

FUND YOUR future®

MONEY FOR COLLEGE!

Grants & Scholarships

pages 2, 4, 22

TWO STEPS

Cal Grants

pages 10, 16

PLUS

Student loan guidance

page 26



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CSAC.StudentAidCommission](http://www.facebook.com/CSAC.StudentAidCommission)

Welcome to Fund Your Future®

This workbook is designed with you in mind. Use the checklists, worksheets and charts to stay on track, meet deadlines and manage your documents, time and money. Learn helpful terms (page 37) and websites (pages 2 and 22) that will help you locate more information and options for financial aid and access to college. Most financial aid is based on demonstrated financial need; don't disqualify yourself! Submit the FAFSA and you may be surprised. Use the "My action plan" worksheet on the back cover to write down important dates.

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The 411

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The term **college** in this workbook refers to any college, university, graduate or professional school, career college, technical or vocational program, or other educational institution beyond high school.

Acknowledgments

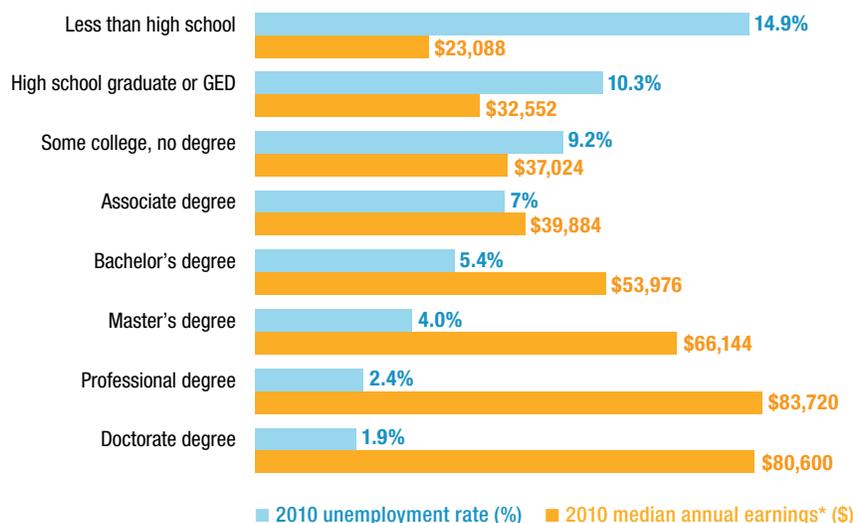
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California Student Aid Commission

Barry Keene, Chair
Lynne de Bie, Secretary
Nancy Anton
Brian E. Conley
Alexander Gonzalez
Lawrence Hershman
Enrique G. Murillo, Jr.
Dontae D. Rayford
Israel Rodriguez
Fred Wood

Learn more, earn more



Not only can college graduates earn more during their lifetime than high school graduates, but they'll also have a better chance of earning it in a career they enjoy.



*Median is the middle of a distribution; half the earnings are above the median and half are below. Earnings are for full-time workers age 25 and above.

Source: www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm.



Qualifying for financial aid

Top 10 things you must do to qualify for most federal and state student aid:

- 1 Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA.** You apply for most financial aid by completing the FAFSA. The easiest and fastest way is online at www.fafsa.gov. For help or other FAFSA options call 1-800-433-3243. The FAFSA asks for information about you, your family, your finances and your college plans. You'll find more information starting on page 8.
- 2 Submit any other applications** or information your college or state may require, and submit your verified GPA to apply for a Cal Grant by **March 2** (page 10).
- 3 Demonstrate financial need** (not required for unsubsidized federal Stafford loans, federal PLUS loans and some scholarships). See page 9.
- 4 Have a high school diploma** or its equivalent (GED), complete a high school education in a state-approved home-school setting, or pass one of the "ability to benefit" tests approved by the U.S. Department of Education (for federal aid).
- 5 Be a U.S. citizen**, permanent resident or other eligible noncitizen.
- 6 Be a resident of the state** (for most state aid).
- 7 Enroll in an eligible degree** or certificate program.
- 8 Maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP)** as determined by your college. You can usually find SAP information on your school's website or in the course catalog.
- 9 Have a Social Security number**; visit www.ssa.gov.
- 10 Register with the U.S. Selective Service** (males age 18-25). See www.sss.gov.

FAFSA4caster — Take a peek into your future

Get an estimate of your eligibility for federal student aid instantly, even before your senior year of high school, and shorten the time it takes you to complete the FAFSA by using FAFSA4caster. You'll find this handy planning tool at www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov in English and Spanish. (You can also call FAFSA representatives at 1-800-433-3243.) You'll need your Social Security number and about 30 minutes to answer questions.

Types of financial aid

While most colleges expect you and your family to contribute financially toward your education, financial aid can help narrow the gap between your resources and the cost of college. The following types of financial aid are available from the federal government, states, colleges and private sources.

Grants are money you don't have to repay and are typically based on financial need. Check into California Cal Grants at www.calgrants.org and learn about federal Pell Grants at www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Scholarships are also free money for college and are usually based on your area of study or merit, such as good grades; high test scores; athletic, musical or other special abilities; leadership; community service; and sometimes financial need.

Work-study or student employment programs—federal and college—let you earn money through certain jobs on or off campus to help pay for your education.

Loans are borrowed money that you must pay back, usually with interest.

‘To learn more, go to www.studentaid.ed.gov and www.calgrants.org.’

