

6 Things You (And Your Parent/Guardian) Need Before You Fill Out the FAFSA

If you need financial aid to help you pay for college, it's important that you complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The good news? The FAFSA is simpler than ever! Did you know that, on average, it only takes 23 minutes complete?

Here is what you'll need to fill out the FAFSA:

1. **Your Federal Student Aid ID*** — In order to sign your FAFSA electronically, you'll need a Federal Student Aid ID. You can help to prevent processing delays by getting an FSA ID before you begin the FAFSA. Go to <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm> to find out how to get an ID and what to do if you forget your ID.
2. **Your birthdate.**
3. **Your social security number*** — If you don't know it, it can be found on your social security card or tax forms. If you don't have access to those, it may be on your birth certificate or permanent resident card. If you don't have one of those, or don't know where it is, ask your parent or legal guardian. If you're a dependent student, you'll need their help with portions of the FAFSA anyway. If you are not a U.S. citizen, you'll also need your Alien Registration Number.
4. **Your tax records*** — Use income records for the tax year prior-prior to the academic year for which you are applying: so if you are filling out the 2020-2021 FAFSA, you will need 2018 tax information. You may be able to automatically import your tax information into the FAFSA using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool.
5. **Records of your untaxed income*** — This includes a whole bunch of variables that may or may not apply to you, like child support received, interest income and veterans non-education benefits.
6. **Records of all your assets (money)*** — This includes savings and checking account balances, as well as investments like stocks and bonds and real estate.
7. **List of the school(s) you are interested in attending** — The schools you list on your FAFSA will automatically receive your FAFSA results electronically. They will use your FAFSA information to determine the types and amounts of financial aid you may receive. You can list up to 10 schools on your FAFSA. If you're applying to more than 10 schools, you can add more later. Be sure to list any school you're considering, even if you're not sure yet.

***If you're a dependent student, you will need this information for your PARENT(S) as well.

For more information: www.fafsa.ed.gov

How to Create or Manage an FSA ID

The Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) allows students and parents to identify themselves electronically to access FSA websites, including the FAFSA website. An FSA ID is the fastest way to sign your FAFSA application and have it processed. And it's the only way to access or correct your information online.

NOTE:

- Parents and students need to create separate FSA IDs.
- Social security numbers are needed to create an FSA ID. (Parents do not need to have a SS# to be able to “sign” your FAFSA with an FSA ID. They can still print out the signature page on the FAFSA, physically sign it, and mail it in.)
- Separate email addresses will be needed for parents and students to complete the process.
- If your parents already have an FSA ID from an older sibling who entered college, they will need to use/retrieve that same FSA ID that they already created.
- You or your parent will not be able to create a new FSA ID if you or your parent already have one. Once you create an account, and use your personal information to set up that account, you will not be able to create another new one; you will need to go through the process to retrieve or update the password.
- Save usernames and passwords! Take a screenshot, put it in your Notes app, or save as a contact

What To Do:

(To **create** your or your parent's ID)

1. Go to FAFSA.gov and click on “START HERE” (left side, middle of the page).
2. Click on the dot next to “I am the student”.
3. The FSA ID log in blanks should appear.
4. Click on the blue underlined “Create one” link. This should take you to the FSA ID creation site.
5. Read and follow the directions carefully. Prompts will be there to assist you.
6. Be sure to register an email address and phone number that you will have immediate access to.

What To Do:

(To **retrieve or manage** your or your parent's ID)

1. Follow the directions above to get to the FSA ID site.
2. Instead of staying on the “Create an FSA ID” tab, click on the “Manage My FSA ID” tab.
3. Log in to manage your account or update any personal information or click on “Forgot My Username” or “Forgot My Password” to begin retrieval/recreation process.
4. Retrieval process is much easier if you have registered an email address and phone number that you have access to in order to receive the “secure code” that you will need to type in to reset your account.