

Fill out the FAFSA: Six steps

Need money for college? Get started by filling out the government's Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA.

Use this online form to apply for federal grants and low-cost student loans. Your state government and colleges may also use the FAFSA to award state grants and college scholarships.

Get started today with these six easy steps!

1

Get organized

Gather your tax and legal documents

Gather your identification documents, current financial statements, and your tax forms from two years ago.

- You'll want the tax year two years before your high school graduation year.
- Gather documents with your legal name and SSN.
- Gather banking and asset documents.

2

Get your FSA ID

Students and parents need FSA IDs

You will need this secure government login to fill out the FAFSA and apply for government aid.

- Search: "[Create FSA ID.](#)"
- Follow the instructions. Get all information exactly right using your legal docs.
- Take screenshots or safely save your login information. You will use this login a lot.

3

Start your FAFSA

Read carefully and answer the FAFSA questions

Hopefully, this will go quickly. Most income information is uploaded automatically from the IRS.

- Search: "[FAFSA.gov.](#)"
- Watch the welcome videos.
- Consent to sharing your tax information.
- Answer the questions by reading slowly and typing carefully.

4

Invite parents

One person starts and invites other family members

Each family member completes their own part of the FAFSA. Ideally, you will start the FAFSA and invite your parents, but the reverse works, too.

- If you start, you'll be asked a few questions about your parents.
- You will be given instructions on which parent (or parents) fill out the FAFSA with you.
- Use the electronic invite form to send them a secure link.
- Or your parents can start the form and invite you to help.

5

Sign and submit

Everyone done? Sign and submit your FAFSA

Each family member completes their part of the form, then electronically signs and submits it.

- Once the last person signs and submits, you'll see "Congratulations!"
- Watch your email for your FAFSA Submission Summary.
- If you need to reach the help desk, search for Federal Student Aid's "[Contact Us](#)" page.

6

Next steps

Watch for FAFSA and college requests

Be sure to check your email frequently. Watch for emails from Federal Student Aid and the colleges you are applying to.

- Do you see a red exclamation point on the top of your FAFSA Submission Summary? Click the tab and see what's needed.
- Watch for additional requests from your colleges. Respond quickly.
- Wait for your college acceptances—and financial aid offers! Compare your offers carefully, and be sure to choose a college you can afford.

Need more information?

We recommend [UnderstandingFAFSA.org](https://www.understandingfafsa.org), a popular website for high school students and their families hosted by one of our nonprofit partners. Be sure to download [Understanding FAFSA & Financial Aid: Your Guide to Paying for College](#).



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