

Tips for Attending College Fairs

College fairs are an all-inclusive way to find out about colleges of interest to you because a variety of college representatives are gathered together in one place. Use these tips to make the most out of your college fair experience.

Go prepared. Before you attend a college fair, make a list of colleges that interest you the most. Then visit the websites of the colleges on your list to try to find as much general information as possible. This will allow you to ask more in-depth questions when you talk to representatives at the fair.

Make a list of questions. Make a list of your most important questions beforehand, so you do not forget what you want to ask. Focus on questions that pertain to your interests. Ask about majors that you are interested in pursuing. What kind of classes will you have to take for those majors? What are recent graduates of those majors doing now? How safe is the campus and its surrounding neighborhoods? What is the campus environment like on the weekends? What kinds of campus job opportunities are available? Just remember to ask questions that you could not find answers to from researching the websites.

Make student information labels. Most colleges will have inquiry cards that they will want you to fill out, which will place you on their mailing lists. You can save a lot of time at the fair by bringing along self-stick labels to place on the cards. Include your contact information, e-mail address, birthday, high school graduation date, GPA, and areas of interest.

Take notes. Bring a pen and a notebook or a smartphone/tablet. You will need these to take notes with when talking to college representatives. Do not expect to remember everything they say without recording the information.

Check out the floor plan. When you arrive at the college fair, go over the floor plan so you will know the locations of your target colleges. Mapping out your route will give you time to talk with the college representatives from your top colleges first. If there is still time left after that, browse around other tables that catch your eye.

Pass out your resume/activities list. Handing out your high school resume (or an activities and leadership list) at college fairs will show college representatives that you are a go-getter. College reps like to see students who have made the effort to compile a resume. Your resume will allow the representatives to see what kind of a student you are and allow them to take it back to their colleagues in college admissions for review.

Get business cards. Ask the college representatives for their business cards. You may want to get in contact with them again if you have further questions.

Attend information sessions. Some college fairs offer information seminars on topics such as financial aid, the search process, applications, etc. These sessions will give you the opportunity to ask questions about the college planning and admission process.

Follow up. Once the college fair is over, you should read over the college pamphlets that you received and the notes that you took. For the colleges that you are really interested in, follow up by taking virtual tours of the campuses and scheduling college visits.

To find out when local college fairs will be held in your area, contact your high school counselor. To find out the dates for the national college fairs, visit www.nacacnet.org.

Source: *eCampusTours.com* - <http://www.ecampustours.com/collegeplanning/gettingstarted/collegefairtips>

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