

<a href="#">NEWS</a>	<a href="#">HOUSING</a>	<a href="#">JOBS</a>	<a href="#">TUTORS</a>	<a href="#">TEXTBOOKS</a>	<a href="#">TEST PREP</a>	<a href="#">STUDY ABROAD</a>	<a href="#">MORE</a>
----------------------	-------------------------	----------------------	------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------------

News > College Choice > Your 5-step guide to surviving the wait-list apocalypse

# Your 5-step guide to surviving the wait-list apocalypse

By Stacey Brook, College Essay Advisors 1:00 pm EDT April 22, 2016

98 shares

SHARE

TWEET

EMAIL

WORK WITH US!

CORRESPONDENT PROGRAM  
CONTACT US

GET TOP STORIES DELIVERED  
WEEKLY

Enter Email for News Alerts

Subscribe

TOP 5 COLLEGE CHOICE ARTICLES



A group of youngsters dressed as ghouls and zombies for Halloween parade in downtown Lisbon, Portugal, Friday, Oct. 31, 2014. (AP Photo/Francisco Seco)



The top 10 colleges in Michigan

The recent onslaught of wait-list letters arriving in the inboxes of disappointed students around the country probably isn't quite as dire as a zombie apocalypse, but the terrors can be just as scary to combat. Once you're infected, that feeling of unease can penetrate your life until you're all like "mmmmm brainzzz."

But students do have the power to fight back against the wait-list. Here's how:

## GET TO MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HIGHER GROUND

Every good survivalist knows that staying calm is essential. Don't let the wait-list news throw you in a panic, don't let the battle take you before it even begins, and don't try to dissect your past application efforts. Instead, take stock of what weapons you have in your arsenal now — like improved grades or a new leadership position — and how you can use them to your advantage. And remember, regardless of how the news makes you feel, being wait-listed isn't actually the end of the world.

## KNOW THE PROTOCOL

There are very specific strategies involved in killing zombies. (At least that's what the Internet tells us.) Similarly, schools will often tell you exactly how they want you to approach their wait-list. Some schools, like Vanderbilt, will outright ask you for confirmation that you are interested in



Yara Shahidi announces she's going to Harvard



Write about these 3 things in your college essay (even if you think you shouldn't)

http://college.usatoday.com/2016/04/22/wait-listed-how-to-cope/

Go

JUN JUN JUL

11

2016 2017 2018



About this capture

7 captures

22 Apr 2016 - 11 Jun 2017

they will only consider the originally submitted application materials. Be alert to all the details in your wait-list instructions to ensure that nothing takes you by surprise.

## SLAY WITH WORDS

While schools can be particular about where and how they want you to confirm your wait-list interest, most are open-minded (not literally) about receiving a short email reinforcing your interest in their institution. You only get one shot at a direct hit, so make sure your letter is carefully crafted and loaded with exactly what an admissions officer wants to hear. The two main areas to cover include why you are still interested in attending the school and any notable life events or achievements that have transpired since you pressed the submit button. Make sure to use specific details that keep this note short, sharp and on target.

## HAVE A BACKUP PLAN

Sometimes the best plan is the one you least expect to work. Perhaps you are a prime candidate for a gap year. Or maybe setting your sights on a different school, even this late in the game, will be refreshing. Take the time to really consider your second, third and even fourth choice institutions. You may very well find you truly connect with members of these communities and can find opportunities to build on your skills in ways you had previously overlooked. Also, don't forget to check matriculation deadlines for schools you might want to attend (usually May 1) if your wait-list opportunity falls through, as well as policies for withdrawal if you do end up victorious. Don't be the fool who forgets to fill up the canteen before heading out into the woods. Be prepared for any and all outcomes.

## THINK LIKE A HERO

Yes, you had goals set way back before the wait-list seemingly tore your world apart. But you are awesome and have the ability to succeed wherever you end up pursuing your passions. You are the only one who can bring a positive attitude, resilience and a determination to succeed no matter where you go. The future is in your hands.

**Stacey Brook is a writer, admissions expert and the Founder and Chief Advisor of College Essay Advisors.**

This article comes from The "College Contributor network. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of USA TODAY. You understand that we have no obligation to monitor any discussion forums, blogs, photo- or video-sharing pages, or other areas of the Site through which users can supply information or material. However, we reserve the right at all times, in our sole discretion, to screen content submitted by users and to edit, move, delete, and/or refuse to accept any content that in our judgment violates these [Terms of Service](#) or is otherwise unacceptable or inappropriate, whether for legal or other reasons.

college acceptances, college advice, wait list, COLLEGE CHOICE

98 shares

SHARE

TWEET

EMAIL

### RELATED STORIES

#### CAMPUS LIFE

9 questions to ask about student loans before you graduate

#### CAMPUS LIFE

Simple ways to pay for unexpected college costs

#### NEWS

7 legit ways to get your student loans canceled

Williamson student writes about pizza, gets into Yale University



Betsy DeVos announces huge overhaul of federal student loan system



MORE INFORMATION ▲