



B+ Grades, A+ College Application: How to Present Your Strongest Self, Write a Standout Admissions Essay, and Get Into the Perfect School for You

By Joie Jager-Hyman

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ABOUT THIS BOOK...

This alternative college guide from a former Dartmouth assistant admissions director-turned-consultant gives non-straight-A students advice on the many options available to them and tips on how to identify, gain admittance to, and pay for the schools that will allow them to flourish.

Less-than-perfect grades? No problem!

Contrary to popular opinion, you don't need to have a 4.0 GPA or a perfect jump shot to get into a good college. This insider's guide reveals easy tweaks that will pay off big-time in showing admissions officers that you as a whole—not just your SAT scores—are a perfect fit for their incoming class. With stellar advice on getting into schools that will allow you to thrive, this handbook reveals how to:

- Find great colleges that are a good match for your strengths (and will overlook less-relevant weaknesses)
- Painlessly beef up your application
- Tailor extracurriculars to showcase your uniqueness
- Make sure your recommendation letters emphasize the right qualities
- Write original essays that reveal traits beyond your transcript
- Make an impression on admissions officers and college interviewers
- Create an early-admissions strategy to increase your likelihood of acceptance
- Help your chances if you're deferred
- Get into brand-name schools through the side door
- Communicate about learning disabilities or special circumstances
- Get scholarship money based on attributes other than grades
- Customize your financial aid strategy

BONUS: Includes an appendix of 130+ selective colleges to consider!

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Editorial Review

Review

“So much admissions advice seems intended for high achievers aiming for hyperselective schools. *B+ Grades, A+ College Application* is a refreshing change. It offers wise counsel to the solid student looking for a good college fit as well as tips on how to maximize acceptance odds. While any student can benefit from the suggestions in this book, those with some Bs (or below) should be delighted to find that they are, for once, the target audience.”

—SALLY RUBENSTONE, columnist, “Ask the Dean,” CollegeConfidential.com

“The decisions made during the college admissions process can have a huge impact on your life. This book provides an expert-crafted road map for this crucial period.”

—CAL NEWPORT, author, *How to Be a High School Superstar*

About the Author

JOIE JAGER-HYMAN served as assistant director of admissions for Dartmouth College. After completing a doctorate in education policy with a focus on the high school to college transition at Harvard University, she founded College Prep 360 (CollegePrep360.com), a college-planning consulting organization that does both for-profit and non-profit work. She is the author of *Fat Envelope Frenzy*, has appeared on CBS's *The Early Show* and NPR, and has contributed to *Forbes* and *New York* magazine. She lives with her husband and their son.

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Introduction

Congratulations! If you are picking up this book, then you (or someone close to you) must be a high school student getting ready for college. Perhaps you have been anticipating and looking forward to this moment for years. Or maybe you find the thought of college visits, applications, essays, and interviews about as appealing as taking a math test “just for fun.” Wherever you fall on the spectrum of college-planning excitement, rest assured that this book will arm you with the tools you need (including the occasional pep talk!) to land at the school that is right for you.

I have been helping high school students apply to college for over a decade. I first became interested in the application process after I graduated from college and took a position in the admissions office at Dartmouth, where I had been a student. When I left to attend graduate school a few years later, families began to approach me with questions about navigating the confusing maze of college admissions and financial aid. Since that time, I have shepherded many students and parents through the application process and have seen firsthand how stressful it can be. Some people think I am crazy for picking a career path that requires me to go through the college application process every year! However, I wouldn’t trade one minute of it for the profound satisfaction I experience when my students are accepted to schools that will truly allow them to thrive. Every time I get updates from students about college experiences that opened doors for them, I know that all the application stress was worth it.

With competition for admissions to college at an all-time high, the media consistently publishes gloomy articles about how students need a perfect GPA or a perfect jump shot to get into a decent college these days.

