Eligibility requirements state that you must:

→ demonstrate financial need

→ be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen

→ have a valid Social Security number

→ register (if you have not already) with Selective Service, if you’re a male between ages 18-25

→ have a high school diploma or GED
How do I apply for federal student aid?

1. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

   → Use FAFSA on the web to fill out your application

   → You can apply beginning January 1, 2012; for the 2012-13 academic year

2. Review your Student Aid Report (SAR).

   → After you apply, you’ll receive a Student Aid Report (SAR).
   → The SAR will contain your eligibility information
   → Review your SAR and make any corrections if necessary.
   → The schools you list will receive your SAR electronically

3. Contact the school(s) you might attend.

   → Make sure the financial aid office at each school you apply to has all the information necessary to determine your eligibility
   → If you're eligible, the school will send you an award letter indicating your reward letter
Steps to Federal Student Aid

STEP 1
Get free information and help from a school counselor, the financial aid office at the college or trade school you plan to attend, or the U.S. Department of Education at www.studentaid.ed.gov or 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243). Free help is available any time during the application process. You should never have to pay for help.

STEP 2
Get a Federal Student Aid PIN, a personal identification number. A PIN lets you apply, “sign” your online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA™), make corrections to your application information, and more—so keep it safe. Go to www.pin.ed.gov to get one.

STEP 3
Complete the FAFSA between Jan. 1, 2011, and June 30, 2012 (no exceptions to either date!). BUT, apply as soon as possible after Jan. 1 to meet school and state aid deadlines (see note at bottom of page). Apply online at FAFSA on the Web™ (the faster and easier way) by going to www.fafsa.gov. If you don’t already have your PIN, you can get it when you complete the online FAFSA.

STEP 4
Collect the documents needed to apply, including income tax returns and W-2 forms (and other records of income). A full list of what you need is at www.fafsa.gov. Tax return not completed at the time you apply? Estimate the tax information, apply, and correct information later.
Federal Student Aid process: In summary

**PREPARE**
This guide gives you information about federal student aid programs, as well as other means of paying for your education after high school.

**APPLY**
Too many students assume they won't qualify or think the FAFSA looks difficult to complete. The improved online FAFSA is much simpler than it used to be. It's a good idea to apply. You may be surprised by the amount of aid for which you qualify.

**RECEIVE**
We'll inform you and your selected schools about your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Then the schools will tell you how much—and what sorts of—aid you qualify for.

**REPAY**
If your aid is in the form of a loan, this guide will give you general information on the repayment process. You can find detailed information on repaying student loans at [www.studentaid.ed.gov/repaying](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/repaying) as well as the publication *Your Federal Student Loans* at [www.studentaid.ed.gov/pubs](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/pubs).
The FAFSA is a free online tool that will provide you with early estimates of your family’s eligibility for federal student aid.

After completing the FAFSA4caster, a worksheet will be displayed to help you determine the net cost of attending your chosen school. It will summarize the cost, the financial aid possible and the difference your family will be responsible for.
The E.F.C. is calculated from the information you report on the FAFSA and according to a formula established by law.

The E.F.C. will appear on your SAR you receive.

The E.F.C. formula is basically the same for all applicants; however, if your family has unusual circumstances, your financial aid administrator can use professional judgment authority to adjust the cost of attendance or the information used to calculate your E.F.C.
**Other Sources of Information**

School Financial Aid Office
Be sure to contact the school that you are applying to by finding out what types of financial aid they accept.

AmeriCorps is a program that provides full time educational awards in return for community service work. Visit www.americorps.org

State Higher Education Agency can give you information about state aid. Visit www.ed.gov/Programs/bastmp/SHEA.htm

Public Libraries/Internet are an excellent source of information. Use keywords financial aid or scholarship to start. Be aware of scams. For more information visit www.Studentaid.ed.gov
Other Sources of Information

Business and labor organizations may have programs to help employees or members of their families.

Foundations, religious organizations, fraternities or sororities and town/city clubs usually offer financial aid.

The armed forces offer financial aid for service members and their families. Visit the U.S. Department of Defense at [www.todaysmilitary.com](http://www.todaysmilitary.com), click on “benefits” and then go to “tuition support”

US Department of Veteran Affairs: If you are the dependent of a veteran, education benefits may be available. Information is available at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)

College.gov is a website that motivates students with inspirational stories and information about planning, preparing, and paying for college.
It’s a Jungle Out There … Be Careful!

Scholarship scams

Be careful when searching for information on student financial aid. The Federal Trade Commission cautions students to look for these telltale lines when speaking with a service representative or reading a service’s literature.

“The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back”
“I just need your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship”

Identity theft

Identity theft occurs when someone gets your personal information, such as your social security number or driver’s license number and uses it to obtain credit cards, loans (including student), bank accounts, merchandise or services in your name.

