

# College Essay Guy's Demonstrated Interest Guide: The 90-Second Version

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Got a few more minutes? [Click here](#) for the entire guide.

## **What is demonstrated interest and why should I consider it?**

Demonstrated interest is what many colleges and universities use to track a) how much you (prospective student) like their school and, more importantly b) how likely you are to enroll if the school admits you. This is important because, for many schools, it is a factor they consider when deciding whether or not to admit you.

## **Why do schools want to know which students are likely to enroll?**

1. Schools have a target enrollment number, which means that each year they want a certain number of students to enroll.
2. Schools want to protect their “yield,” or the percentage of students who decide to enroll at a particular college or university after being accepted. This is partially because these statistics factor into university rankings.

## **What are examples of actions that a college might track for demonstrated interest?**

- Interaction and inquiry card submission (or scan) at a college fair
- Campus visit during junior year or summer after junior year
- Early application
- Supplemental essay: showing your particular interest in that college and how you have researched that school specifically
- Speaking with alumni or students who may share information with admissions office
- Campus info session/tour in fall of senior year
- Interview with admission rep/alum



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- Second visit to campus in senior year
- Overnight program
- Contacting admissions rep
- Meeting with faculty on campus or by phone

### **How do I check to see if a school tracks demonstrated interest?**

1. Find the school's most updated "common data set," which is information that the school must publish about their admissions. You can possibly find it [here](#) or by Googling "[school's name] common data set."
2. Once you find the document, look for the section titled "C7" where it lists the "Relative importance of each of the following academic and nonacademic factors in first-time, first year, degree-seeking (freshman) admission decisions." You should find an entry there called "Level of applicant's interest." If the box next to this entry is "Not Considered," then you should not try to demonstrate interest; otherwise, you should consider demonstrating some interest.

### **How can I demonstrate interest?**

- **Get on the school's email list. (2 min.)** Google the name of the school and fill out an "information request" form like [this one](#).
- **Open the emails you receive from a school and click on something in the email. (3-5 min.)**
- **"Click deep" on the school's website. (15-30 min.)** This is our friend Michelle Myers's phrase; it basically means spending some time researching to learn, for example, if the school has a rad program that may be right for you.
- **Attend a college fair. (2-3 hrs)** Check out [these tips for making the most of a college fair experience](#).
- **Contact your regional rep. (10-30 min.)** Head to the school's website and look for a page like [this one](#) that lists the representative closest to you.
- **Follow the school on social media. (5-10 min.)** Google to find out what social media platforms the school is on, and follow or like their pages, then maybe even share or re-Tweet something from the school.



- **Visit campus. (Time spent depends how far away you live.)** Make sure they've got some record you were there by signing up for a tour or meeting with a rep.
- **Interview. (1 hr prep + 2-3 hrs driving to and doing actual interview)** A complete guide to the college interview can be found [here](#).
- **Supplemental essays. (You'll have to write these anyway if you're applying; time will vary.)** The big one is the "why this college" essay.
- **Apply Early Action or Early Decision. (Takes pre-planning, but no extra work to do beyond actual application.)** Applying [binding early decision](#) means that you are required to attend the school if admitted, the biggest show of interest you can make.
- **Submit your application before the deadline. (No extra time required.)** This is especially true for schools that read applications on a rolling basis (in other words: in the order applications are submitted). As Monica James says on [the podcast](#): better to be the first oboe player that a reader reads than the sixth!
- **Thank you notes and emails. (10-15 min.)** Hello, life skill. Spend a few minutes following up after an interview or college fair meeting with a little, "Thanks for talking with me!" You can even ask a follow-up question, if you'd like to keep the conversation going, but don't overdo this.
- **Follow the waitlist instructions. (10 min-2 hrs, depending)** If you've been waitlisted by a school, make sure you do whatever they tell you to do—including the optional stuff.

