

# Financial Aid 101

College is within your reach, and financial aid can help! Whether you're attending a university, community college, or trade school, there are options to cover the costs. From grants to scholarships, this guide will show you how to apply, where to find support, and key deadlines to keep in mind. Let's get started on your path to success!



## What is financial aid?

- Financial aid is money for educational expenses for college or career school
- Grants do not have to be repaid (often called “gift aid”)
- Loans have to be repaid with interest
- Work-study is money earned by the student at a job (often on campus) that helps the student pay his or her educational expenses. This money does not have to be repaid and is not taken into account in assessing a student’s eligibility for financial aid the following year.

## How much federal student aid can I get?

- A student of any age can use *Federal Student Aid Estimator*, [studentaid.gov/aid-estimator](https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator), to predict potential federal aid.
- Purpose of the tool is to provide students with an estimate of how much federal aid they might be eligible for.
- The *Federal Student Aid Estimator* asks for information such as earnings, savings, and taxes and then provides estimate of how much the student might get from the federal student aid programs.
- Students and parents should remember that:
  - The *Federal Student Aid Estimator* is not the official federal aid application.
  - **The *Federal Student Aid Estimator* provides information only about federal aid; students also should apply for institutional aid, as well as private scholarships.**

## Not sure where to start with financial aid?

### Create your FSA ID.

- The FSA ID is a username and password combination that allows you to sign your FAFSA for electronically. Other benefits include access the myStudentAid app, sign loan contracts, and access information online. Parent will need to create their own FSA ID.
- Go to <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm> to create your FSA ID.

### Your FSA ID is used to sign legally binding documents electronically.

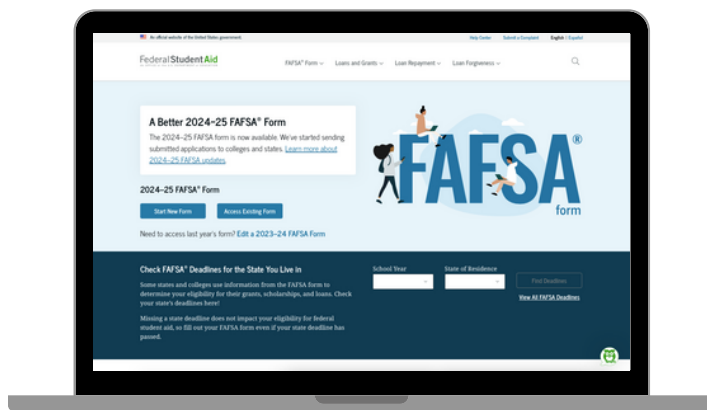
- It has the same legal status as a written signature. Don't give your FSA ID to anyone or allow anyone to create an FSA ID for you---not even your parent, your child, or someone helping you fill out the FAFSA form. Sharing your FSA ID is like teaching someone to forge your signature; and it could put you at risk of identity theft!

### Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid

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

## What Happens After You Submit Your FAFSA?

- Any schools that are listed on the student's FAFSA and that have accepted the student's application for admission will contact the student to offer an aid "package" (a list of aid the student is eligible for at that school).
- A school might ask for additional paperwork, either to verify information on the FAFSA, or to submit an application for financial aid from the school's funds.



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

## Where can I get more info?

For help with the FAFSA, visit [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov) where you can access resources and support.

You can also reach out for assistance by calling **1-800-433-3243**, sending an email, or using the live chat feature for quick answers to your questions.