

Ten College Application Essay Tips from [CollegeData.Com](https://collegedata.com)!

Here are some tried and true tips for creating a strong essay that will engage the reader with your voice and personality.

1. **Make it personal.** Whether your topic is chosen by you or assigned, show what you care about and what makes you tick. You are not writing a book report. You are writing a "self report."
2. **Choose a unique topic.** Try to avoid common subjects like "my trip to XYZ country," "my winning sports season," "my political views," or even the death of someone close to you, unless you can write about it from a unique angle. For example, you might write about a single experience during your trip to XYZ country that profoundly affected you. Or a failure that taught you something important. A unique personal story can speak volumes about you.
3. **Test drive a few subjects.** Try writing a few draft essays using different prompts or ideas. If one essay seems to write itself, you've found your topic.
4. **Bring your essay to life.** How do great documentaries fascinate the viewer? By boring narration about lofty ideas or by using vivid details and examples? That said, keep it PG-13. Shocking the admissions officer or scholarship committee is not a good idea.
5. **Follow the instructions.** If they say 600 words, they mean it. If they ask you to talk about your favorite subject in high school, don't write about the time you had hypothermia.
6. **Don't be afraid to be funny.** It's okay to include some humor if it comes naturally to you. Just make sure you are writing in your own voice and the material would be funny to everyone.
7. **Be honest.** Don't make your essay an exercise in creative writing in order to stand out. And above all, don't get someone to write it for you. Show admission officers who you are, not who you wish you were.
8. **Use words you know.** Using words you don't know will only make you sound less like yourself.
9. **Get a second opinion.** Have one or two people—perhaps a teacher or your school counselor—review your essay. Does the essay ring true to them? Does the language sound like you? Did they find any parts of it unclear or difficult to understand?
10. **Write as many drafts as you need to.** Revise until you feel confident that it's the best you can do. And make sure you have someone with excellent grammar and punctuation skills proofread it.

What's Next?

- See [How to Write Your Common Application Essay](#) for specific advice on writing your Common Application Essay.
- Take a look at [How to Shine in Your College Application Essay](#) for more help with essay writing.
- Check out [Make Your College Applications Stand Out](#) for advice on how your whole application can make the case for your admission.