



CONSIDER EARLY DECISION

by the student editors of ***CHOOSE THE RIGHT COLLEGE & GET ACCEPTED!***
a Students Helping Students™ book

If you have a very clear first choice that you feel is a perfect fit for you, Early Decision can be the right way to go. This is how it works:

You get to apply early to the school of your dreams—in most cases, your application has to be in by November 15th. You also get to hear back early, by mid-December, whether you've been accepted, rejected, or deferred to regular decision. Here's the tricky part: By applying Early Decision, you're agreeing in advance to attend that school if you're accepted and you can only apply to one school using this method. You're allowed to apply to other schools under regular application procedures, but if you're accepted by your Early Decision school you must then withdraw your applications from all other colleges.

"I applied Early Decision to Vassar. It was definitely my number one choice. I really wanted to show them that I was 100% interested, so I filled out the Vassar application instead of the common one. I didn't have the best SATs, but I had really good grades and a lot of extracurriculars. When I got accepted, it just confirmed that it was the right place for me to go. It was nice to be able to take a deep sigh and enjoy my senior year."

**Recent Grad,
Vassar College**

According to the College Board, about a quarter of all four-year colleges have some sort of early application program and about 14% of college applicants go this route. The College Board's Web site, **www.CollegeBoard.org**, has a list of colleges that offer either Early Decision or Early Action. There are stats on the number of students who applied this way and were accepted—check it out.

There has been a lot of controversy in recent years about the fairness or lack of fairness of the Early Decision system. Similarly, there are never-ending arguments about just how much better your chances of admission are if you apply early—they are better, but how much better? We're not experts on this and won't go into detail here, but you should discuss this option with your parents and your guidance counselor. Applying Early Decision is a significant commitment.

Many colleges now offer Early Action as an option to applicants. Under this procedure, you apply early, like you do for Early Decision, but if you're accepted at a school, you're not obligated to go there. If you like a certain college but aren't one hundred percent sure that you want to enroll, or need to see what your financial aid packages come out to be, this option might be a good choice for you.

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For more helpful tips and proven strategies from students and recent grads on choosing the right college and acing every aspect of your applications, visit **www.StudentsHelpingStudents.com** and buy the Students Helping Students™ guide titled ***CHOOSE THE RIGHT COLLEGE & GET ACCEPTED!***, available at bookstores and online stores, such as Amazon.com.