

DECISION PLANS: Applying RD, EA, ED, or Rolling Admissions

Regular Decision (RD)

Most students will apply Regular Decision. The regular applications are due on January 1 or later of one's senior year. The college reviews the applications and informs applicants of the decisions in the spring. Students then will need to send in a deposit and agreement to attend by May 1.

Early Action (EA)

This is a non-binding application. If you know you are highly interested in a school that offers Early Action, we suggest you take advantage of it. The application due dates are usually in November or December. Colleges make their decisions more quickly in Early Action than in Regular Decision, but you still will have until May 1 to send in your deposit.

Advantages:

- You may apply to any number of colleges via EA, as you are not bound to attend the school if they accept you. (Exception: some schools have restricted Early Action, meaning you agree to only apply to one school via Early Action.)
- You may find out early that you have been accepted, thus reducing your stress when waiting to hear from other colleges.
- You may find out early what the school is willing to offer vis-à-vis a financial aid package, allowing a point of comparison when you begin to receive other package offers.
- The University of Vermont waives the application fee for Vermont residents who apply EA.
- If you are deferred to the regular pool, you will have a second chance to be considered for the school.

Disadvantages:

- If accepted, it might be easier for you to procrastinate on your other applications. This would severely limit your options.
- If students do not start the application process early, the application may be rushed to complete it by November or December dates.

Early Decision (ED)

When you apply to a school via Early Decision application, you are pledging to attend the school, if accepted. If a school accepts you on an Early Decision application, you must withdraw your application(s) to other schools. Thus, if you have a dream school and you are happy with your grades and test scores, you might consider applying this way. However, if you have any doubts about your college or serious concerns about financial aid, do not use early decision. Only apply ED if you are absolutely convinced there is only one school for you and you believe they will provide you with any needed financial aid. Make sure you know what the ED application deadlines are. (Generally November or December)

Advantages:

- If accepted, you know where you are going for college and are done with the college application process early.
- You may have a slightly better chance of being accepted to a more competitive college if you apply ED than if you apply in the regular pool. Many schools take a fixed percentage of their available spots from the ED applicant pool.
- If you are deferred to the regular pool, you will have a second chance to be considered for the school.

Disadvantages:

- You have signed a contract to attend the college, if accepted. If you were unsure when you applied, you may have made a mistake.
- If the college does not accept you, you won't know until about mid-December. You may then be in a rush to get applications, letters of recommendation, and transcripts out to the other colleges in which you are interested, if you have not been working on these applications.
- Many students grow and change considerably throughout their senior year, and early November is much too soon for most to have made a definitive decision about the college they want to attend. We find many of our students change their mind about where they would most want to attend college throughout their senior year. For most, it is helpful to delay the final decision until as late in the spring as possible.
- The financial aid package offered to you may be inadequate and you will have no other college offers to compare it to.
- You will have had to have taken your SAT/ACT early, certainly at least once during May or June of your junior year.

Rolling Admissions

Certain colleges offer rolling admissions. These colleges fill their vacancies on a first-come, first-served basis. As applications come in, they are reviewed, and all qualified applicants receive an offer of admission--provided that there are spaces available. If the program is a competitive one, the spots may fill up quickly. For example, several Vermont State Colleges offer rolling admissions, but if you are applying to the nursing program, you need to apply early. Also, we recommend sending in your rolling admission application at about the same time as your other applications