



College Admissions Interview Prep Worksheet

To prepare for a college interview, you need to know a lot about yourself and about the school for which you are interviewing. We've put together this worksheet to help you prepare. First, take a look at your application and supplements for the school you are about to be interviewed by, and compile a clear summary of your narrative. Write 2-3 sentences describing each of the aspects below:

Personal data (Parents, history, etc.):

Grades and test scores:

Activities:

Personal essay:

Next, dig up the research you did on that school when you chose to apply. Review it in detail and do more research on the areas you are most interested in.

Now, with both information about yourself and information about the school in mind, ask yourself why you are a good candidate for this school. Even though your interviewer may not ask you such a direct question, it's good for you to have the answer in mind while you are preparing other interview responses. Write your answer here:

Most interviews start with a pretty casual, open-ended request: **“Tell me about yourself.”** You could answer this in virtually infinite ways, but the best thing to do is stay relevant. Start by talking about your family, where you grew up, your interests, what you like to do in school, your activities, etc. and the interviewer will likely interrupt you when he or she wants to hear more about something you've mentioned. The conversation may go off on a tangent about your interest in building model ships, or on growing up in the desert, and let it! By asking for more detail, your interviewer is signaling interest.

Other interview questions may vary, but here are ten that often come up:

1. Why do you want to go to this school? *Do your research. Look at the school's website for at least 30 minutes and cite specific classes or professors that actually interest you.*
2. What is your favorite academic subject and why?
3. What do you want to study in college? *Watch out -- do not pick a major not offered by this school!*
4. What extracurricular activities do you plan on continuing and why?
5. In the last six months, what was the last book you read outside of school? What did you like about it and why?
6. If you could change anything about your high school, what would it be and why?
7. What specifically will you contribute to the campus of this school?
8. If you could be anything in life, what would you be and why?

9. Which world event in the past six months made you pause and think? And why? *This is what our former Yale admissions officer describes as his “Do you live in a bubble test?” If you cannot come up with a single event, you are probably too concerned with personal grades and activities to be a valuable member of the Yale community.*

10. What event in your personal life over the last six months made you pause and think? Why? *This question tests an applicant’s level of introspection and self-awareness.*

Will your interviewer ask you questions other than those above? Certainly, but these are good places to begin thinking.

Now, practice! Get a friend or a family member to ask you these and other questions. Do your best to pretend you don’t know them, and ask for their feedback when you’re done.

Oh, and one more thing. Your interviewer will always—invariably—ask you, usually at the end of the interview: **“Do you have any questions for me?”** Definitely don’t say no. What you need are at least three honest-to-goodness, can’t-get-an-answer-to-this-on-the-college-website questions for your interviewers.

Don’t ask things like “What is the median SAT score of accepted students?” Ask things like “I know that [x school] prides itself on its [three characteristics of x school— look back to your specific school research]. How do these characteristics translate into the classroom [or student life, or anything else that matters to you] experience at [x school]?” In other words: be thoughtful, demonstrate that you’ve done your research and that you are interested in the college, and, once again and as always, be sincere.

Brainstorm at least three questions to ask your interviewers here:

1.

2.

3.