

The FAFSA: the most important



The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, is used by colleges and the federal government to determine your eligibility for grants, need-based scholarships, loans and work-study programs.

The FAFSA becomes available each year on October 1, and the sooner you submit it, the more aid will be available to you. Each school and some states have their own priority deadlines as well. You can [look up your state's deadline here](#).

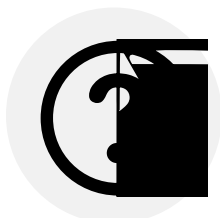
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Filing the FAFSA isn't as complicated or time-consuming as it sounds – a little preparation will help make the process go smoothly. Use [this worksheet](#) to get a sneak preview of what the form looks like and the questions it asks!



Before you can submit your FAFSA, you'll need to [create your FSA ID](#). You'll need an FSA ID to log in to your account, sign the FAFSA and make changes or add schools. You and your parent must create separate FSA IDs.

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questions you have at any step of the process.

On the FAFSA app and website, there are tooltips next to each question, [detailed help pages](#) and a chat option. There's also an 800 number to call (1-800-4FED-AID).

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The FAFSA even has its own YouTube channel! [Check it out](#) for step-by-step instructions on creating an

Don't forget to list our FAFSA Code:

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Here's a checklist of everything you and your FAFSA:

- An [FSA ID](#). Your FSA ID allows you to log in to your account, sign the FAFSA and make changes or add schools. You and your parent must create separate FSA IDs. Create this [? U V W](#)
- You and your parent's Social Security or Alien Registration number. Here's what to do if your parent [doesn't have a Social Security number](#).
- Driver's license (if you have one)
- Your and your parent's federal income tax returns and W-2s from 2019 (you can use the [IRS Data Retrieval Tool](#) to import this data!)
- Bank statement
- If applicable, other records of money earned, and records of investments and untaxed income

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myStudentAid app! It's free at the [Apple App Store](#)

(iOS) or the [Google Play](#) store (Android)

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The amount that the federal government believes your family can contribute to one year of college. Colleges use this, among other things, to determine ζ Q D Q F L D O Q H H G

This report shows you what data is on your FAFSA, some information about the aid for which you're eligible and your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). [See a sample SAR here.](#)

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An estimate of how much it costs to attend a college. The COA includes the price of tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies and other expenses associated with attending that school.

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The difference between Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and a college's Cost of Attendance (COA).

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How much it will cost you to attend a college for one year after your scholarships and grants, loans and work-study subtracted from the COA.