Basic steps to financial aid for high school students and their families



1

Prepare for college	When	Page
The first thing you and your family should do to prepare is start saving money for college. There are many ways to help get started, and tax benefits can mean getting some of your education investment back later.	Year-round	23-25
Meet with a school counselor to talk about college plans and financial needs. Ask about scholarships offered by local organizations and businesses. Learn about college admission requirements, academic transcripts, application fees, test scores, letters of recommendation and essays.	Aug - Dec	Back cover
Check your academic transcripts and keep your grades up.	Year-round	
Attend college planning workshops to find out about financial aid programs available to you. Check out online tools like www.californiacolleges.edu and www.collegenavigator.gov .	Year-round	
Learn about financial aid and how to apply. Helpful websites include www.csac.ca.gov , www.calgrants.org , www.studentaid.ed.gov , www.finaid.org and www.collegeboard.org .	Aug - Mar	1, 4-14
Find out about deadlines for financial aid, school applications, etc. and keep a calendar to track all of them.	Aug - May	Back cover
Search and apply for scholarships starting with the free scholarship directory websites below and on page 22. Some may have very early deadlines. Create a free scholarship search profile to receive notices about national scholarships at www.fastweb.com .	Aug - Dec	2, 22

Prepare for college	When	Page
Learn the language of financial aid, such as expected family contribution (EFC), cost of attendance (COA), net price, and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).	Aug - Dec	9, 37
Take SAT and/or ACT tests as a senior in high school, if you haven't already. Visit www.collegeboard.org and www.actstudent.org .	Aug - Dec	Back cover
Narrow your college selections. Meet with college representatives who visit your school or community, and check out www.californiacolleges.edu , www.collegenavigator.gov and www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov/choosing .	Year-round	
Visit your top college choices or take virtual tours on the colleges' websites.	Aug - Dec	
Ask your teachers, counselors, coaches, employers, friends and family for letters of recommendation.	Year-round	Back cover
Get your college applications and admissions essays ready early, and have your family, friends or a counselor review them.	Aug - Dec	Back cover
Locate your Social Security card or number. You'll need it to apply for federal and most state financial aid. For help, visit www.ssa.gov .	Aug - Dec	1
Get a free email account if you don't already have one. Be sure your email address is appropriate for corresponding with colleges and employers. You may wish to set up a separate email account for these purposes, using your name as the user name; for example, amandajones@yahoo.com .	Year-round	

Useful websites

California state aid

www.csac.ca.gov
www.calgrants.org
www.ca.gov/education
www.webgrants4students.org

Scholarship directories

www.fastweb.com
www.collegenet.com/mach25
www.collegeboard.com/pay
www.scholarships.com
www.gmsp.org

College planning and exploration

www.californiacolleges.edu
www.collegenavigator.gov
www.knowhow2go.org
www.finaid.org
www.college.gov
www.students.gov

California colleges

www.californiacolleges.edu
www.icanaffordcollege.com
www.csumentor.edu
www.universityofcalifornia.edu
www.aiccu.edu
www.cvc.edu

2

Apply for financial aid	When	Page
Attend a financial aid workshop to get help completing the FAFSA and other applications; more at www.calgrants.org .	Jan - Feb	8-9
Be sure you (and/or your parents) file your taxes early; it helps when filling out the FAFSA (taxes can be estimated but must be verified later).	Jan - Feb	6
Apply early to get the most financial aid—it's usually distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. You don't have to pay to apply for financial aid; the FAFSA is free; visit www.fafsa.gov .	Jan - Feb	1, 8-9
Submit a FAFSA on or after January 1.	Dec - Feb	1, 8-9
Apply for a Cal Grant no later than March 2 by submitting two forms: the FAFSA and the GPA Verification Form. If you're going to a community college and missed the March 2 deadline, apply for a Cal Grant by September 2.	Jan - Feb & Summer	10-11
After you apply for a Cal Grant, track your application online using WebGrants for Students at www.webgrants4students.org .	Mar - Apr	11
Apply for scholarships.	Year-round	2, 22
Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) which comes after you submit the FAFSA, and make any needed corrections. If you submitted a FAFSA and haven't yet received a SAR, follow up by calling 1-800-433-3243.	Mar - Apr	12-13
Review the California Aid Report (CAR) which you will receive after you apply and are approved for a Cal Grant, and make any needed corrections. If you applied for a Cal Grant and haven't received a response, email studentsupport@csac.ca.gov .	Mar - Apr	12-13
Evaluate all financial aid offers carefully. Ask questions. If you haven't received financial aid offers from colleges you've been accepted to, call the college directly.	Mar - May	14-15
Decide on a college and send in all forms or deposits by the deadline. Notify those schools you will not attend so that others may be able to attend.	Mar - May	Back cover
Let your chosen college know the financial aid awards you're accepting and declining.	Mar - May	14
Be aware of any other deadlines or school requirements, deposits, or housing applications that may be required.	Mar - May	Back cover

