

# Getting Financial Aid for School

Going to college or career school can cost a lot of money. Learn how to apply for financial aid and avoid scams.



## How do I pay for college or career school?

To get financial aid, or money to help pay for school, start by applying for federal aid.

Federal financial aid is from the government. It can be student loans, grants, or work-study. The college or career school will tell you what you qualify for when you're accepted.

Federal student loans are a better deal for most students than private loans. Private loans can be from a bank, credit union, state agency, or school.

You don't have to repay money you get from grants or work-study programs. You will have to repay any federal or private loans you get, plus interest.

Learn more at [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). That's the Department of Education's website to help students with financial aid.

## How do I apply for federal financial aid?

Use the FAFSA form. FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It's the only way to apply for federal, state, or school financial aid. Apply at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov), a website managed by the Department of Education.

At [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov), you'll create an FSA ID to get into your account. FSA ID stands for Federal Student Aid Identification. It's a username and password you create to complete the FAFSA. Never share your FSA ID with anyone else. Scammers could use it to get into your account.

You fill out your FAFSA form every year you're in school. The FAFSA is free. You can fill out the form yourself. Don't pay anyone to do it for you.

## How do I avoid scholarship scams?

A scholarship is money you don't have to repay. To be considered for a scholarship, you usually have to apply. Nobody can guarantee you'll get a scholarship. If someone does, that person is a scammer.

- ▶ Scammers will tell you there's a fee to collect your scholarship.
- ▶ Scammers will ask for your bank account or credit card number.

Never pay to get a scholarship. That's always a scam.

If you spot a scam, tell the Federal Trade Commission:

- ▶ Go online at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/report-fraud)
- ▶ Call **1-877-382-4357**

