

Narrowing Your College Search

Use this worksheet to guide you through your college search process.

- I. Research schools by visiting your favorite college search website, or try one of the below recommended websites to conduct your college search. Use the “College Search Protocol” for tips on how to navigate these online college search tools.
 - <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>
 - <http://www.collegedata.com/>
 - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search>
- II. Recall that the colleges you apply to should fit you academically, socially, financially. Ask yourself:
 - **Academic Fit:** How do my scores compare to the average incoming freshman? Do I fall below, above, or within the average? Falling too far below or too far above the average is an indicator that the school is *not* an academic fit.
 - **Social Fit:** Are students being promoted from their first year to the next? Are they graduating from the college? These retention rates indicate how well a school serves the needs of its students.
 - **Financial Fit:** *Based on my family’s income*, what is my expected average cost? Are students graduating the college with more than \$20,000 in total debt? A financially fit college will have you owing less at the end of it all.
- III. Record information on college fit in the table below, and then determine if the school is a safety, match, or reach.
 - **Safety:** Your GPA and SAT/ACT scores are above the school's range for the average freshman. You should apply to at least 2 safety schools
 - **Match:** Your GPA and SAT/ACT scores fall within (or even exceed) the school's range for the average freshman. The majority of schools to which you apply should be match schools.
 - **Reach:** Your GPA and SAT/ACT scores fall below the school's range for the average freshman. Reach schools are long shots. You should apply to 2 reach schools
- IV. Use the table on the back of this page as a template for investigating schools to determine if they are a fit for you, and if they belong in your safety, match, or reach category.
 - *For schools that are a fit for you, email their admissions office to request a course catalog.*

School	(Academic Fit)	(Social Fit)	(Financial Fit)	S-M-R
Name:	GPA:	Graduation Rate:	Average Annual Cost:	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Match <input type="checkbox"/> Reach
	SAT/ACT:	% Return After Their First Year:	Typical Total Debt After Graduation:	
	Acceptance Rate:			
Fit? Yes / No				

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