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Pay for college	When	Page
Find out if your school submits your verified Cal Grant GPA electronically or if you need to submit the paper Cal Grant GPA Verification Form at www.calgrants.org . GPAs are sent to the California Student Aid Commission.	Nov - Dec	10-11
Complete the FAFSA on the Web Worksheet, which you'll find at www.fafsa.gov , or your school may have paper copies. This will make it much easier to fill out the official FAFSA starting January 1.	Nov - Dec	6
Learn all about federal and private loans; be careful because they must be repaid with interest.	Winter - Spring	26-31
There are federal and state-funded programs as well as campus-based aid, and most require you to file the FAFSA.	Winter	4-5, 8
Grants like the federal Pell Grant and Cal Grant are free money that you don't have to pay back—submit your FAFSA and GPA Verification Form no later than March 2 to apply for both types of grants.	Winter	4-5, 8-11
Pay as you go—find out about work-study, student employment programs or part-time work to help you work your way through college.	Mar - May	19, 23-25
Look into volunteer service at www.californiavolunteers.org or www.americorps.gov to learn how to earn money for college. Or, consider military options at www.todaysmilitary.com .	Jan - May	21-25

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Manage your money	When	Page
Establish a budget. Find out how much it will cost you to live on your own, if that's in your plans.	Summer	34-36
Maintain satisfactory academic progress during college to keep your financial aid.	Year-round	1
Don't let identity theft ruin your finances—keep your confidential information private and watch out for scams.	Year-round	35



Major financial aid programs

Grants (Need-based financial aid that doesn't have to be repaid)

Program	Eligibility requirements	Annual awards up to...	Application deadline	Forms required	More information ²
Cal Grant A	Undergraduates	\$12,192 ⁴	March 2 ¹	FAFSA, verified GPA www.calgrants.org	3.0 high school GPA or 2.4 college GPA, financial need
Cal Grant B	Undergraduates	\$1,551 (first year) \$12,192 ⁴ + \$1,551	March 2 ¹	FAFSA, verified GPA www.calgrants.org	2.0 high school GPA, financial need
Cal Grant A and B Transfer Entitlement Awards	California Community College students	\$12,192 ⁴	March 2 ¹	FAFSA, verified GPA www.calgrants.org	2.4 California Community College GPA, financial need, graduated high school after 7/1/2000, not age 28 by December 31
Cal Grant C	Technical and career students	\$3,168	March 2 ¹	FAFSA, Cal Grant C Supplement Form www.calgrants.org	Financial need
Cal Grant A and B Extended Benefits	Undergraduates	An additional year of Cal Grant award	Contact your financial aid office	www.calgrants.org	Enroll in an approved teacher credential program
Federal Pell Grant	Undergraduates	\$5,550 (2011-12 maximum award)	Contact your financial aid office	FAFSA www.fafsa.gov	Financial need according to your EFC and COA
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	Undergraduates	\$4,000	Contact your financial aid office	FAFSA www.fafsa.gov	Financial need according to your EFC and COA (not all colleges offer FSEOGs)
Federal TEACH Grant	Undergraduates/graduate/post-baccalaureate students pursuing a career in teaching	\$4,000	Contact your financial aid office	FAFSA www.fafsa.gov	Must agree to teach in a high-need field serving low-income students; see page 22
University of California Student Aid	UC undergraduate/graduate students	Average grant award of \$14,000	Contact your financial aid office	FAFSA www.fafsa.gov	Financial need See page 20
California State University Grant	CSU undergraduate/graduate students	Full systemwide fees	Contact your financial aid office	FAFSA www.fafsa.gov	Financial need See page 20

Special programs

Program	Eligibility requirements	Annual awards up to...	How to apply	Forms required	More information ²
California Community College Board of Governors Fee Waiver	California Community College students	Waives registration fees	Applications accepted throughout the year	FAFSA or fee waiver application www.icanaffordcollege.com	Financial need
Educational Opportunity Program	CSU undergraduate students	\$2,000	Contact your financial aid office	Contact your financial aid office	Low income, educationally disadvantaged
Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)	California Community College students	Contact your financial aid or EOPS office	Contact your financial aid or EOPS office	Contact your financial aid or EOPS office	Low income, educationally disadvantaged
Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE)	California Community College students	Contact your financial aid or EOPS office	Contact your financial aid or EOPS office	Contact your financial aid or EOPS office	Single parents of children under 14 who are receiving welfare benefits and are EOPS students
Special fee waivers	Various; search for "fee waivers" on each institution's website	Waives registration fees at UC, CSU and CCC	Contact your bursar's or registrar's office	Contact your bursar's or registrar's office	www.cccapply.org www.calstate.edu www.ucop.edu
Institution-based scholarships, grants, work-study, loans	Undergraduate/graduate students	Contact your financial aid office	Contact your financial aid office	Contact your financial aid office	Varies

