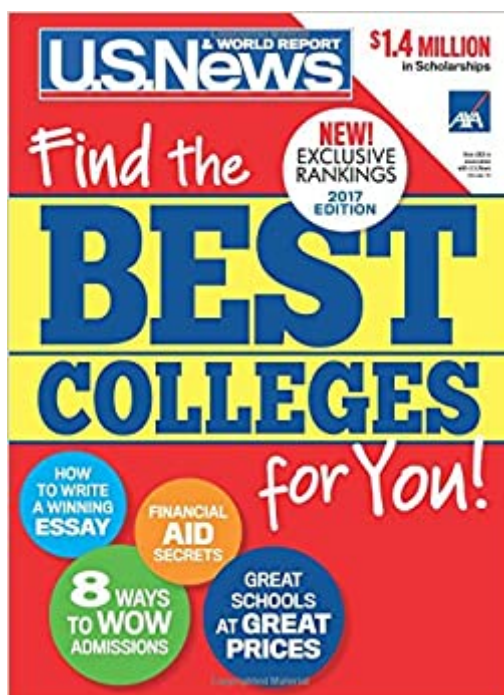


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# Best Colleges 2017: Find The Best Colleges For You!



## Synopsis

The 2017 edition of the U.S. News Best Colleges guidebook offers comprehensive advice for high school students and their families on researching their college choices, drawing up a smart shortlist, putting together a slam-dunk application and finding the money to pay the bills. Find out what programs to look for that will raise your chances of thriving at college, the many ways to wow the admissions office and how to negotiate the best possible financial aid package. You'll also get our latest exclusive college rankings. Discover the country's best universities, liberal arts colleges, regional colleges and universities, historically black colleges and universities, and undergraduate engineering and business programs. Plus:

- A look at accelerated degree programs as a way to cut costs and save time
- What if you get an acceptance for spring semester?
- Profiles: How 8 recent high school grads navigated the college-application process
- A calendar of important tasks for the college-bound student
- Take a road trip with U.S. News to 12 colleges and universities in Colorado, Connecticut, Mississippi and Louisiana
- 8 things admission deans want you to know, including how to write a winning essay
- State-by-state directory profiling nearly 1,600 schools

For more than 30 years, U.S. News's "Best" publications have been the definitive consumer guides to higher education in the United States. Teen Vogue said that U.S. News Best Colleges "is widely regarded as the authority on how a school stacks up against its competitors." And as The Washington Post noted, "You can't pass up the granddaddy of college rankings." • Note: Advertisements from universities and other reputable organizations enable us to offer this valuable guidebook at an affordable price. Advertisements do not influence current or future rankings.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Detailed information for each school is located in the back section. Cost of tuition, average size of financial aid package, Greek life, demographics, and a breakdown of the most popular majors at that school. Religious affiliation too. Great for parents of high school students and middle school students. There was stuff in here I hadn't considered. (Julie Webb Best Colleges 2017: Find the Best Colleges for You!)

By Brian Kelly, Editor and Chief Content Officer of U.S. News  
This college search thing can be a little intimidating, especially if you're going through it for the first time. This is our 32nd go-round at U.S. News, so we feel like we've got some experience worth sharing. Over the years, we've improved our information and sharpened our focus, with our primary objective being to help students and their parents make one of life's most important - and costliest - decisions. Prospective students and their parents need objective measures that allow them to evaluate and compare schools. The U.S. News rankings are one tool to help them make choices, along with all the other insights and guidance contained in these pages. This sort of assistance is more relevant than ever, with some private colleges now costing around \$250,000 for a bachelor's degree. At the same time, many public high schools have greatly reduced their college counseling resources, leaving students and parents to educate themselves about the search and admission process. Of course, we have adjusted our ranking methodology over the years to reflect changes in the world of higher education, and we make it clear that we are not doing peer-reviewed social science although we do maintain very high survey and data standards. We have always been open and transparent. We have always said that the rankings are not perfect. The first were based solely on schools' academic reputation among leaders at peer institutions; we later developed a formula in which reputation accounts for 22.5 percent of a school's score and important quantitative measures such as graduation and retention rates, average class size and student-faculty ratios account for the rest. Over time, we have shifted weight from inputs (indicators of the quality of students and resources) to outputs (success in graduating students). We operate under this guiding principle: The methodology is altered only if a change will better help our readers and web audience compare schools as they're deciding where to apply and enroll. It has helped us a great deal to have these principles to focus on as we have faced the inevitable criticisms from academia about our rankings' growing influence. One main

critique remains: that it is impossible to reduce the complexities of a college's offerings and attributes to a single number. It's important to keep in mind that our information is a starting point. The next steps in a college search should include detailed research on a smaller list of choices, campus visits and conversations with students, faculty and alumni wherever you can find them. Feedback from academia has helped improve the rankings over time. We meet with our critics, listen to their points of view, debate them on the merits of what we do, and make appropriate changes. U.S. News is keenly aware that the higher education community is also a major audience for our rankings. We understand how seriously academics, college presidents, trustees and governing boards take our data. They study, analyze and use them in various ways, including benchmarking against peers, alumni fundraising, and advertising to attract students. What does all of this mean in today's global information marketplace? U.S. News has become a respected unbiased source that higher education administrators and policymakers and the college-bound public worldwide turn to for reliable guidance. In fact, the Best Colleges rankings have become a key part of the evolving higher education accountability movement. Universities are increasingly being held responsible for their policies, how their funds are spent, the level of student engagement, and how much graduates have learned. The U.S. News rankings have become the annual public benchmark to measure the academic performance of the country's colleges and universities. We know our role has limits. The rankings should only be used as one factor in the college search — "we've long said that there is no single best college." • There is only the best college for you or, more likely, a handful of good options, one of which will turn out to be a great fit. Besides the rankings, we can help college-bound high school students and their parents by providing a wealth of information on all aspects of the application process, from getting in to getting financial aid. Our website, [usnews.com](http://usnews.com), features thousands of pages of rankings, research, sortable data, photos, videos and a personalized tool called College Compass. We've been doing this for over three decades, so we know the process is not simple. But our experience tells us the hard work is worth it in the end. (Brian Kelly)

A great resource to help determine which colleges have what you and your child are looking for. I highly recommend it.

Great resource to begin your college search or help you student begin theirs. This is our 2nd time going thru this process and US News has been a great resource. Especially the section on A+ schools for B+ students.

Very helpful!

I find the U.S. News college books very helpful. I was happy to see UCONN has made it to the top engineering schools list.

Excellent resource for your Junior or Senior getting ready for College.

This is very helpful for the parent of a first-born looking at colleges. It's nice to have a concise reference book like this to help narrow down choices.

Love the rankings. Easy to see where individual colleges rate against each other.

Great resource book on colleges.

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