



WHEATON
COLLEGE
For Christ & His Kingdom

HOW TO BECOME A STRONG COLLEGE APPLICANT

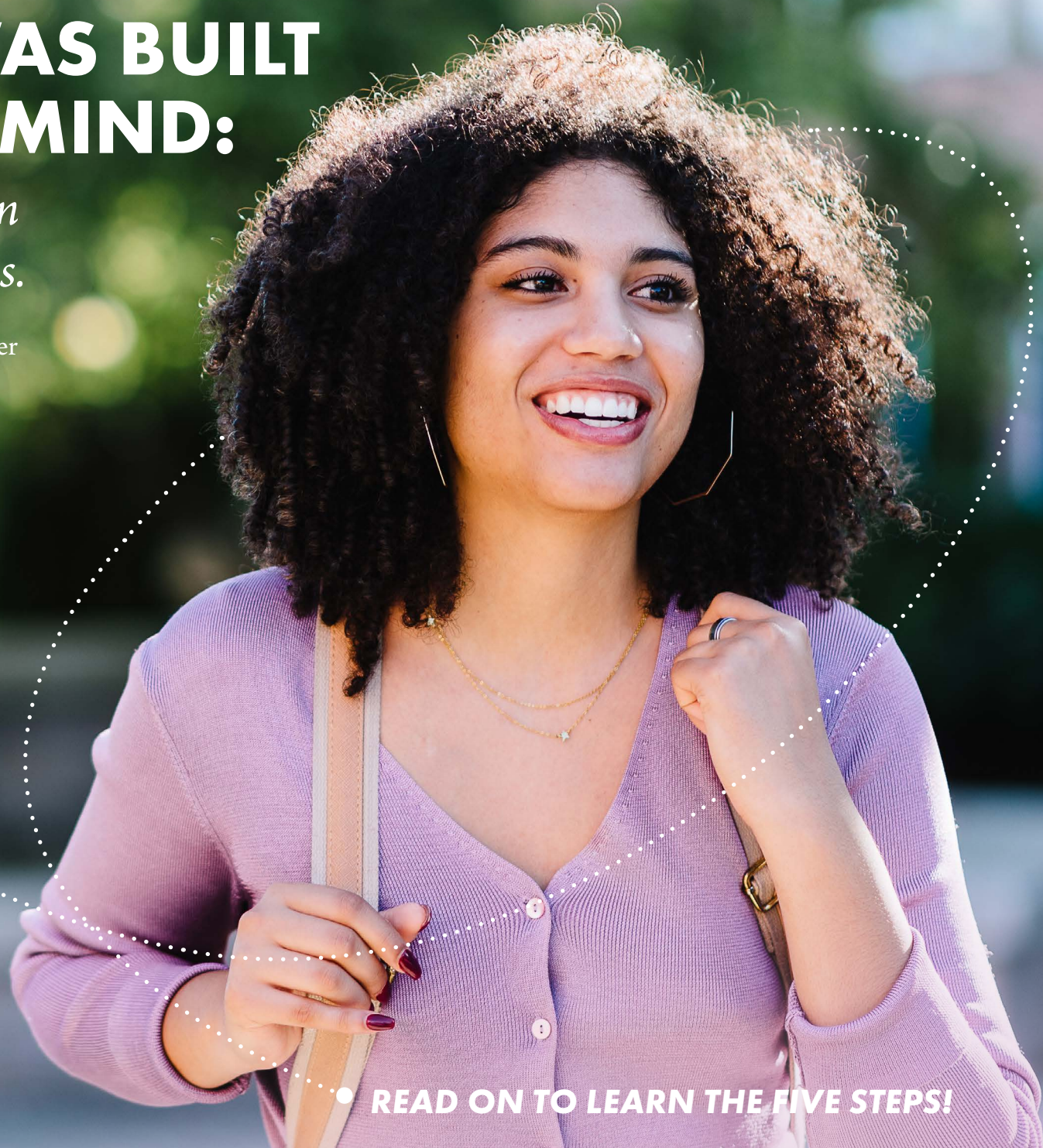


THIS GUIDE WAS BUILT WITH YOU IN MIND:

*a talented, smart, and driven
high schooler who loves Jesus.*

You might not know what major, college, or career you want to pursue—that's okay! We're here to help you become a strong college applicant.

We're in this with you.



