Why the FAFSA® is important

(Like really, really important)

Filing the FAFSA® (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is your key to getting all kinds of financial aid for school—we're talking federal, state, and school aid. If you want to qualify for the most free money you can, and pay less out of your own pocket, you need to file the FAFSA®. Nearly everyone who submits the FAFSA® qualifies for some aid.

What you'll need to complete the FAFSA®

If you're a dependent student, you'll need this information for both you and your parents.

- You and your parents will need an FSA (Federal Student Aid) ID to access the FAFSA® and sign the form electronically. Apply for your FSA IDs at **studentaid.gov** 3-5 days before you plan on starting the FAFSA®.
- Your Social Security number
- Your parents' Social Security numbers (SSN). Parents without a social security number need to check the box stating "I do not have an SSN".
- **What's no longer needed?** Student and parent tax documents. All of this information will be automatically accessed from the IRS through the FUTURE Act Direct Data Exchange (FA-DDX).
- If your financial status has changed since you filed your 2023 taxes, you must complete the FAFSA® with the required information, and then follow up with your school's financial aid office for further advice.

Submission time frames

Academic year
2025 – 2026

Submit your FAFSA® beginning
December 1, 2024

Academic year
2026 – 2027

Submit your FAFSA® beginning
October 1, 2025
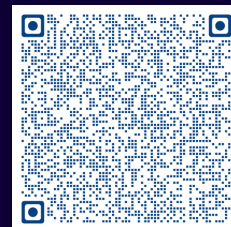
Academic year
2027 – 2028

Submit your FAFSA® beginning
October 1, 2026

FAFSA®Guide
by sallie

Looking for FAFSA® help?
Our guide walks you through all the FAFSA® questions to help you answer correctly so you can maximize your financial aid for college.
salliemae.com/fafsaguide