



DEL MAR ADMISSIONS

An elite practice for ambitious students



The Senior Year Timeline

A Month-by-Month Application Roadmap

Everything a senior needs to do, from June through the New Year —
a month ahead of the deadlines, not a day behind them.

FOR THE CLASS OF 2027

SECTION 01

How To Use This Timeline

The seniors who actually enjoy their fall are the ones who did the quiet work over the summer. This roadmap front-loads the heavy lifting — account setup, your personal statement, and mapping out supplements — into June and July, so that when school, activities, testing, and deadlines all arrive at once in October and November, you are editing and submitting rather than starting from a blank page.

Each month below is a short checklist plus the tips and traps we walk our own students through. You do not need to be ahead of every other applicant. You need to be about a month ahead of your deadlines — that single habit removes most of the stress from senior fall.

A note on the dates

Deadlines move by school and by year. Treat every date in this guide as a planning anchor, then confirm each college's exact deadlines on its own admissions page before you build your calendar.

SECTION 02

The Cycle At A Glance

Here is the whole year on one page. Everything after this simply breaks these milestones into a month-by-month plan.

Milestone	Typical timing	Keep in mind
Common App opens	August 1	Cycle rollover; your info carries over.
Final SAT / ACT sittings	Aug – Oct	Last comfortable window before apps close.
FAFSA + CSS Profile open	~ October 1	2027–28 aid forms — file early.
Early Action / Early Decision	~ November 1	Some fall Nov 15; confirm each school.
UC applications due	November 30	Submit window opens October 1.
Regular Decision	Jan 1 / 5 / 15	Exact date varies by school.

The pattern to internalize: **summer is for building and writing**, fall is for supplements and submitting, and financial aid quietly opens in the middle of it all. Miss the summer work and every later month gets heavier.

03 · JUNE

Build The Foundation



Your goal this month is to build the skeleton of your application — everything an admissions officer sees before a single essay — so the writing you do later has somewhere to live.

- **Create your Common App account.** The cycle officially rolls over on August 1, but the account and core information you enter now carry forward.
- **Complete the Profile and Activities sections in full.** Seeing how much you convey before any essay is read is clarifying — and it often surfaces the theme of your personal statement.
- **Start brainstorming your personal essay.** Let the activities you are logging point you toward the story worth telling.
- **Verify your senior courses** against your official transcript, line by line.

Del Mar tip

Never leave an “optional” field blank — each one is free space to add context, and readers treat every section like another page of your story.

Click Preview constantly as you work. It shows the exact PDF an officer will see, so your formatting stays clean. The details are noticed.

04 · JULY

The Personal Statement



With the framework built, July belongs to one thing: getting your main essay into real shape before the supplement flood begins.

- **Draft your personal statement** — the roughly 650-word essay that goes to every school on your list.
- **Revise three or four times, then finalize.** Aim to lock a polished draft by July 31.
- **Keep perspective.** Officers read quickly, and there is no such thing as a perfect essay. Clear, honest, and specific beats endlessly polished.

Rollover & Mapping The Work

August 1 is rollover day, when the Common App updates for the new cycle. This month is about scoping the road ahead so nothing surprises you in October.

- **Build your My Colleges list** now that the new cycle is live (20 schools maximum).
- **Choose your prospective majors**, paying attention to how your interests map onto each school's offerings.
- **Audit for “hidden” supplemental essays.** Open each school's questions and complete the basic fields first.
- **Tally your writing workload.** By August 31, know exactly how many supplements you owe.

Del Mar tip

Read supplement prompts closely for overlap. A strong “why us,” community, or activity essay can often be adapted across several schools — map the reuse before you write a word.

Lock in your testing

If you still need a score, the August and October SAT (and the September/October ACT) are your last comfortable sittings before applications close. Plan so results arrive before your deadlines — and see our *Digital SAT guide* for how many times to sit and what to actually aim for.

Supplements & Recommenders

September is the heavy-lifting month: school-specific writing, and locking in the people who will speak for you.

- **Draft your supplemental essays**, one school at a time, built around a few core anecdotes rather than starting fresh each time.
- **Send recommender invitations** through the Common App to your counselor and teachers early — before their request queue fills up.

Del Mar tip

Mix your recommenders. People who know you in different settings — a teacher, a coach, a mentor, an employer — together paint a fuller, more three-dimensional picture than two versions of the same praise.

07 · OCTOBER

Polish, Early Apps & Aid Opens

The pressure rises. October is for tightening your writing, submitting early applications, and starting financial aid in earnest.

- **Gather outside feedback** from people who read critically — a counselor, a strong-writer friend, or a trusted teacher.
- **Submit your EA/ED applications** through the month. Some schools read on a rolling basis; most highly selective ones begin only after the deadline.
- **Open the FAFSA and CSS Profile.** The 2027–28 aid forms open around October 1 — file early, since some aid is first-come and many schools set October or November priority deadlines.

Watch out

Never submit on deadline day. The Common App reliably slows or crashes under the last-minute crush, and deadlines are 11:59 p.m. in your local time zone — not the school's. Give yourself a two-day buffer.

08 · NOVEMBER

UC Apps & The RD Rhythm

If the University of California is on your list, November shifts to their separate platform — and everyone settles into a steady regular-decision rhythm.

- **Draft your UC Personal Insight Questions**, repurposing material you already wrote for your Common App supplements.
- **Submit your UC application by November 30** (the submission window opens October 1).
- **Set a weekly pace for Regular Decision** so December never becomes a wall — especially if you did not apply anywhere early.

Del Mar tip

UC readers want substance over style. The word counts are short and the prose should not be flowery — get straight to Action → Result → Reflection. Aim to finish one full application per week and protect your holidays.

09 · DECEMBER

RD Submissions & Staying Complete

December is about finishing clean: keep your grades up, confirm nothing is missing, and clear your Regular Decision deadlines before the January crunch.

- **Protect your senior grades.** Many schools request mid-year or first-quarter reports and read them before deciding — senioritis is visible.
- **Check each applicant portal weekly** to confirm no recommendation, transcript, or form is marked missing.
- **Watch your email — and your spam folder —** every few days for interview invitations, aid updates, and missing-material alerts, which are frequently filtered (especially from a school email address).
- **Submit your Regular Decision applications** well before the January 1, 5, and 15 deadlines. Beat the holiday rush rather than joining it.

SECTION 10

Where Del Mar Comes In

A timeline keeps you on schedule; strategy is what makes the applications land. If you would like a second set of expert eyes on the essays, or a plan that ties your testing, activities, and story into one coherent case, we would love to help your student cross the finish line with room to spare.



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