**A Few Ways That Colleges Track Demonstrated Interest (DI)**

* Interaction and inquiry card submission (or scan) at college fairs
* 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 admission office
* Campus info session/tour in fall of senior year
* Interview with admission rep/alum
* Second visit to campus in senior year
* Overnight program
* Contacting admission rep
* Meeting with faculty on campus or by phone
* FAFSA form--how student ranks the school on the form (Ethan note: NOT true anymore. This was stopped in early 2015, so ignore this one. [Source](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/feds-to-stop-tipping-off-colleges-on-student-choices/).)
* Oh, and you know [those 42 questions](http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/sat/sat-registration-booklet.pdf) that you answer when you sign up for the SAT? Some colleges pay for that info too. So those are, y’know, 42 other things they track.

**Ways You Can Demonstrate Interest (in order of the college process)**

1. **Get on the school’s email list. (2 min.)** You can do this by Googling the name of the school and filling out an “information request” form
2. **Open the emails you receive from a school and click on something in the email. (3-5 min.)**
3. **“Click deep” on the school’s website. (15-30 min.)** basically means spending some time researching to learn, for example, if the school has a program that may be right for you. This will not only help you write your [“Why us” statement](http://www.collegeessayguy.com/blog/how-to-write-a-why-us-essay-1-of-3) (assuming the school has one), but will prep you for a potential conversation with your regional rep if and when you…
4. **Attend a college fair. (2-3 hrs.)**
5. **Contact your regional rep. (10-30 min.)** More tips on developing an authentic relationship with your rep below.
6. **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.
7. **Visit campus. (Time spent depends how far away you live.)**
8. **Interview. (1 hr prep + 2-3 hrs driving to and doing actual interview)**
9. **Supplemental essays. (You’ll have to write these anyway if you’re applying; time will vary.)**
10. **Apply Early Action or Early Decision. (Takes pre-planning, but no extra work to do beyond actual application.)**
11. **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).
12. **Thank you notes and emails. (10-15 min.)** 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 go crazy (see tips below for more on this).

~The College Essay Guy