



What is a stealth applicant?

You are considered a stealth applicant if the first time the university has any record of interacting with you is when you submit your application. This may be confusing since many students have received multiple emails from schools before deciding to apply but are still considered stealth applicants.

The problem is that many schools contract out emailing potential students based on information from the College Board or ACT but don't bother to include the contacted students in their records. In these situations, until a student actually contacts the school through email, phone calls, or social media, as far as the college is concerned, the student doesn't exist.

Why is this a problem for the student? Because colleges often want to know the student's level of interest in the school before admitting or awarding financial aid. In other words, they don't want to admit or provide financial aid to a student who isn't likely to attend.

This isn't just about increasing yield or rejecting students to improve college rankings. It's a matter of efficiently allocating resources.

Therefore, even if a student has browsed the college's website, has recommendations from relatives, and even visited a friend on campus, it's in her best interest to make "documented" contact with the school. This shows "demonstrated interest" and improves chances for admissions and financial aid.

You can find out how important a college considers applicant interest by using CollegeData.com. Under the Admissions tab, you'll see a table with the different factors considered when selecting a student. "Level of Applicant's Interest" is one of the listed factors.

As the available applicant pool begins to shrink again, colleges will no longer have the luxury to ignore stealth applicants. But it's better to be safe than sorry so be sure to fill out a contact form for all schools before you apply.

Learn more:

- [The Secret Life of a Stealth Applicant](#)
- [Are You Ignoring a Quarter of Your Applicant Pool](#)

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