

Managing Mail From Colleges

A simple guide to efficiently manage college mail correspondence

Presented by My College Options

It starts out small, probably during your sophomore year, with the occasional college brochure arriving mixed in with the rest of your family's mail. You are excited to receive the glossy booklets and interactive CDs, and you eagerly look through them, maybe putting them in a pile on your desk or a table when you're finished looking at them.

Pretty soon, the pile begins to grow. And grow. You start getting more mail than anyone else in your family, and you are asked repeatedly to do something with this huge pile of brochures. You want to keep things organized, but you're not sure where to start. Managing the approximately 60 lbs. of college information you are likely to receive as you are entering the college selection process doesn't have to be a challenge if you have a plan from the start.

The simplest way to handle all this mail is to get yourself three boxes. Label them "Definitely," "Maybe," and "Not a Chance." In the first box, put the brochures from schools that you are definitely interested in. These are the schools that have most of, if not all, the qualities you have identified as most important in a school you want to attend.

In the second box, the "Maybe" box, put the brochures from the schools that you're curious about, but not 100% sure you're ready to consider. These could be schools that only have some of the qualities you are looking for, or schools you don't know enough about to eliminate. You'll want to spend some time sorting through the information you put in this box, doing some research on the schools to help you decide whether or not you want to move any of them into the "Definitely" box.

The last box, which is the "Not a Chance" box is for the schools that aren't even remotely possibilities. For example, if you get a brochure from an all-female college, and as a male student, you definitely don't qualify, then you can probably safely put this brochure in the "Not a Chance" box. In fact, you probably don't even need a box for these...the trash can will work just great.

Remember, too, that just because a school hasn't found you with its materials, doesn't mean you shouldn't seek it out. Write, call or email schools that interest you and ask them to send you information. Better yet, try visiting their websites to see if they might have an online brochure you can look at or material to print out. And you should definitely keep track of any materials or information you find on your own the same way you are keeping track of the materials you are already receiving from colleges and universities.

See, now this keeping organized thing doesn't sound so bad, does it?