



How To Shine During Your College Interview

The interview is an opportunity for the college admissions representative to get to know you. It is not a test of academic knowledge. It is a way to help the admissions officer learn about you as an individual.

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Do your homework before the interview and learn about the school. Most interviewers will want to know why you're interested in their school. If at all possible, tour the school before interviewing.

When you meet your interviewer, shake hands and maintain eye contact. If you are with your parent(s) or a friend, introduce them to the interviewer. Make sure your parents understand that they are not to accompany you into the interview room. If your parent(s) want to be in the waiting room when your meeting ends so they can ask a question or two, that's OK. Don't have a family discussion in the presence of the interviewer. Don't roll your eyes at something your parent says. That will only show how immature you are, even if you think it's the most stupid thing you ever heard.

Here are some questions you might be asked. Do not memorize answers to these questions. Instead, reflect on the points you would like to make. Think about what the interviewer should know about you, things that might not be apparent on the application, and then think about how you would answer the questions so you can make these points. Always be yourself. If you try to be something you're not it will come across loud and clear. Have a conversation with the interviewer. Get to know the interviewer, be responsive and maintain eye contact. When in doubt, be honest. If you're feeling nervous, it's OK to say so.

Be prepared to talk about your high school experience. Think about words to describe your school and its academic offerings.

Sample Questions

- Tell me about your high school. Are there things you would change if you had the opportunity?
- What have you enjoyed most about your high school years?
- What courses are you taking this year?
- Have any of your courses challenged you? Which ones? How?
- Which courses do you dislike? Why?
- How do you respond to academic competition or pressure?
- How are you involved outside the classroom?
- What achievements have given you satisfaction?
- What programs and activities do you consider essential and why?
- What activities have you found the most satisfying? Why?
- What things do you do well? What are your talents?



Be Prepared to...

Be prepared to talk about college.

- What are you looking forward to most about college?
- What are you looking forward to least about college?
- What are you interested in studying in college?
- Are there any courses/electives that you are interested in studying even though you are not planning to major in that area?
- If you can pick one activity to participate in in college what would it be and why?
- How did you first hear about our college?
- What do you see yourself doing after graduation from college? What do you want to accomplish in the years ahead?
- What are you looking for in a college?
- What do you find most interesting about XXX College? Why do you want to enroll here?
- What would you add to life at XXX College?

Be prepared for tough questions

- What other colleges are you considering? This is a tough question to answer. If the college is your first choice, say so.
- Is there anything else I should know about you? The interview is a good time to introduce ticklish subjects. It is a good time to tell your story, to explain dips in performance or to discuss a learning disability. Always explain the steps you have taken to compensate and how you plan to cope in college.

Be prepared to talk about current events.

- What issues concern you?

Be prepared to talk about yourself.

- What would you consider as your strengths? What strengths would you most like to develop?
- What would you consider as your weaknesses?
- Is this your first interview?
- If you had an extra hour in the day, what would you do?
- Do you have any brothers and sisters? Are you the first to go through the college search process?
- If I could meet your teachers and classmates and ask them to describe you, what would they say? What three adjectives would your best friend use to describe you?
- What do you do for relaxation? For fun?
- How do you spend your summers?
- Do you have a favorite book? What books have you read lately? Is there any book, article or creative work that has had an impact on you?
- Do you have a favorite movie?
- Do you have a favorite magazine?
- What do you like best about yourself?
- How would you describe your family? Your community?
- Is there an author, activity or field you have explored in depth?
- Have you had any stimulating intellectual experiences recently?

Be prepared to ask questions.

- Do you have any questions about XXX College that I may answer?

Always be prepared with at least three questions. Ask intelligent questions. Do not ask questions that you can read the answers to in the view book or on the Internet. You can ask about recent developments on campus, specific majors or even why the interviewer likes the school. You can ask what is distinctive about their school.

Ask the interviewer for a business card. Having the card will help you spell the person's name correctly when sending a thank you note.