

FAFSA® Tip Sheet

Complete the FAFSA® to Get Money For School



The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) is the most important application you must complete to qualify for almost all types of financial aid (money for school). Colleges and career schools use the FAFSA form to decide how much financial aid you qualify to receive. Any student, regardless of family income, should complete a FAFSA to be considered for federal, state, and school financial aid programs.

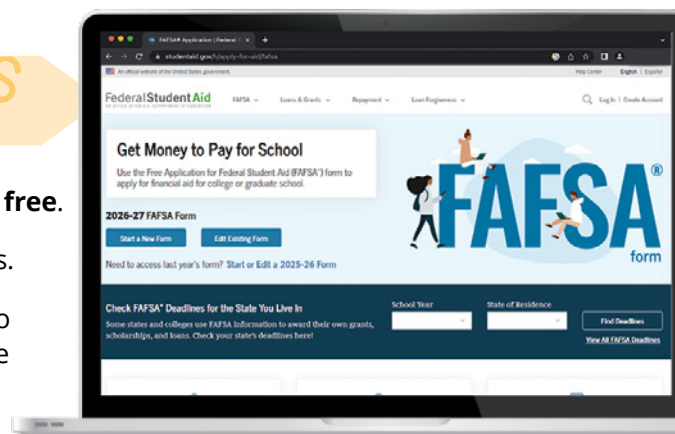
→ How to Apply

Visit [StudentAid.gov/fafsa](https://studentaid.gov/fafsa) to complete and submit your application for **free**.

You may need your 2024 federal tax returns and supporting documents.

If you complete your FAFSA online, each contributor will be required to provide consent and approval. The consent and approval will allow the IRS to import relevant tax data for most filers to their FAFSA.

The 2026-27 FAFSA will use your 2024 tax information.



Also Prepare...

- Your [Federal StudentAid.gov Account](https://studentaid.gov)
- Your Social Security number and alien registration number, if applicable
- Records of child support payments, including the total amount received for the last complete calendar year
- Current bank statements, records of stocks, bonds, 529 savings plans, and other investments
- List of colleges or career schools you want to include on your FAFSA
- A personal email address (not your school email!)

Dependent students will also need their contributor's name and email address.

NOTE: A contributor can be a student, student's spouse, biological or adoptive parent, or stepparent.

Log In 

Email, Phone, or FSA ID Username

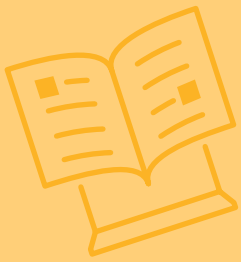
Password

Show Password

Log In

What is a Federal StudentAid.gov Account?

A Federal StudentAid.gov account is your verified account username and password. You will use the account you create at [StudentAid.gov/fsa-id](https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id) to log in to and sign the FAFSA. If you are a dependent student, you and all contributors must have their own username and password.



Get Help with the FAFSA!

Visit StudentAid.gov/fafsa for resources, videos, FAQ, and other helpful information to get you started on the FAFSA. Additional resources for students and families can be found at EducationPlanner.org.



Use the Correct Tax Information

If you plan to attend college from	You can submit the FAFSA from	Using income & tax information from
July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026	October 1, 2024–June 30, 2026	2023
July 1, 2026–June 30, 2027	October 1, 2025–June 30, 2027	2024
July 1, 2027–June 30, 2028	October 1, 2026–June 30, 2028	2025

Once Your FAFSA is Processed

You will be notified by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) that your FAFSA has been processed, and you can view or print your FAFSA Submission Summary online. Check your FAFSA Submission Summary for any errors. If you find mistakes, you will need to make necessary corrections by logging in at StudentAid.gov.

Your FAFSA will be shared with any schools you listed on it. Schools send out financial aid notifications to students once they're accepted. Your school may also require you to fill out additional forms for their school-specific programs. Contact your postsecondary schools for more information about financial aid notifications.

Next Steps for Financial Aid

Federal Student Aid (FSA) also shares your FAFSA information with schools and state agencies to determine your eligibility for other types of financial aid. After processing your information, you may receive further instructions from your state aid agency at the email address you provided on the FAFSA.

Did Your Circumstances Change?

Contact the financial aid department at your school for help if your family's income suddenly changed (such as high medical expenses not covered by insurance, divorce, or separation) or is less this year than what you reported on the FAFSA.



To learn more about the financial aid process, visit EducationPlanner.org.