Other California aid programs

Program	Eligibility requirements	Annual awards up to...	How to apply	Other requirements	For more information ²
California Chafee Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are or were in foster care between ages 16-18 Demonstrate financial need Not yet age 22 	\$5,000 for job training or college in addition to any other state or federal aid you receive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chafee Grant application available at www.chafee.csac.ca.gov Priority selection for award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAFSA Does not require a Social Security number Must stay in school and maintain good grades Must be enrolled at least half time Need analysis report Confirmation of eligible foster care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.chafee.csac.ca.gov Call 1-888-224-7268 Contact your school, caseworker or Independent Living Coordinator Or contact California's Foster Care Ombudsman at 1-877-846-1602 or go to www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov
Child Development Grant	Must be nominated by an eligible postsecondary institution or by the employing agency	\$1,000 (at a California Community College) or \$2,000 (at a four-year college); up to \$6,000 total	FAFSA and Child Development Grant Application Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be pursuing a child development permit and plan to work at a licensed children's center in California Must sign a Service Commitment Agreement to teach or supervise in a California licensed child care facility Demonstrate financial need Apply by application deadline at www.csac.ca.gov 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.csac.ca.gov click on "Financial Aid Programs" Call 1-888-224-7268
California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program	Members of the California National Guard, State Military Reserve or Naval Militia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$12,192³ at the University of California \$12,192³ at private institutions \$5,472³ at California State Universities \$1,551 at California Community Colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAFSA California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program application Additional forms as required by the Adjutant General's Office Priority application deadline is June 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California residency Two years of qualifying military service Enrollment in minimum of three units per term at qualifying institution Pursuing a certificate, degree or diploma not currently held 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.calguard.ca.gov click on "Education Benefit" at top www.csac.ca.gov click on "Financial Aid Programs" Call the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program Coordinator 916-854-4255
Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant	Dependent or spouse of a California peace officer, firefighter or certain other law enforcement employee who died or became totally disabled in the line of duty	\$13,743 (need-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAFSA and Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant application Applications accepted year-round 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional documentation as required by the California Student Aid Commission Demonstrate financial need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.csac.ca.gov click on "Financial Aid Programs" Call 1-888-224-7268

Work-study (Money for college that you earn)

Program	Eligibility requirements	Annual awards up to...	How to apply	Forms required	More information ²
Federal Work-study	Undergraduate/graduate students	Contact your financial aid office	Contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	Demonstrate financial need; depends on your college's available funds
College Work-study/ Student employment programs	Undergraduate/graduate students	Contact your financial aid office	Contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	Demonstrate financial need; depends on your college's available funds

¹ Community college students have a second deadline of September 2 for Cal Grant A and B Competitive awards; awards are limited.

² Other eligibility requirements may apply.

³ Additional \$500 for graduate studies at these institutions.

⁴ The Cal Grant maximum annual award amount of \$12,192 is subject to change.

GEAR UP awards

Did you receive federal GEAR UP funding for college while you were in middle school? You may be able to use these funds for higher education. Your annual notification letter will explain how to access your award. Go to the GEAR UP website at www.castategearup.org, call 916-479-6742 or email GEAR-UP@csac.ca.gov for details.

- ▶ Loan assumption program information on page 25.
- ▶ Scholarship information available on pages 2 and 22.



How do you apply? There are eight steps

1 Collect your information

- **Your Social Security number.** You'll need it to apply for most federal and state aid. If you don't have one, apply at your local post office or Social Security office. If you're a dependent student, you'll also need your parents' Social Security numbers. (If your parents don't have Social Security numbers, enter all zeros when asked for them on the FAFSA.) To learn more, go to www.ssa.gov or call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).
- **Your financial records.** This includes your W-2 Forms or other records of money earned, current bank statements, business and investment records, and records of untaxed income (for example, veterans benefits, child support or workers' compensation), as well your parents' 2011 federal tax return (or yours, if you file one).
- **An email address.** If you provide one, you'll receive your FAFSA results sooner.
- **Your driver's license number**, if you have one.
- **Your Alien Registration number**, if you're not a U.S. citizen.

Taxes not filed yet?

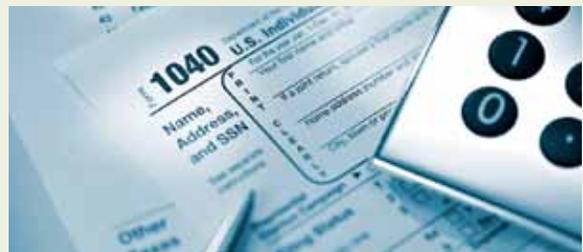
Don't wait until you or your parents have filed a tax return to submit the FAFSA. Instead, get your FAFSA in early using estimated income figures based on last year's return or payroll stubs. (If your estimates are significantly higher or lower than your actual numbers, your EFC may change and your financial aid offers may be revised.)

2 Fill out the FAFSA on the Web Worksheet

This way, you'll have all the information you need in front of you when you're ready to complete the FAFSA. The FAFSA on the Web Worksheet lists all the questions in the same order as they appear on the online FAFSA. English and Spanish versions are available starting in November or December from your school or at www.fafsa.gov. You can also order a Braille version of the worksheet by calling 1-800-433-3243.

If you file your taxes early, the FAFSA gets even easier

In an effort to make filing a FAFSA even easier, the U.S. Department of Education has developed the IRS Data Retrieval tool to automatically transfer tax information from the IRS directly onto the FAFSA. This tool is only available for those who have completed their prior-year taxes at the time you file the FAFSA, and data is transferred only with your permission.



There's plenty of FREE HELP—you should never have to pay for the FAFSA or to have it completed for you. Attend a free Cash for College FAFSA workshop. Go to www.californiacashforcollege.org.



www.facebook.com/cashforcollegecalifornia

Do I need to provide parent financial information?

You will have to supply your parent's financial information on the FAFSA unless one of the following situations describes you:

- You were born before January 1, 1989.
- You're married as of the date you complete the FAFSA.
- You'll be working on a master's, doctorate degree or graduate certificate in the fall of 2012.
- You're currently serving on active duty (other than training) in the U.S. Armed Forces.
- You're a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces (or will be a veteran as of June 30, 2013), or you attended a service academy and were released under a condition other than dishonorable.
- You have children who receive more than half their financial support from you.
- You have dependents other than your spouse or children who live with you and who receive more than half their financial support from you.
- At any time since you turned age 13, both your parents were deceased, or you were in foster care or were a dependent or ward of the court.
- You're an emancipated minor or are in legal guardianship as determined by the court in your state of legal residence.
- You are a self-supporting, unaccompanied youth who is homeless or at risk of homelessness (as determined by your high school or school district, or by an emergency shelter or transitional housing program).