In turn, guidance counselors and college-prep books often focus on the academic superstars, the straight-A students who have their sights set only on the Ivy League. But what about the good students—the ones who go to class, do their homework, get good grades, and still want to have a life that doesn't completely revolve around school? What happens to students with Bs or even the occasional C on their transcript? If you are feeling disheartened or even doomed when it comes to getting into a good college, this book is for you.

Who Is This Book For?

I wrote this book because I want every college applicant to have fantastic college options and the know-how to put together a winning application. Forget everything that you've read about how impossible it is to get into college these days. You do not need to be superhuman or well connected to go to a good school. There are literally hundreds of colleges for students like you just waiting to be discovered.

Is this book only for students with B+ GPAs? Of course not. When I talk about B+ students, I am referring to students who work hard and do well in school but may not have a "perfect" transcript or a 2400 on the SAT. These capable students sometimes feel discouraged by their guidance counselors or the media, even though they get good grades. You don't have to be in the running for valedictorian to complete a college application that shows what you have to offer.

How to Use This Book

The following chapters cover everything a high school student needs to know about applying to college. I start by discussing some of the different paths that students take to find the colleges that are right for them—the best names, the best deals, and everything in between. Don't know what you want to study or what type of academic environment is ideal for you? Don't worry. This book has lots of advice on how to identify your college priorities and find colleges that will truly allow you to flourish. Want to go to an Ivy League school but don't think that a student without a 4.0 can get in? Relax. This book gives you the scoop on how to bypass the ultracompetitive admissions processes at schools like Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania through their under-the-radar programs, which are easier to get into, cheaper to attend, and still award you that big-name degree.

Once you have identified the full range of terrific college options at your disposal, this book will walk you through the application process so that you can understand how colleges make admissions decisions and how to maximize your chances of putting together an application that showcases what you have to offer. Confused about whether to apply early decision and early action? No clue how to write a compelling college essay? Need to painlessly beef up your extracurricular profile? If so, keep reading. These pages will answer all of these questions and more with helpful worksheets, questionnaires, and "action steps." The last chapter of this book also provides some tips for parents. The appendixes offer a detailed college admissions timeline for high school juniors and seniors, suggestions for getting into a top college through a "side door," and a list of colleges to consider.

Just because your transcript isn't perfect does not mean that you can't find the "perfect" college that will allow you to thrive. Let the journey begin!

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Nicholas Walsh:

The book untitled B+ Grades, A+ College Application: How to Present Your Strongest Self, Write a Standout Admissions Essay, and Get Into the Perfect School for You is the guide that recommended to you to learn. You can see the quality of the reserve content that will be shown to you actually. The language that writer use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The author was did a lot of research when write the book, to ensure the information that they share to you personally is absolutely accurate. You also could possibly get the e-book of B+ Grades, A+ College Application: How to Present Your Strongest Self, Write a Standout Admissions Essay, and Get Into the Perfect School for You from the publisher to make you more enjoy free time.

Ella Cook:

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Linda Caron:

It is possible to spend your free time to study this book this guide. This B+ Grades, A+ College Application: How to Present Your Strongest Self, Write a Standout Admissions Essay, and Get Into the Perfect School for You is simple to develop you can read it in the recreation area, in the beach, train in addition to soon. If you did not include much space to bring typically the printed book, you can buy the actual e-book. It is make you simpler to read it. You can save the actual book in your smart phone. Thus there are a lot of benefits that you will get when you buy this book.

Richard Pascual:

Within this era which is the greater person or who has ability to do something more are more special than other. Do you want to become one among it? It is just simple way to have that. What you must do is just spending your time little but quite enough to possess a look at some books. On the list of books in the top checklist in your reading list is definitely B+ Grades, A+ College Application: How to Present Your Strongest Self, Write a Standout Admissions Essay, and Get Into the Perfect School for You. This book that is certainly qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in getting precious person. By looking way up and review this guide you can get many advantages.

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