

# 2021-2022 FAFSA Completion Guide

## FAFSA application process

Visit [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) to create an FSA User ID so you can submit and sign your FAFSA online. You and at least one parent need an FSA User ID.

Complete the FAFSA and submit as soon as possible starting October 1. Apply online at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov).

If selected for verification, turn in documentation to the **Financial Planning Office** to complete your file.

Review your **Student Aid Report (SAR)** to find out your family's **EFC (Expected Family Contribution)**. Make corrections and resubmit if necessary.

## What you will need:

**Dependent students will also need the following information for their parents.**

Personal Information for Student

Student Demographics School Selection Dependency Status Parent Demographics Financial Information Sign & Submit Confirmation

**STUDENT INFORMATION** ← Tells whose information

Because the FAFSA belongs to the student, "you" and "your" always (unless otherwise noted) refer to the student.

Your last name: Dependent **HELP** → ?

Your first name: Student ?

Your middle initial: ?

Your Social Security Number: ?

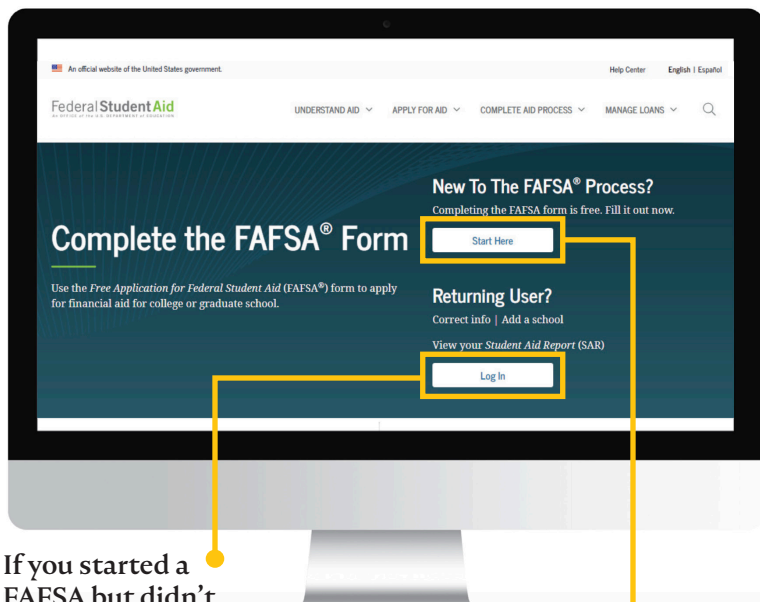
Your date of birth: 02/09/1999 **Goes to next screen** → ?

PREVIOUS NEXT



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If you started a FAFSA but didn't finish, you will click here.

**Start your FAFSA here.** Make sure you select the FAFSA for the year you will be entering college.

- Email address or mobile phone number.
- FSA ID for **both** the student and the dependent student's parent/stepparent.
- Your Social Security number.
- Your alien registration number (if you are not a U.S. citizen.)
- Your 2019 federal income tax returns, W-2s, and other records of money earned.
- Bank statements and records of investments (if applicable.)
- Records of untaxed income (if applicable.)
- Parents' date of birth, Social Security number, marital status, and date parent was married, divorced, or widowed.



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## Federal Student Aid USER ID

Use your FSA ID to confirm your identity when you access your financial aid information and electronically sign your federal student aid documents, including the FAFSA.

**1** Visit [studentaid.gov/](https://studentaid.gov/)

**2** Create a memorable username and password.

**3** Enter your name, date of birth, Social Security number, contact information, and challenge questions and answers.

**4** Confirm your cell phone number using the secure code, which will be texted to the number you provided.

**5** Confirm your email address using the secure code, which will be sent to the email address you entered when you created your FSA ID.

Keep track of your FSA ID since you'll use it frequently throughout the federal student aid application process each year.

**Tip for Step 4:** Providing a mobile phone number will give you access to make it easier to log in to ED online systems, unlock your account, retrieve your forgotten username, or reset your forgotten password.

## Are you dependent or independent?

If you answer "Yes" to any question below, you are considered an independent student.

- Were you born before January 1, 1998?
- As of today, are you married? (Answer "Yes" if you are separated but not divorced.)
- At the beginning of the 2021–2022 school year, will you be working on a master's or doctoral program (such as an MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, or graduate certificate, etc.)?
- Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training?
- Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?
- Do you now have or will you have children **who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022?**
- Do you have dependents (other than your children or spouse) **who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you, now and through June 30, 2022?**
- At any time since you turned age 13** were both of your parents deceased, or were you in foster care, or were you a dependent or ward of the court?
- As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you now or were you, upon reaching the age of majority, an emancipated minor (released from control by your parent or guardian)?
- As determined by a court in your legal state of residence, are you now or were you, upon reaching the age of majority, in legal guardianship (of someone other than your parent or stepparent)? Note: Custody is different from guardianship.
- At any time on or **after** July 1, 2020, did your high school or school district homeless liaison, the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center, or transitional living program **or** a college financial aid administrator determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

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## Whose information do I use?

