

# Finding the Right Fit

When considering colleges, it is important to research your options. This will help you choose a school with features that fit your needs, interests, and talents.

## Consider these factors when comparing schools:

### Size

Colleges range in size. Some might be the size of your high school, while others are the size of a small town!

At a small school, you will likely take classes with 30 or fewer students. Classes at a big school could have as many as 500 students. Many classes at larger colleges are also taught by graduate students.

Big schools often have more services, programs, and activities available. By contrast, small schools may offer more specialized programs and personalized attention.

### Location

Do you want to save money by living at home? Do you want to go home on weekends? Or do you want to be as far away as possible?

Do you want to go to school in an urban area (city/town) where you can use public transit? Or would you prefer a more quiet, rural setting?

These are all questions to consider when thinking about a school's location.

### Culture

Big schools often offer opportunities for joining fraternities or sororities. These schools also may have nationally-recognized sports teams and a culture of school pride.

A smaller school, however, may have a more supportive environment. You can check the school's list of student clubs and organizations to find your niche.

### Programs

Large schools usually offer a wide variety of academic programs. This offers you flexibility if you're not yet sure what you want to study, or if you want to change your major.

If you're interested in something specific, a small school might offer more specialized programs. You also may have the opportunity to work closely with faculty earlier in your education.

# The Perfect Match

## What kinds of schools should I apply to?

Based on your academic record, you should apply to at least **one safety school**, **one reach school**, and **two match schools**. See [page 11](#) to learn how to use fee waivers to cover the cost of your application.

### Safety Schools

#### Schools you are **confident** you will be accepted to

Safety schools may include schools with higher acceptance rates, schools with less selective admissions requirements, or schools where your academic record is stronger than the average admitted student.

Keep in mind: Florida state colleges are “open admission,” meaning that they accept **all** students who apply.

### Match Schools

#### Schools you will **likely** be accepted to

Match schools should be more selective than the safety schools you apply to. At a Match school, your academic record should be similar to that of the average admitted student’s record.

### Reach Schools

#### Schools you **could** be accepted to

Reach schools are institutions that tend to have lower acceptance rates than other schools. At these schools, your academic record may be on the lower end compared to the average admitted student.

## What is my academic record?

There are several factors that impact your academic record, including your average high school **grade point average** (GPA), the **rigor** of the classes you’ve taken (Honors, AP, IB, dual enrollment, etc.), and your **standardized test scores** (ACT, SAT, etc.).