Even though it is not your fault, you’re the one who has to clean up the damage, which can take months or even years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Type of Aid</th>
<th>Eligibility (i.e., who can get the grant)</th>
<th>Award Amounts</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grants and Work-Study</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Pell Grant</td>
<td>Grant: does not have to be repaid</td>
<td>Available almost exclusively to undergraduates; <strong>student</strong> may receive up to 2 consecutive maximum awards in a year if attending school year-round</td>
<td>$609–$5,550 for 2010–11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)</td>
<td>Grant: does not have to be repaid</td>
<td>For undergraduates with exceptional financial need; Federal Pell Grant recipients take priority; funds depend on availability at school</td>
<td>$100–$4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant | Grant: does not have to be repaid unless you fail to carry out the service obligation In that case, you must repay a TEACH Grant as a Direct Unsubsidized Loan with interest accrued from the date the grant was disbursed | For undergraduate, postbaccalaureate, and graduate students who are taking or will be taking course work necessary to become an elementary or secondary school teacher; recipient must sign an Agreement to Serve promising to teach full-time in a high-need field for four complete academic years (within eight years of completing academic program for which the TEACH Grant was received) at a low-income elementary or secondary school or educational service agency | Up to $4,000 a year | **Undergraduate students:** total amount may not exceed $16,000  
**Graduate student:** total amount may not exceed $8,000 |
<p>| Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant           | Grant: does not have to be repaid                                             | For students who are not Pell-eligible; whose parent or guardian died as a result of military service in Iraq or Afghanistan after Sept. 11, 2001; and who, at the time of the parent’s or guardian’s death, were less than 24 years old or were enrolled at least part-time at an institution of higher education | Maximum is same as Pell maximum; payment adjusted for less-than-full-time study |                                                                        |
| Federal Work-Study                          | Money earned while attending school; does not have to be repaid              | For undergraduate and graduate students                                                                                         | No annual minimum or maximum amounts      | <strong>Jobs can be on campus or off campus; students are paid at least federal minimum wage</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Type of Aid and Interest Rate</th>
<th>Eligibility (i.e., who can get the loan)</th>
<th>Award Amounts</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Perkins Loans</td>
<td>Loan: must be repaid 5%</td>
<td>Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at least half-time Must demonstrate financial need</td>
<td>Undergraduate students: up to $5,500 a year Graduate and professional students: up to $8,000 a year Amount actually received depends on financial need, amount of other aid, availability of funds at school</td>
<td>Must be repaid to the school that made the loan Up to 10 years to repay, depending on the amount owed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William D. Ford Direct Stafford Loans</td>
<td>Loan: must be repaid</td>
<td>Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at least half-time Must demonstrate financial need</td>
<td>$3,500–$8,500, depending on year in school</td>
<td>The U.S. Department of Education is the lender and pays interest on the loan while you are in school at least half-time and during grace and deferment periods Between 10 and 25 years to repay, depending on amount owed and type of repayment plan selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Subsidized Stafford Loans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans</td>
<td>Loan: must be repaid 6.8%</td>
<td>Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at least half-time Financial need is not required</td>
<td>$5,500–$20,500 (less any subsidized amount received for the same period), depending on year in school and dependency status</td>
<td>The U.S. Department of Education is the lender The borrower is responsible for paying all interest on the loan starting on the date the loan is first disbursed Between 10 and 25 years to repay, depending on amount owed and type of repayment plan selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Type of Aid and Interest Rate</td>
<td>Eligibility (i.e., who can get the loan)</td>
<td>Award Amounts</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Loans (continued)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct PLUS Loans (for parents and graduate and professional degree students)</td>
<td>Loan: must be repaid 7.9%</td>
<td>Graduate students enrolled at least half-time and Parents of dependent undergraduate students to help pay the cost of their child’s education Financial need is not required Must not have adverse credit history</td>
<td>Cost of attendance (determined by the school) minus any other financial aid received; there is no minimum amount</td>
<td>The U.S. Department of Education is the lender Loan is unsubsidized (you are responsible for paying all interest)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Loan Consolidation | | | | |
| Direct Consolidation Loans | Loan: must be repaid Fixed rate is based on the weighted average of the interest rates on the loans being consolidated, rounded up to the nearest one-eighth of 1% Cannot exceed 8.25% | Borrowers with multiple federal student loans | Depends on the amount of the loans | Combine multiple federal student loans into one loan A parent loan cannot be consolidated with the student’s loan(s) and become the student’s responsibility to pay |
Useful Websites

Find detailed information on Federal Student Aid programs; research school and career choices; learn about the entire federal student aid process, eligibility, and the application process; and access other Federal Student Aid websites and publications online.

Create a “MyFSA,” a federal student aid personalized folder to help you decide on a career, research schools, and find scholarships. Track your progress in the college planning and application process and access other sources of nonfederal aid.

Use your Federal Student PIN, to access all your federal student loan records and obtain contact information from your loan servicer.

To report student aid fraud (including identity theft), waste, or abuse of US Department of Education funds.

Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)
1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
P.O. Box 84
Washington, DC 20044-0084
TTY users can call 1-800-730-8913.
Callers in locations without access to 1-800 numbers may call 319-337-5665 (this is not a toll-free number).