If none of the above scenarios apply to you, you must include your parent's financial information on the FAFSA.

Please be aware that you cannot omit your parent's financial information simply because you live on your own, or your parents no longer list you as a dependent on their tax return or feel it's not their responsibility to help you pay for college.

If none of these apply to you, but you believe your situation makes you independent, you should contact the financial aid office at the college you are planning to attend.

Which parent's financial information should you use on your FAFSA?

It doesn't matter who claimed you as a tax exemption.

- For divorced or separated parents, give answers for the parent you lived with more during the past 12 months. (If you didn't live with one parent more than the other, then answer for the parent who provided more financial support during the past 12 months.)
- If your parent is widowed or single, answer the questions about only that parent.
- If your parent has remarried as of the day you complete the FAFSA, answer the questions about that parent and the person your parent married (your stepparent).

If you don't know where your parents are or if you left home due to irreconcilable differences, let your high school counselor or college financial aid office know.

For the FAFSA, the following people are not your parents unless they've adopted you:

- Grandparents
- Foster parents
- Legal guardians
- Older brothers or sisters

(For the FAFSA question that asks about your parent's education level, answer for your biological or adoptive parents.)



Your assets and financial aid

The FAFSA asks for information about the value of certain assets, as of the day you fill out the form, including:

- Savings
- Stocks
- Bonds
- Mutual funds
- Money market funds
- Real estate investments
- Trusts
- Education savings accounts owned by your parents (or you, if you're an independent student), including Coverdell savings accounts, 529 college savings plans and the refund value of 529 prepaid tuition plans

The FAFSA doesn't count the value of:

- Your family home or farm
- Annuities
- Life insurance plans
- Any non-education IRAs, 401(k), Keogh or other retirement plans (though you must report contributions for 2011 to any tax-deferred pension or savings plan)

For state Cal Grant purposes, you should list parent and student assets even if the FAFSA states that the assets are not required.



If one or both of your parents have lost their job and you've already filed the FAFSA, contact the financial aid office of the colleges you applied to and ask for a "professional judgment review." The change in your household income could mean an increase in your financial aid.

3 Complete the FAFSA online

The simplest way to complete the FAFSA is online at www.fafsa.gov; it's easy, fast and secure. (For help or other FAFSA options, call 1-800-433-3243.) The FAFSA is also available in Spanish. Try to submit your FAFSA as soon as possible on or after January 1—and before your earliest financial aid deadline.

Here are some tips to help you successfully file your FAFSA:

- **Complete the 2012-13 FAFSA to apply for aid for the 2012-13 school year.** (For schools with year-round admissions and rolling starts, contact the financial aid office to find out which FAFSA to submit.)
- **Schedule an hour.** The FAFSA should take about one hour if you have your completed FAFSA on the Web Worksheet (see page 6) in front of you.
- **Read all the instructions, work through each step and review your answers carefully.** Careless errors can delay processing, which could mean missed deadlines and dollars.
- **Be sure your name matches your name as it appears on your Social Security card.** Using a nickname will delay processing. If you've changed your name, update your records with the Social Security Administration at www.ssa.gov. (Also notify Social Security if you've become a U.S. citizen.)
- **Don't have a computer?** Look into using one at your school or library. You can save your FAFSA for up to 45 days at a time, so you don't have to complete it in one sitting.
- **Don't mail (or date) your paper FAFSA before January 1.** It will be returned to you unprocessed and you'll need to submit it again.
- **Photocopies or faxes of the FAFSA are not accepted.**
- **Don't send any tax forms, letters of explanation or other materials with your FAFSA—they'll be shredded.** If you or your family have unusual circumstances you feel should be considered, complete the FAFSA as best you can. Then contact the financial aid office of each college you're considering.
- **If you provide an email address, you'll get an instant confirmation** that your FAFSA was received, which you should save.
- **If you don't already have a Federal Student Aid PIN (personal identification number),** you'll receive one instantly when you're completing the FAFSA. (If you're a dependent student, your parent will need to get a PIN.) To get a PIN before starting the FAFSA, go to www.pin.ed.gov. You can even select your own PIN. It can be used to e-sign your FAFSA or master promissory note, make corrections to your FAFSA, add another school, and



Free help with the FAFSA

IN PERSON ▶ Ask your school for help, attend your school's college planning night or plan to attend a free California Cash for College workshop in January or February. Many workshops have staff who speak Spanish and other languages. For dates and locations go to www.californiacashforcollege.org.

ONLINE ▶ Find help for questions at www.fafsa.gov or click on the Live Help button during business hours (Monday-Friday 5 a.m.–9 p.m. and Saturdays 6 a.m.–3 p.m. Pacific Time, except federal holidays).

PHONE ▶ Call the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-433-3243 Monday through Friday up to 9 p.m. Pacific Time and extended hours on the weekend (TTY 1-800-730-8913).

High school seniors who attend a Cash for College workshop may qualify for a \$1,000 scholarship.



more. You can use it each year to apply for federal aid. It's important not to share your PIN with anyone.

