→ As part of the college application, you may have to write an essay or two. Whether it’s an essay on Common App or supplemental essay, writing can quickly become time-consuming, overwhelming, and tiring.

→ It is good to start your college list early so you are aware of the number of essays you may have to write.

→ Some competitive institutions will require several supplemental essays while other institutions will actually require you to write zero essays.

→ To find a list of some colleges that don't require essays + more info go to:

*Source:* <https://blog.prepscholar.com/colleges-that-dont-require-essays>

**Personal Essay VS Supplemental Essay**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Personal Essay/Statement  | Supplemental Essay  |
| -The personal essay will be required by the majority of colleges-The personal essay has a variety of prompts you can choose from-The prompt you choose to respond to does not change between different colleges, in other words the topic remains static  | -Supplemental essays differ depending on the colleges -Supplemental essay questions also differ between all colleges-One should spend the same amount of time and effort on both the supplemental essay and the personal essay -Supplemental essays tend to be more focused than personal essays-Supplemental essays are good ways admission officers get to know you  |

*Source*:<https://www.ivywise.com/ivywise-knowledgebase/resources/article/how-to-write-great-supplemental-college-application-essays/>

<https://www.collegeessayadvisors.com/beyond-the-common-application-essay-the-dreaded-writing-supplements/>

**A few quick tips**

What to write:

* Write about something you are interested in or passionate about. If you don't like your topic, neither will the person reading it.
* This is not a standard academic essay. Get personal and not just factual. It shouldn't read like a textbook.
* Don't write what you think admission reps want to hear. Write what YOU want them to hear.
* Be true to yourself. Schools do not just want grades. Your writing makes you unique and sets you apart from others. This is a good thing.
* These essays are frustrating. Don't let that discourage you. We often don't write about personal matters so when we are asked to, that is a challenge itself.
* Always try to relate your topic back to you

How to write:

* Don't lie or exaggerate. That could hurt you in the long term.
* Find and use your voice. Don't use massive SAT words if you don't normally do so. We each have a "writing voice" so don't change yours for this essay.
* Show the reader what you are writing, meaning use words to help them feel, see, smell, even taste what you are writing about.

Time management;

* Start early so you have time. You will most likely draft your essays a few times and that is a good sign!
* Try to not write for prolonged periods of time. You will need to let what you initially write to process before re-reading. Have others read when you feel like you are almost done. When you feel annoyed or blocked, step away!
* Did I mention to start early? Choose your topic/topics and at least begin an outline/draft. The application process is overwhelming enough without the added pressure to complete multiple essays in a few days.
* Try and have drafts ready by October (this applies to essays for regular decision)

Revising & Editing:

* Have at least one person read for grammar/spelling. Have someone read for content. These are two very different perspectives in an essay and BOTH count.
* Don’t have anyone specific in mind? Reach out to a former teacher who knows you and your writing. They can check for grammar, syntax, and content. Schedule an appointment with him/her. Take the time to go over your essay. That being said...
* Be ready for criticism. It is meant to HELP, so do not take it personally.
* Don't second guess your choice unless you have enough time to change your topic. Go with your gut instinct. You never know!
* Do not have multiple people read your writing. Too many outside voices might cause you to doubt yourself. I say 2-3 people that you trust/know you well enough.
* Make sure the person reading your essay knows your writing style
* Take a breath. It will be alright. Don't place unrealistic pressures or expectations on yourself, especially in your writing. However, this is not texting or DMing friends, so you need to spend time and think about what you are sharing with this particular audience.

Good luck (:

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