



A Step-by-Step Guide to Filling Out the FAFSA

Parents: Get access to money to pay for college by filling out the FAFSA today. Follow these 8 steps to get started!

1. Create a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID

- To complete the FAFSA, you must first create an FSA ID (username and password) that gives you access to Federal Student Aid's online systems and can serve as your legal signature.
- Create your FSA ID here: StudentAid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch.

2. Start the FAFSA form at fafsa.gov

- Go to fafsa.gov and click "Start Here" under the "New to FAFSA.gov" heading.
- If you are starting the FAFSA form on behalf of your child, choose the option on the right, "I am a parent, preparer, or student from a Freely Associated State."
- Enter your child's name, Social Security number, and date of birth. Then, click next.
- Choose which FAFSA form you'd like to complete.
 - ◆ 2020–21 FAFSA form if your child will be attending college between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021.
 - ◆ 2021–22 FAFSA form if your child will be attending college between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.
 - ◆ Both: If your child will be attending college during both time periods and hasn't completed the 2020–21 FAFSA form yet, complete that first, wait until it processes then go back in and complete the 2021–22 FAFSA form after.
- Were you given the option to submit a FAFSA Renewal? If your child is present, you should choose this option. If you do, a lot of the demographic information required will be pre-populated. Your child must be present because he or she will need to enter the student's FSA ID to continue. If your child is not present, you should select "Start NEW FAFSA."

3. Fill out the Student Demographics section

- After the introduction page, you will enter basic demographic information about your child. Make sure you enter your child's personal information exactly as it appears on his or her Social Security card so you don't encounter any errors. If you chose the FAFSA renewal option in step two, a lot of his or her personal information will be pre-populated to save you time.

4. List the schools to which you want your FAFSA information sent

- In the School Selection section, you'll add all the schools you want to receive your child's information. It is important that you add every school your child is considering, even if he or she hasn't yet applied or been accepted. You can remove schools at any time to make room for new schools and can add up to 10 schools at a time.

5. Answer the dependency status questions

- In this section, you'll be asked a series of questions to determine whether or not your child is required to provide your (parent) information on the FAFSA form.
- These dependency guidelines are set by Congress and are different from those used by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- Even if your child doesn't live with you, supports him or herself, and files taxes separately from you, he or she may still be considered a dependent student for federal student aid purposes.
- If your child is determined to be a dependent student, he or she will be required to report information about you. If your child is determined to be an independent student, you can skip the questions about providing parent information.

6. Fill out the Parent Demographics section

- This is where you'll provide your own demographic information. Are you divorced? Remarried? For specific guidance, review the U.S. Department of Education's website "Reporting Parent Information" [page](#).

7. Supply your financial information

- This step is simple if you use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT). The IRS DRT allows you to import your IRS tax information into the FAFSA form with just a few clicks. Using this tool also may reduce the amount of paperwork you need to provide to your child's school. To access the tool, indicate that you've "already completed" taxes on the parent finances page. If you're eligible, you'll see an option to "Link to IRS."
- Next, you'll likely be asked to provide your child's financial information.
- If your child filed taxes, the easiest way to complete this section is to use the IRS DRT. Your child would need to be present because he or she needs to provide his or her FSA ID to use the tool. If your child is not present, save and exit the application and instruct your child to log in with his or her FSA ID, retrieve the FAFSA form using the save key, and then use the IRS DRT to complete the FAFSA form and sign it.
- If your child did not file taxes, you can enter his or her financial information manually. If you don't have access to the information, save and exit the application and instruct your child to log in with his or her FSA ID, retrieve the FAFSA form using the save key, complete the FAFSA form, and sign it.

8. Sign your child's FAFSA form

- Both you and your child need to sign the FAFSA form. The quickest and easiest way to sign your child's FAFSA form is online with your FSA ID.
- If your child is not present, here's what you do:
 - ◆ Sign your child's FAFSA form with your FSA ID first.
 - ◆ Save and exit the application.
 - ◆ Instruct your child to log in using their FSA ID and sign the FAFSA form.
- If you have multiple children who need to complete the FAFSA form, you can use the same FSA ID to sign FAFSA forms for all of your children. You can also transfer your information into your other children's applications by choosing the option provided on the FAFSA confirmation page.

Congratulations, you have successfully completed the FAFSA!