

# FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH

## FEDERAL STUDENT AID

<http://studentaid.ed.gov>

<http://www2.ed.gov/parents>

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

### Financial Literacy

Financial literacy is the education on the management of personal finances and is an essential part of planning and paying for postsecondary education. You'll find links to Web sites that provide information on money management, handling credit and debt, and information on consumer protection.

### **Saving**

You should begin saving as early as possible. The average in-state tuition and fees for full-time undergraduate students for 2008-09, before student financial aid was deducted, was \$2,923 for a public two-year college and \$13,298 for a four-year public university. Private four-year schools averaged \$33,315 in 2008-09.

(Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Higher Education General Information Survey.)

Many state governments now offer innovative college savings programs. The [College Savings Plans Network](#) (an affiliate of the National Association of State Treasurers) provides information about these plans and links from their Web site to the many state plans.

### **Student Aid Eligibility**

Eligibility for most federal student aid is based on financial need and on several other factors.

The most basic eligibility requirements to receive federal student aid are that you must

- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen,
- have a valid Social Security number,
- register (if you haven't already) with the Selective Service, if you're a male between the ages of 18 and 25,
- maintain satisfactory academic progress in college or career school, and
- show you're qualified to obtain a postsecondary education by
  - having a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) certificate;
  - passing an approved ability-to-benefit test (if you don't have a diploma or GED certificate, a school can administer a test to determine whether you can benefit from the education offered at that school);
  - completing six credit hours or equivalent course work toward a degree or certificate;
  - meeting other federally approved standards your state establishes; or
  - completing a high school education in a homeschool setting approved under state law.

### **Federal Student Aid Programs**

We offer the following types of aid to help you pay for your education after high school.

- [Grants](#)—student aid funds that do not have to be repaid (other conditions apply).
- [Work-Study](#)—a part-time work program to earn money while you are in school.
- Federal Loans—student aid funds that you must repay with [interest](#).

Types of federal student loans:

- [Perkins](#)
- [Direct Stafford](#)
- [Direct PLUS \(graduate and professional degree student borrowers\)](#)
- [Direct PLUS \(parent borrowers\)](#)
- [Direct Loan Consolidation](#)

**Apply for Aid**

Applying for federal student aid is quicker and easier than ever. You can complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA<sup>SM</sup>) at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Follow these easy steps to simplify the process of applying for federal student aid.

1. Gather the documents needed to apply. For example, you'll need
  - income tax returns (yours and most likely your parents), W-2 forms, and other records of income, and
  - identification documents (social security cards, drivers licenses).
2. [Apply online at FAFSA on the Web<sup>SM</sup>](#). Submit a FAFSA. The FAFSA is used to apply for federal financial aid (grants, work-study, and loans). Also, many colleges, universities, and career schools use your FAFSA information to award state and college aid. The process is free. Never pay to apply for federal financial aid. You'll need a PIN to "sign" your online FAFSA, make corrections to the application, and more. If you are a dependent student, your parent will need one too. You can get your PIN before you begin or as you complete the FAFSA — it's up to you. [Get a PIN now!](#)  
**Note:** Complete the FAFSA each year, starting on January 1. Be sure you meet application deadlines. For deadlines, visit [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).
3. Get free information and help from
  - your school counselor,
  - the financial aid office at the college, university, or career school you plan to attend, or
  - the U.S. Department of Education at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) (**online chat is also available**), or call 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

### Apply for a PIN

We recommend that students and parents request a personal identification number (PIN) before applying for aid. The PIN can be used to electronically sign your FAFSA application, dramatically decreasing the processing time. You can also use your PIN to make online corrections to your FAFSA, access your Student Aid Report, sign the master promissory note for a federal student loan and access your federal student aid records online including your student loan history information on National Student Loan Data System<sup>SM</sup> (NSLDS<sup>SM</sup>)

## SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH

<http://www.fastweb.com/>

<http://www.scholarships.com/>

[www.fastaid.com/](http://www.fastaid.com/)

<http://www.studentscholarshipsearch.com/>

[www.upromise.com](http://www.upromise.com)

**\*\*DO NOT PAY FOR ACCESS TO FEDERAL STUDENT AID OR SCHOLARSHIP SEARCHES\*\***

## OTHER HELPFUL SEARCHES

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

<http://www.nvcis.intocareers.org/>

[www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com)

[www.mymajors.com](http://www.mymajors.com)

[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)

[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

TCA SAT/ACT test prep: [https://www.tcaprep.com/php2/login.php?school\\_code=1628136157](https://www.tcaprep.com/php2/login.php?school_code=1628136157)