- **E-sign your FAFSA** using your Federal Student Aid PIN and provide an email address to receive an estimate of your EFC instantly. Your application will be processed faster, usually within three to five business days.
- **Keep a copy of your FAFSA for your records.** Also keep copies of the financial records you used to complete the FAFSA. Your college may ask to see them.
- **Use your PIN to check on the status of your FAFSA,** correct or print your Student Aid Report, or view your federal financial aid records at www.nslds.ed.gov. Don't give your PIN to anyone—not even to someone who works in a financial aid office, or who is helping you fill out the FAFSA.
- **If you'd like additional colleges to receive your FAFSA information,** go to www.fafsa.gov (or call 1-800-433-3243). If you have to delete a college before adding a new one, be sure the first college has already received your information.



If you're mailing the FAFSA or any other application form, it's a good idea to get a Certificate of Mailing from the post office (\$1.15 in addition to postage) as proof you met the deadline.

Your college cost of attendance (COA)

Each college has its own student budget or cost of attendance (COA), which includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing, food, transportation and personal expenses for the school year. It may also include money for a computer.

Your COA will vary depending on where you live (with your parents, on or off campus), your academic major and the college you attend. If you have children or other dependents who require care while you go to class, your COA may also include these expenses. If you have a disability, let your college's financial aid office know about any related expenses that aren't already covered.

Your expected family contribution (EFC)

Your expected family contribution (EFC), is the amount of money the government calculates you and your family could reasonably contribute toward your education for the school year. It is calculated using a federal formula that evaluates the information you provide on your FAFSA. Your EFC will appear on your Student Aid Report (SAR), which you'll receive after submitting your FAFSA.

Keep in mind that your EFC may or may not be the actual amount you end up paying for college. For example, your college's COA includes actual costs for tuition and fees, but reflects average costs for housing, food, transportation and personal expenses.

You may spend less or more than these costs. If your college is unable to meet all of your financial need, your actual contribution may be more than your calculated EFC.

Your EFC stays the same no matter which college you attend. However, you may be eligible for different types and amounts of aid at different colleges, since each college has its own COA and financial aid funds.

Your EFC will determine the types and amounts of federal and state aid you qualify for.

If you're a **dependent student**, your EFC will be based on:

- your income and your parents' income;
- your assets and your parents' assets;
- the age of your older parent living in your household;
- the number of family members living in your household;
- the number of family members, other than your parents, in college during the coming school year; and
- your parents' state of legal residence.

If you're an **independent student**, your EFC will take into account:

- your income and assets, and your spouse's, if married;
- the number of children and other dependents in your household;
- the number of family members in college during the coming school year; and
- your state of legal residence.

Your financial need

Each college you list on your FAFSA, and are accepted to, will determine your eligibility for financial aid, also known as your demonstrated financial need.

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{YOUR COST OF ATTENDANCE} \\ - \text{YOUR EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION} \\ \hline = \text{YOUR DEMONSTRATED FINANCIAL NEED} \end{array} \right]$$

Your financial need will vary from college to college because each college has its own COA. Find more information on financial aid offers and how to review them on pages 14-15.



High school seniors

Attend a California Cash for College workshop in January or February to get help completing your FAFSA. Workshops are held at high schools, colleges and community sites across the state and often have staff who speak Spanish and other languages, and provide information about AB 540 in-state tuition assistance (see "AB 540 in-state tuition for undocumented students" on page 22).

High school seniors who attend a Cash for College workshop and apply for a Cal Grant by the March 2 deadline could qualify for an extra \$1,000 scholarship.

Go to www.californiacashforcollege.org for dates and locations of workshops.



AB 540 students and the California Dream Act of 2011

If you're an undocumented or underdocumented student, attended at least three years of high school in California and graduated from a California high school or received its equivalent, you may qualify for in-state tuition rates at California's public colleges and may also be considered for an institutional, privately funded scholarship. To learn more, contact your college's admissions office. Check out additional scholarship websites listed on pages 2 and 22.



CHANGING SCHOOLS? If you'll be changing schools, your financial aid may not automatically go with you, or stay the same. Contact your new school's financial aid office to learn more—and ask about deadlines. If you did not previously receive a Cal Grant, you should still apply for one. To find out if your Cal Grant or California Chafee Grant award will change at your new school, go to www.webgrants4students.org.

4 Apply for a Cal Grant

It takes two—you're responsible for submitting both your FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the Cal Grant application deadline.

Two forms, two steps

1. Submit the FAFSA as soon as possible on or after January 1 and no later than the postmark (or electronically transmitted) deadline of **March 2**.
2. Submit your verified Cal Grant GPA (or GED, SAT or ACT score under some circumstances) by the **March 2** Cal Grant deadline.

- **Cal Grants provide tuition and fee assistance** and/or access cost assistance depending upon the type of Cal Grant (Entitlement, Competitive or Cal Grant C. See pages 16-18 for more details).
- **If you're a high school senior**, you must apply for a Cal Grant Entitlement Award between January 1 and March 2 of your senior year, or by March 2 of the year after you graduate or receive your GED.
- **If you plan to attend a California Community College in the fall**, you have a second deadline of September 2. However, you should still try to meet the March 2 deadline because there are a limited number of Cal Grant awards available for students who apply in the fall.
- **If you qualify for a Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement Award**, you must submit the FAFSA and your verified community college GPA between January 1 and March 2 of the year prior to which you plan to transfer to a four-year college.