● **READ ON TO LEARN THE FIVE STEPS!**

1

GET INVOLVED

CHANCES ARE, YOU'RE ALREADY INVOLVED IN A FEW THINGS. If that's the case, stay the course! There's no need to over-commit yourself and cause unneeded stress to impress a college.

If you aren't already involved, here are some ideas:

- *Volunteer at a local nonprofit*
- *Join a club or student organization*
- *Participate in a sport*
- *Sign up for a musical or play*
- *Write for your school newspaper or blog*

Here's another option for the more adventurous student: set an audacious goal and go for it. Find a problem to solve, a skill to master, or a side hustle to start. The pursuit of your goal will make for incredible stories.

Once you find your thing, continue to lean into it. Consider where there might be opportunities to deepen your involvement and lead. For college apps, one or two significant areas of responsibility or involvement are favored over dozens of shallow commitments.





2

MEET WITH A GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

YOUR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR IS THERE TO HELP YOU MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME IN HIGH SCHOOL, academically speaking.

Give your counselor an idea of the types of colleges that catch your eye, and they'll be able to help you meet the requirements.

You can also ask them about honors or AP/IB classes. Choosing challenging courses will help you stand out and might give you a better idea about what kind of major you want to pursue in college. It's a win-win.

Keep this in mind: colleges look at your academic transcript from all of high school. Don't wait to focus on your grades until senior year.

3

EXPLORE COLLEGE CAMPS

MANY COLLEGES OFFER SUMMER CAMPS. At Wheaton, we have a few, too:

- **STUDYING MUSIC?** *Check out our music camp designed for high schoolers who are considering playing at the collegiate level.*
- **PLAY A SPORT?** *Continue practicing over the summer in one of the camps our athletics department runs.*
- **FEELING ADVENTUROUS?** *Explore HoneyRock.*

Think about college camps like an extended college visit. You'll spend time on campus eating in the dining hall, hanging out in the student center, and living in a residence hall. You can meet with coaches, professors, and students. It's the best!





4

READ, PRACTICE, TEST, REPEAT

THIS IS KIND OF LIKE A THREE-IN-ONE, BUT THEY'RE ALL RELATED. Here's what we mean by read, practice, test, repeat:

- **READ:** *Beyond reading for class, pick a few classics to read each year. Studies have shown that students who read regularly have higher test scores than those who do not. Plus, you never know when something you learn by reading might help you write a college essay.*
- **PRACTICE:** *Whether you buy a couple of workbooks, sign up for a prep class, or dive in and take the PSAT or PLAN, practice! Take note of the problematic sections and develop strategies to improve your scores.*
- **TEST, REPEAT:** *Don't hesitate to take standardized tests more than once. They're an important part of your college application. No, they're not everything, but it's important to prepare well and do your best.*

Whether you need pointers on what books to read, help to practice, or understanding how standardized tests work, don't be afraid to ask for help! Your guidance counselor at school is a great resource.

5

USE YOUR SUMMERS

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, summers can be just as helpful to your college applications as the school year.

Your summer can be a significant stretch of time to log volunteer hours, prepare for standardized tests, work an interesting job, immerse yourself in a new culture, learn a language, start a side-hustle, go to camp...the list is endless.

We aren't saying to jam-pack your summer just as full as the school year—you should still take time to enjoy the break. However, keep an eye out for opportunities to explore your interests, try out different work environments, and build life experience.





HAVE QUESTIONS?

We're here to serve you!

It's never too early to have a quick conversation with a college admissions counselor. You can get yourself on the road to a stress-free college decision by asking a few questions.

Make an appointment with your Wheaton admissions counselor today:

[WHEATON.EDU/CONNECT](https://wheaton.edu/connect)



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Wheaton College is an explicitly Christian, academically rigorous, liberal arts college and graduate school located just 25 miles west of Chicago. Established in 1860 in Wheaton, Illinois, Wheaton is guided by its original mission to provide excellence in Christian higher education, and offers more than 50 academic programs in various fields of study.

VISIT

Register for an in-person or virtual visit:

[WHEATON.EDU/VISIT](https://www.wheaton.edu/visit)

APPLY

Receive information on applying to Wheaton:

[WHEATON.EDU/APPLY](https://www.wheaton.edu/apply)

CONNECT

Meet your admissions counselor:

[WHEATON.EDU/CONNECT](https://www.wheaton.edu/connect)