

**Before you start:**

- **Make a FSA ID for the your child and yourself :** <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>
  - Have an email address that you regularly use
  - Do not share this with anyone it is your legal signature on these documents
  
- **Documents at hand:**
  - Your social security and child's social security
  - Your and child's ( if they have one ) driver's license number if you have one
  - Your Alien Registration number if you are not a U.S. citizen
  - Federal tax information\* or tax returns including IRS W-2 information ( From the most recent year )
    - IRS 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ
      - Foreign tax return and/or tax return for Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or Palau. Records of your untaxed income, such as child support received, interest income, and veterans noneducation benefits, for you, and for your parents if you are a dependent student
  - Information on cash; savings and checking account balances; investments, including stocks and bonds and real estate but not including the home in which you live; and business and farm assets for you, and for your parents if you are a dependent student
  
- **Finalized List of Universities your child is applying to**
  
- **Asset information:** You must report the net worth of all these assets as of the date you and your parents sign the FAFSA, so before you record any totals, be sure your family pays off all its bills and pays down any consumer debt, like credit card balances.
  - The value of cash, savings, and checking accounts held under the names of the parents and the student
  - Net worth of all the parents' and student's investments (except for retirement plans), including stocks, bonds, CDs, money market funds, mutual funds, commodities, trust funds, education IRAs, state-based college savings plans (except pre-paid tuition plans), and real estate holdings (rental property and second homes); you need not include the equity in your family's primary residence.
  - The net worth of any family business and/or farm (excluding farms that are principal residences)

**When to start:** As soon as possible, the FAFSA has a rolling deadline and opens October 1.

**Filling out the Fafsa:** Be as accurate as possible when filling this form out any mistake found can have you start the process over

- **Student Demographics and Eligibility**
  - The student's educational plans and high school
  - The highest level of education completed by the student's mother and father
  - The student's state of legal residence
  - The types of aid for which he or she wants to be considered (To maximize your chances for receiving aid, you should indicate a willingness to accept loans and work-study. You can always change your mind later.)
  - Registration for the Selective Service (If you're male, age 18–25, you may use this section to register. In most instances, male students must be registered to receive federal student aid.)
  - Drug offenses (If you've never been convicted of a drug offense, simply check the "No" box and move on. If, however, you do have a past drug-related conviction, you will not be considered for federal aid; however, you may still receive state or institutional aid, so it's still worth filing the FAFSA.)
- **School Section**
  - have list of universities - up to 10 schools
- **Dependency Determination**
  - Your child will need your help filling this out unless they file as independent.
    - To qualify as independent they must :
      - 24 years old by December 31 of the award year
      - A graduate or professional student during the award year
      - Married (or separated)
      - A parent or have other dependents who currently receive more than half their support from you
      - An orphan or a ward of the court
      - A veteran of the US Armed Forces
- **Parent Demographic Information**
  - Have social security number and number of people in household
- **Parent Tax Information**
  - Automatically fill in your tax Information using the IRS data retrieval tool
    - Make sure to preview all information before agreeing
- **Parent Financial Information**
  - Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) is based off the family's gross income
    - Be exact in numbers and truthful !
  - Have asset information at hand
- **Student Tax Information**
  - If your child works make sure to file taxes and report on Fafsa
- **Student financial information**
  - If dependent mark as 0
- **Sign and Submit**

**After Filing Fafsa: Three day to three weeks after you will receive Student Aid Report**

- This document lists your answers to the questions on your FAFSA and gives you some basic information about your aid eligibility.

- Quickly make any necessary corrections and submit them to the FAFSA processor.

Other helpful resources:

**<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/prepare-for-college/checklists/12th-grade>**

**<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out#get-fsaid>**

**<http://www.collegexpress.com/articles-and-advice/financial-aid/articles/applying-financial-aid/how-fill-out-fafsa-step-step/>**