Attendance requirements

Cal Grant award amounts are based on full-time attendance, so if you attend less than full time, your award may be reduced. To receive your Cal Grant, you must be enrolled at least half time—at least six semester units or the equivalent. However, an exception may be made in the final term of your four-year college academic program if you only need a few units to graduate.

Submit your verified Cal Grant GPA

You can submit your verified GPA before your FAFSA, beginning November 1. Some schools automatically submit GPAs electronically for their students—check with your school counselor. If your school does not electronically submit GPAs, you'll need to fill out the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form and give it to a school official for verification before mailing it to the California Student Aid Commission—it can't be submitted online. You'll find the form at www.calgrants.org. Give your school plenty of time to certify it before **March 2**.

If you'll be pursuing a technical or career education, you can be considered for a Cal Grant C Award even if you don't submit a verified GPA. You're still encouraged to submit your GPA because it can only help your chances of receiving a Cal Grant award.



Calculating your Cal Grant GPA

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Your Cal Grant GPA will be calculated on a 0 to 4.00 scale (to two decimal places) and extra weight will not be added for honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or physical education classes. Your GPA must include all grades from:

- your sophomore year,
- the summer following your sophomore year,
- your junior year,
- the summer following your junior year, and
- failing grades for classes you haven't repeated before your verified GPA is submitted.

If you apply after your senior year, your GPA must also include your senior-year grades.

Your GPA must not include grades for:

- physical education,
- Reserve Officers' Training Corps, or
- remedial courses (those that aren't counted toward high school graduation).

Keep in mind that your GPA for college admission may be calculated differently.

Don't have a 2.0 GPA?

If your GPA for your sophomore and junior years is below 2.0, and if you're not pursuing a technical or career education, you'll need to improve your grades in your senior year. You can apply for a Cal Grant by the September 2 deadline if you'll



Apply early. If you need to correct or update your FAFSA information, and you wait until just before **March 2**, there may not be enough time to make corrections before your eligibility is determined for a Cal Grant award. You need your Federal Student Aid PIN to make corrections (see page 8).

be attending a California Community College, or by **March 2** the year after you've graduated, when your GPA will include your high school senior-year grades or you've had a chance to improve your GPA by taking community college courses.

Recent high school graduates

You will need to contact your high school to request your Cal Grant GPA to apply for a Cal Grant by **March 2** of the year after you graduated.

COLLEGE STUDENTS

Improve your GPA for Cal Grant B

You can improve or "re-establish" your GPA for the Cal Grant B Competitive Award by taking courses at a California Community College. Your new GPA will be calculated if you have earned at least 16 but fewer than 24 degree-applicable semester units.

Your College GPA

If you've completed at least 24 degree-applicable semester units, 36 quarter units or the equivalent at any college or career school, your Cal Grant GPA will be calculated using the grades from college coursework completed by the date your college certifies your GPA.

(If you've completed fewer than 24 semester units, you'll need to work with your high school to submit a GPA calculated using your high school grades or your re-established GPA, which can be used only for the Cal Grant B Competitive Award.)

Other options

If you were home-schooled, or you attended a school that doesn't provide grades, isn't fully accredited by a regional accrediting agency or doesn't have a course list approved by the University of California, you must submit your GED, SAT or ACT score. If you have a GPA that's more than five years old, you can submit a test score instead of your GPA. All test scores must be submitted using the paper Cal Grant GPA Verification Form available at www.calgrants.org.



California state aid and domestic partnerships

When determining eligibility for state financial aid, California recognizes domestic partnerships, however, the Federal government does not.

After checking your California Aid Report, go to www.csac.ca.gov/pubs/forms/grnt_frm/g-37.pdf to complete the Registered Domestic Partnership Reporting Form so that the California Student Aid Commission can further evaluate your eligibility for California state aid.

For more on registered domestic partnerships, visit www.sos.ca.gov/dpregistry.

Cal Grant renewal

Your Cal Grant will be renewed automatically if you continue to meet the requirements, maintain satisfactory academic progress (as determined by your college) and continue to have demonstrated financial need. You'll have to submit the FAFSA each year but not your GPA. The campus you'll be attending will evaluate your eligibility, so be sure to list that college on your FAFSA.

STUDENTS ▶ Under Senate Bill (SB) 70, students renewing their Cal Grant award now have to meet maximum income and asset ceilings. Previously, students only had to meet the maximum ceilings when first entering the program. Now some students may fail to meet the income and asset maximums and not be able to renew their award after the first year.

SCHOOLS ▶ Participating Cal Grant institutions with more than 40 percent of their undergraduate enrollment borrowing federal student loans are required to have a three-year cohort default rate of less than 30 percent to be eligible for new and renewal Cal Grant awards in the 2012-13 academic year, and less than 30 percent for each subsequent year. Students applying for Cal Grants for the first time will not be able to use their award at these affected schools.

WebGrants for Students lets you track your Cal Grant 24/7

WebGrants for Students provides you with the resources, information and tools needed to assist you with the college financial aid process. WebGrants for Students allows you to manage your Cal Grant and/or Chafee Grant account(s) online—you can view updates, make school or address changes, make corrections, post leave-of-absence requests and complete forms at www.webgrants4students.org. It is important to understand that your WebGrants for Students account does not replace your school or FAFSA accounts; each account must be monitored and managed separately.

