your high school.



Attend a college fair early in the school year



Begin your college essay(s), if you haven't already



If you haven't already, start applying to colleges you wish to attend.



Avoid common college application mistakes — Talk things through with your counselor



Find out if you qualify for [scholarships](#) at each college where you have applied, and apply early.



Start the [financial aid](#) application process — See your counselor for help finding financial aid and scholarships.



Fill out the [FAFSA \(Free Application for Federal Student Aid\)](#), and if you need to, ask for help.



In January, ask your school counselor office to send first semester transcripts to schools where you applied.



In May, they will need to send final transcripts to the college you will attend.



Compare financial aid packages from different schools.



Decision time! Talk it out with friends, family, teachers, and your counselor, and decide which college you want to attend.



Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.



Continue to look for scholarship opportunities, and keep track of important deadlines.



Watch the mail for your [Student Aid Report \(SAR\)](#) — it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed.



Make sure your final transcript is sent to the school you will be attending.



Getting a summer job can help pay some of your college expenses.



Figure out your housing situation — Do you plan on living at home or on campus? What are the dorms like? Will you have a roommate?



Make a list of what you will need to take with you for your dorm room.



GRADUATE!