

Get Ready for FAFSA!

The **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** is an important step in planning for college, university, trade school, or other eligible postsecondary programs. Completing the FAFSA helps determine a student's eligibility for **federal grants, work-study opportunities, student loans, and some state and college financial aid**. Even if you think your family may not qualify for assistance, **we encourage every eligible student to complete the FAFSA** because many schools and scholarship programs use FAFSA information when awarding financial aid.

Texas Graduation Requirement: Texas law requires graduating high school seniors to **complete and submit a FAFSA or submit the appropriate opt-out form** to satisfy this graduation requirement.

Preparing ahead can make the process much easier! Students and families should gather important information, create the necessary [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) accounts, and make sure everyone who needs to contribute information is ready before beginning the application.

Use the checklist below to get FAFSA-ready!

FAFSA Preparedness Checklist

For Students & Families

Before you begin the FAFSA, gather the following information so you're ready to complete the application.

Student Information

- ☐ Social Security number, if applicable
- ☐ Date of birth
- ☐ Personal email address that the student checks regularly
- ☐ Current mailing address and phone number
- ☐ Driver's license number, if applicable
- ☐ List of colleges, universities, or career/trade schools the student is considering

StudentAid.gov Account

- ☐ Create your **StudentAid.gov account**
- ☐ Make sure you can log in before FAFSA completion day
- ☐ Save your username and password in a secure place
- ☐ Make sure your name, date of birth, and Social Security number are entered correctly

Parent/Contributor Information

Depending on the student's circumstances, one or more parents or other contributors may need to provide information.

- ☐ Parent/contributor's legal name
- ☐ Date of birth
- ☐ Social Security number, if applicable
- ☐ Current email address
- ☐ Parent/contributor creates their **own StudentAid.gov account**
- ☐ Make sure the parent can successfully log in before starting the FAFSA

Important: Students and parents should **not share a StudentAid.gov account**. Each person who needs an account should create their own.

Financial Information

Have these available in case they are needed:

- ☐ Federal income tax information
- ☐ Records of child support received, if applicable
- ☐ Current balances of cash, savings, and checking accounts
- ☐ Information about investments and other assets, if applicable
- ☐ Business or farm information, if required

Much of the federal tax information can be transferred directly from the IRS with the contributor's consent, but having financial records handy can make the process easier.

College & Career Plans

- ☐ Make a list of schools the student may apply to
- ☐ Include **backup schools**—you don't have to be accepted before listing a school on the FAFSA
- ☐ Check each school's **financial-aid priority deadline**
- ☐ Look for scholarships while completing the FAFSA—don't wait for FAFSA results to begin applying

Before FAFSA Day

- ☐ Student has created and tested their StudentAid.gov account
- ☐ Required parent/contributor has created and tested their account
- ☐ Everyone knows their login information

- ☐ Student and parent have access to the email addresses connected to their accounts
- ☐ Financial information is gathered
- ☐ College list is ready
- ☐ Set aside time for the student **and** parent/contributor to complete their required portions

★ Remember

FAFSA = Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Completing the FAFSA can help students qualify for **federal grants, work-study, student loans, and some state and college financial aid.**

The FAFSA is **FREE to complete.** Never pay a company simply to submit the FAFSA for you.

Official FAFSA website: [StudentAid.gov FAFSA](https://studentaid.gov)