

## What to Know Before Submitting the New Common App [Part 2]

Posted by [Elyse Krantz](#) on Fri, Aug 09, 2013 @ 01:30 PM



By now you have probably taken the first step and have created your account on the Common Application website. Congrats! But by now you probably also have come across a roadblock. While we certainly can't eradicate all of the website's technical difficulties, we are confident that the five additional [Common App tips](#) below will make the completion process a little easier.

### **6. It's all in the family**

So what do you do if your dad is a retired physician, or your mom is a pastry chef? While the application used to provide a place for students to enter their parents' specific job titles, now you must select from one of 45 generic job fields, such as "business executive" and "semi-skilled worker." Scroll through the entire list (enlist mom or dad's help if you're not sure!), and chose the options that seem to best capture your parents' job responsibilities. Keep in mind that "other" is always a possibility. As for mom and dad's educational backgrounds? If either parent attended both an undergraduate and a graduate school, be sure to select "Educational Level: College" and "Number of Colleges: 2." You will have the chance to include both educational institutions later on.

Occupation\*  
Other

Employment status\*  
Unemployed

Education level\*  
College

Indicate the number of colleges\*  
2

College lookup\*  
Adelphi University  
One South Avenue  
Garden City, NY 11530  
USA  
CEEB Code: 2003

Number of degrees your parent received from this college\*  
1

Degree received\*  
Bachelors (four-year degree)

## 7. Standard leaving examinations

Hidden among some seemingly innocuous questions about your standardized testing history is a brand new question that may catch you completely off guard.

The first time I read that “standard leaving examinations” question, I had to read it again. Then I emailed my fellow [College Coach admissions experts](#) for their thoughts just to be sure I was interpreting it correctly! As it turns out, we were all on the same page. For most students living and studying here in the U.S., your answer here will be “no.” Some students who attend high school abroad may be required to answer “yes.” Ask your high school guidance counselor if you have any doubts.

## 8. Managing your extra-curricular activities

The Common Application gives you room to list 10 distinct activities on their built-in résumé. So let’s imagine that you are filling out each your clubs, sports, and other [extracurricular](#)

[involvements](#) while also texting a friend when you realize that “Video game connoisseur” perhaps shouldn’t be included in your top 10. And right now, you have it listed as “Activity 1.” How do you delete it? If you don’t have another activity to put in its place (i.e. you have nine solid activities to list, but not 10), you will first need to hit the “edit” button at the bottom of that page. Then hit the “down arrow” located in the upper right-hand corner. Once you move “Video game connoisseur” all the way down to the last position on the page (in our scenario, Activity 10), you will see a little trash can icon appear at the bottom of the screen. Hit that, and your list is good to go.

▼ Activity 10

Activity type  
Other Club/Activity

Position/Leadership \*  
Video game connoisseur

Participation grade levels\*  
9, 10, 11, 12

I intend to participate while in college\*  
Yes


Timing of participation\*  
Year

Hours spent per week \*  
15

Weeks spent per year \*  
52

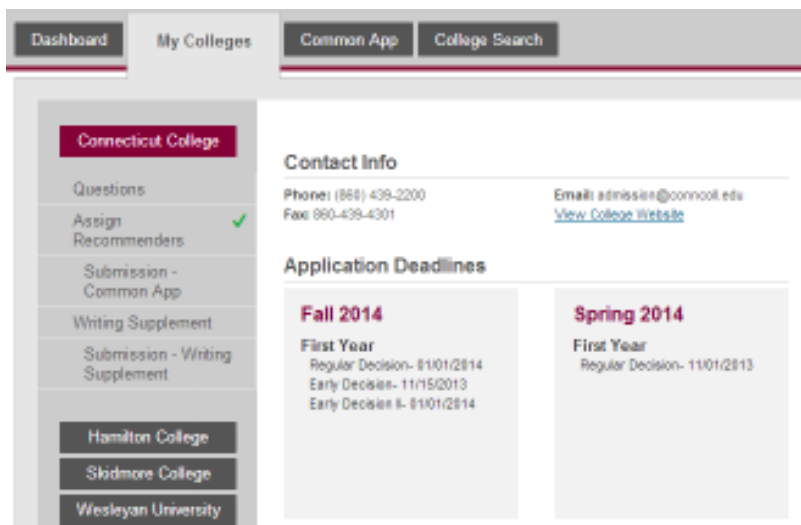
Details, honors, and accomplishments \*  
Play on a variety of gaming consoles, including Xbox 360, Wii, and Nintendo 3DS.

[Edit](#) [Back](#) [Continue](#)



## 9. Supplemental essays

Looking for a quick and easy way to determine which of your colleges require the submission of additional essays? Click on the “My Colleges” tab. If you see “Writing Supplement” as an option underneath any of your schools, you’ll definitely have additional writing to complete. However, if you don’t see “Writing Supplement” under a particular school’s name, there’s still a chance that extra essays are required. Sometimes essays don’t show up until after you’ve selected a particular major or unique academic program (such as a combined BS/MD or honors program).



## 10. Green checkmarks and red X's

You're ready to submit your application when all of a sudden you see the following message: *In order to begin the submission process, you must first have the following items completed...* How do you know what's still missing from your application? Unfortunately, blank fields aren't highlighted in a visually striking way, and it can be a little tedious trying to find the one final question that still needs answer. Our suggestion? Click on the "Common App" tab first. If any of the items to the left lack a green checkmark, select it. Then click in the first drop down box you see. Hit the "tab" key on your keyboard until a red X appears, indicating a required field you inadvertently missed. Alternatively, just scour the screen for those tiny red asterisks, as those also indicate questions that must be answered. Once you see six green checkmarks to the left, follow the same procedure under the "My Colleges" tab. Once every item has a green checkmark beside it, you should be free to submit your application.