The intent of the FAFSA is to get an idea of your household income. Use the guide on page 2 to determine if you are a dependent student. If you are dependent, use this guide to figure out which parent's information to include.

- Are your parents married to each other? If yes, then report information for both parents on the FAFSA.
- Do your parents live together? If yes, then report information for both parents on the FAFSA, even if they were never married, are divorced, or are separated.
- Did you live with one parent more than the other over the past 12 months?
  - If yes, then report information on the FAFSA for the parent you lived with more. **Also, if this parent remarried**, you will need to report information for your stepparent on the FAFSA even though he or she may not be responsible for your college costs.
  - If no, then report information on the FAFSA for the parent who provided more financial support over the past 12 months or in the last year you received support. Also, if this parent is remarried, you will need to report information for your stepparent on the FAFSA.

The following people are **NOT** your parents **UNLESS** they have legally adopted you:

- Widowed stepparents
- Grandparents
- Foster parents
- Legal guardians
- Older brothers or sisters
- Aunts or uncles

### SIMPLE STEPS TO TRANSFER TAX INFORMATION INTO YOUR FAFSA®

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) Electronically Transfers Your Federal Tax Return Information into your FAFSA®

#### For Students and Parents



To learn more about the IRS DRT, visit [StudentAid.gov/irsdrt](https://StudentAid.gov/irsdrt)

Graphic adapted from U.S. Department of Education

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## Helpful Hints

### ASSETS

- Asset net worth means current value of the assets minus what is owed on those assets.
- Assets include: money in cash, savings, and checking accounts; businesses (over 100 employees); investment farms; other investments, such as real estate (other than the home in which you live); UGMA and UTMA accounts for which you are the owner; stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit, etc.
- Assets do not include: the home and farm where you live; UGMA and UTMA accounts for which you are the custodian but not the owner; value of life insurance; retirement plans (401[k] plans, pension funds, annuities, non-education IRAs, Keogh plans, etc.)

### COMMUNICATION

- Use a personal email (not school) that you check often for the FSA ID and the FAFSA. You will receive IMPORTANT information and directions via email.

### DATA SECURITY

- Each email address or mobile phone number can be used with only one FSA ID. If you share an email address with someone else, then only one of you will be able to use that email address to create an FSA ID. This applies to your mobile phone number too.
- Keep track of all usernames and passwords in a safe, secure place. You will need your FSA ID every year you complete a FAFSA, as well as to log in to all Department of Education websites.


### FIRST YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS

- The grade level for high school seniors and first-year students will be “Never attended college and 1st year undergraduate” even if you have taken AP or dual credit courses.
- The question “What degree or certificate will you be working on when you begin the 2021–2022 school year?” is referring to the category or type of program and NOT college major. Refrain from choosing “Other/undecided.” **First-year college students will not be in a graduate program.**

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Name and Social Security number need to match what is on your Social Security card and tax forms, if applicable.
- Tax filers **should** use the **IRS Data Retrieval Tool** to transfer income information from the IRS to the FAFSA if possible (both student and parent).
- Review confirmation page and check your email as an indicator the FAFSA was submitted correctly.

### WEBSITE NAVIGATION

- To get clarification and guidance for each data field, click on the question mark  next to each data box to show HELP text.
- The top of the screen will indicate whose information is needed on that page, either STUDENT or PARENT. When the FAFSA says “you,” it is referring to the student (not the parent).
- Make sure that you select the correct form. High school seniors graduating in 2021 will need to complete the 2021–2022 FAFSA.
- **Your FAFSA will reset after 45 days if it isn’t submitted.**

## Next Steps

### VERIFICATION

Colleges are required to verify the information provided on some FAFSAs. Most people selected for verification are picked at random.

If you’re selected for verification, you’ll be contacted by the college. The college or, in some cases, an agency with which the college has contracted will let you know what forms and information you need to supply.

 **If you are chosen for verification, DON’T PANIC. YOU HAVE DONE NOTHING WRONG!**

Don’t delay. It’s important to complete verification as soon as you’re notified so there are no delays with your financial aid.

### SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If you believe you have special circumstances that were not accurately reflected on your FAFSA, contact the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend.

### AWARD NOTIFICATIONS

Once your FAFSA has been processed, your award notifications will come from the college(s) you listed on your FAFSA, once you’ve been accepted. Some colleges begin sending award letters in the fall, but many will wait until the spring.