

# **How Many College Applications Should You Send?**

Two? Four? Six? Eight? What's the answer to the college application debate?

There is no limit to how many college applications you can send. As long as you can afford the application fees, you can apply away all day. And with tools like the Common Application making sending applications easier than ever, you may be tempted to apply to 8, 10 or even 15 colleges.

Sending out more applications doesn't necessarily increase your odds of being admitted to colleges. But there are some guidelines to follow when deciding how many applications to send.

## **College App Stats**

Last year, among students sending college applications, 72 percent applied to five or fewer colleges, according to a Chronicle of Higher Education survey.

If that number seems lower than the hype suggests, know this: There is a college for you out there. On average, 70 percent of colleges accept 70 percent of students who apply.

Not only are students getting admitted, they're getting admitted to colleges they love. For the 2008 college freshmen class, 64 percent enrolled in their first choice college, according to a Chronicle of Higher Education survey.

That doesn't mean you need to apply to only one college. Putting all your eggs in one basket is never a good idea. You should plan on applying to multiple colleges.

Your college applications shouldn't go to four colleges that are too similar to each other. And don't send an application to the Ivy League and only the Ivy League. Specifically you need to apply to at least one of the following college types:

**Your top choices.** Simply put, you like these colleges more than others. You can see yourself walking the campus at these colleges, you have a good chance of being admitted and they fit your needs academically, socially and financially.

**Your reaches.** This is a more competitive college that you may not be admitted to. This college may be highly selective, or your grades and test scores may be just below par for this college. You should apply anyway to at least one reach college. If you apply, you might just get in.

**Your safeties.** This is a college that you have a very high chance of being admitted to. This college may be the state school near your home or it could be one of the more than 250 colleges which accept virtually 100 percent of applicants. Love your safety school just like you love your top choice and reach colleges. You just might end up attending, and enjoying, this college.