

What to Know about the 24-25 FAFSA



To apply for financial aid, students need to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Whether you have applied before or not, these tips, reminders, and terms will prepare you for a smooth process.

The FAFSA will open in December (TBD) this year.

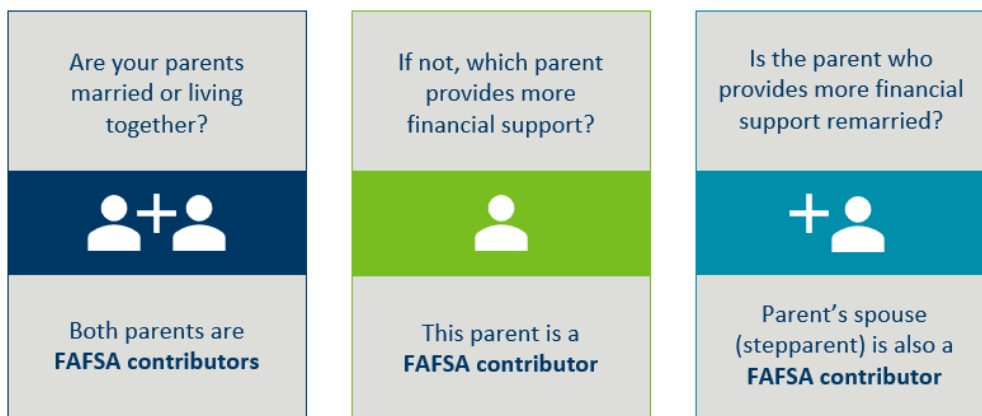
The good news is the FAFSA will be much simpler than it has ever been! Get ready with these next steps:

- Everyone who provides financial information on the FAFSA needs to create a Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) before accessing the FAFSA. [Create your FSA ID now!](#)
- [Register to attend free college planning and financial aid virtual events in October and January.](#)
- [Learn about the different types of financial aid and how the process works.](#)
- Pay attention to communications from your school's Career and College Center and/or counseling team: more financial aid news will be coming soon.

For dependent students, parent financial information is needed on the FAFSA.

A **contributor** is anyone who is required to provide consent and financial information on the FAFSA, including the student, a parent, and sometimes the parent's spouse (stepparent). Contributors are not required to financially contribute towards the cost of the student's education.

- Dependent students will start the FAFSA and determine which parent/guardian's information they need to include on their FAFSA (there is a tool called "Parent Wizard" that can help with this).
- Students invite contributor(s) to fill out the contributor section of the FAFSA by email. Each contributor will log in with their own unique FSA ID to provide their financial information.



A unique FSA ID is required for each student and FAFSA contributor.

Your FSA ID is created when you set up an account on studentaid.gov. It is a unique identifier for each contributor who needs to access and include any information on the FAFSA. Other things to know:

- A unique email address and phone number are required for each person creating FSA ID.
- A Social Security Number (SSN) is used to create an FSA ID, but a new process will allow those without SSN to create one as well. More information from Federal Student Aid is forthcoming.

- Processing time can take a few days so create your FSA ID well in advance of starting the FAFSA.
- FSA ID will require a password reset after 90 days of inactivity (logging in/out).
- [Use this worksheet to help you create an FSA ID.](#)

Financial information for each contributor is imported directly from IRS.

After creating an FSA ID, contributors will use it to give consent for their financial information to be transferred through Direct Data Exchange from IRS – *this includes non-tax-filers.*

- **If any FAFSA contributor (student or parent) does not provide consent for Direct Data Exchange, the student will not be eligible for federal student aid.**

There are some key changes to FAFSA terms, process and formula.

If you have filed a FAFSA in the past, the 2024-2025 version will have some terms and updates that are different from what you know. Some of these changes are detailed below. If you haven't filed a FAFSA before, stick to the column on the right! [Visit Federal Student Aid for more information.](#)



Terminology

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
Parent
Dependency Status
Student Aid Report
IRS Data Retrieval Tool (optional)

Student Aid Index (SAI)
Contributor
Student Personal Circumstances
FAFSA Submission Summary
Direct Data Exchange (required with consent)

Process

Financial aid parent could access the FAFSA without creating an FSA ID first.
Financial information transferred from IRS by the Data Retrieval Tool was optional ; students and parents could manually enter information.
Divorced households: Financial aid parent was determined by who the student lived with most in the previous 12 months.
Student could enter up to 10 colleges.

Financial aid contributor cannot access the FAFSA without creating an FSA ID prior to starting the form.
Financial information is required to be imported from the IRS through Direct Data Exchange. Each contributor must provide consent or the student will not be eligible for federal student aid.
Divorced households: Financial aid contributor determined by parent who provides more financial support.
Student may enter up to 20 colleges.

Formula

Household size manually entered by student.
When two or more students from one family were enrolled in college, Expected Family Contribution (EFC) was divided among them.
Small businesses and/or family farms were reported as assets, depending on the size.
The lowest EFC was \$0

Family size imported from tax information via IRS.
When two or more students from one family are enrolled in college, Student Aid Index (SAI) will not be divided among them.
All small businesses and/or family farms must be reported as assets, regardless of size.
The lowest SAI is -\$1,500