What to do before you visit?

Research the University: Use the College Board website ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) or Naviance to begin your search. This will contain an outline of the school’s vital information. It will also have a link to the school’s official website. From here you can get contact information, as well as a list of special programs and a calendar of events. This will help you better plan the timing of the visit. You probably don’t want to visit when the university is crowded (like Homecoming Weekend) or when the school is not in session (Spring Break).

Contact the Admissions Office: Make arrangement with the admissions office to take a guided tour of the school. Most schools have student tour guides to take you around. They can give you a student’s perspective of the campus. You might also make arrangements to sit in a class or two to get a feel for the classroom environment. The admissions office may also make arrangements for an overnight visit in one of the residence halls. Many schools have weekend visits for perspective students. This is great for seeing what life is like on campus. You should also set up an appointment with an admissions counselor. You may be able to meet with a financial aid counselor as well.

Prepare good questions:

For the student Guides: Why did you apply to this school? Is that still true today? Identify what you want to know about college and this school in particular. How does the size of the school feel to you? What is the best thing about being a student here? How do you like the food? What are the dorms like during the week? Weekend? Do most students stay on campus on the weekend? What do you think about the library? What are the hours? How do you like your roommate? Is that typical? What are the sports teams like? How is campus and off campus transportation? Will I need a car? A bike? If you could do it all over again, would you still come to this school? What is the weather like year-round?

For the admissions counselor: Tell me about the admissions requirements. Do you offer (my major)? Is it impacted? How big is the department? Do I need to declare a major on the application? If I decide to go to a community college first, what are the transfer requirements?

For the financial aid counselor: What is the total cost including tuition, room and board, books, supplies, transportation…everything? What is the payment plan like? Are there installment plans? What type of financial aid is offered? Is it need-based? Merit-based? What is the average financial award available?
What to do during the visit?

During the visit you will need to be prompt, ask good questions, sample the food, visit places not on the tour, talk to students on campus. Visit areas around the campus. Is it safe? Convenient? Interesting? Visit areas of campus life that might affect your quality of life. Visit the student union and health center. What kinds of activities or services do they have?

What to do after the visit?

Write a thank you note: Send one to any of the school representatives who gave you assistance, the admissions counselor, financial aid officer, and/or student host.

Write down your impressions: Don’t wait too long. You want to remember how you felt on that campus. Make a pros and cons list.

Don’t stress out: You don’t have to make a decision on where to attend school until after you have been accepted. This just narrows the field of where to apply.