Looking for an Academic Job: General Advice and Outline

A. Finding job ads
This varies entirely by field: some professional organizations list ads (the MLA), some have crowdsourced spreadsheets (ecology). Figure out where jobs are listed in your discipline by asking faculty/other grad students. Some big clearinghouses:
   a. Academicjobsonline.org
   b. Higheredjobs.com
   c. Academicjobs.wikia.org

B. Timeline
   a. Most tenure track academic jobs hires are roughly timed to the academic year. Ads go up in the early fall, interviews happen throughout the fall, campus visits are in January/February, and offers are made in the spring. However, some jobs don’t follow this timeline—particularly more teaching-focused jobs at smaller schools. These often post ads later in the year, well into the spring.
   b. Postdocs tend to have weird idiosyncratic requirements and deadlines (some have interviews, some don’t). But generally they tend to follow the academic year, with deadlines in the fall.
   c. Most visiting professor positions / lectureships tend to get listed late, in the spring.
   d. If you are planning to apply for academic jobs, it is a good idea to have your materials ready by late August so that you can send them to your recommenders.

C. Process
   a. application
   b. request for more materials (sometimes)
      i. materials: CV, cover letter, recommendation letters plus sometimes separate documents about research and teaching.
   c. interviews (usually 20-30 min; in person at national conferences or, increasingly, on Skype)
   d. campus visits

D. General advice
   a. Before you start applying for academic jobs, sit down and have a serious conversation with yourself about your limits. How long are you willing to look for an academic job? What limits do you have on the kind of job you want?
   b. Remember that your PhD is an extremely valuable thing separate and apart from whether it leads to a faculty position.
   c. Manage your expectations / try to emotionally disinvest and not take it personally. I applied for jobs for three years—probably around 200 applications total—and got rejected from 199 of those jobs! Rejection is the norm.
   d. Ask faculty to look at your materials and give you feedback. Two kinds of faculty you should ask, in particular: dissertation directors whose graduate students have gotten jobs and young faculty who have recently been on the market.
   e. Use Interfolio! It is a dossier service that stores your recommenders’ letters, which means you only have to ask for one letter instead of having to constantly bug faculty and feel terrible.