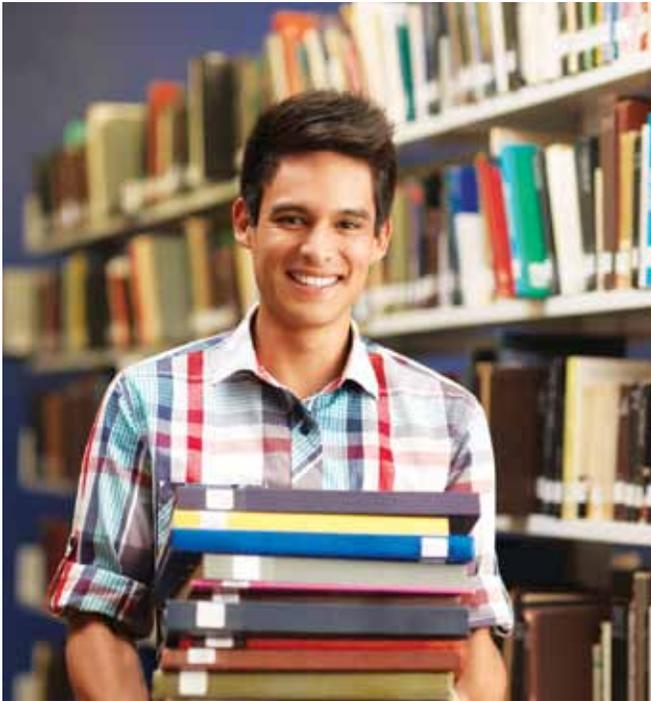
Still have a Cal Grant application question?

Customer service representatives at the California Student Aid Commission can help. Simply call 1-888-224-7268 and select from a menu of options. You can get an update on your FAFSA or verified Cal Grant GPA, and check your award status.

Cash for College workshops

Get help filling out your FAFSA—attend a free Cash for College workshop in January or February. High school seniors who attend a Cash for College workshop and apply for a Cal Grant by the **March 2** deadline could qualify for an extra \$1,000 scholarship. For dates and locations, visit www.californiacashforcollege.org.





5 Submit any other applications

Some colleges use the FAFSA as well as additional applications, such as the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®, to award their private financial aid dollars. Unlike the FAFSA, the PROFILE costs money to submit and is only available at <http://profileonline.collegeboard.org>.

Ask the financial aid office of each college you're considering what forms are required to apply for financial aid. Also, ask about deadlines and whether a deadline is the postmark (or electronically transmitted) date or the received date. Don't forget that your Cal Grant GPA is due **March 2** if you want to be considered for a Cal Grant.

Some state aid programs require their own application forms as well as the FAFSA.

6 Review your Student Aid Report (SAR)

If you submit your FAFSA online and provide all the required e-signatures and an email address, you'll usually receive your SAR within 72 hours. To ensure you receive the email, designate the following email address as "safe": cpsnotify@cpsemail.ed.gov. If you submit the paper FAFSA, it could take up to two weeks to receive your SAR.

The SAR contains the information you provided on the FAFSA and lists your expected family contribution, or EFC, for the school year. Look for this number next to "EFC" at

the top of your SAR—there won't be a dollar sign. If there are any numbers after the EFC, even zeros, then your EFC was calculated. An EFC of 02500, for example, means that your EFC would be \$2,500 for the academic year. Your EFC may be more or less than what you actually end up paying for college.

If there are no numbers, your SAR is incomplete and you must provide additional information or corrections before your EFC can be calculated.

Review your SAR right away for accuracy and follow the instructions if you need to make corrections. If you don't receive your SAR within two weeks, or if you need another copy, go to www.fafsa.gov or call 1-800-433-3243.

Each college you list on your FAFSA will receive your SAR information and will use your EFC to determine your eligibility for federal grants, loans and work-study, and possible institution-based aid. The California Student Aid Commission will also receive it to evaluate your eligibility for a Cal Grant and other California state aid as long as you list at least one California college and indicate you're a California resident.

7 Review your California Aid Report (CAR)

- **If you're offered a Cal Grant**, you'll receive an email notification from the California Student Aid Commission. To ensure you receive the email, designate the following email addresses as "safe": studentsupport@csac.ca.gov and calgrantoffice@csac.ca.gov. To view your CAR, go to www.webgrants4students.org. The CAR is an estimated Cal Grant award and should be considered a tentative offer. Cal Grant awards are subject to approval of the final 2012-13 state budget. It is imperative to list a valid email address on your FAFSA as the Commission will send an email regarding Cal Grants to that address.
- **If you need to make corrections**, such as a college change, use the New Recipient Change Form that came with your notification or go to www.webgrants4students.org. Choose "Forms/Applications" on the right.
- **If you submitted both the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA** but were not awarded a Cal Grant, you'll receive notification explaining why.
- **If you submitted only the FAFSA and no GPA**—and you're not pursuing a career or technical education—you won't receive a notification because you didn't meet the Cal Grant application requirements.
- **If you'll be attending a California Community College** in the fall and submitted both your FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the September 2 deadline, you'll receive a notification in early October indicating your eligibility status for a Cal Grant.



Each college is required to have a "net price calculator" on its website by October 2011. This will allow you to compare colleges and determine whether you can afford a particular one. For tips on how to use the calculators, visit www.finaid.org.

SAR and CAR

Sample Student Aid Report (SAR) notification

A notification from the U.S. Department of Education that will have a link to view your actual SAR

From: Federal Student Aid [mailto:FederalStudentAidFAFSA@cpsemail.ed.gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 08, 2010 11:12 PM
To: John Smith
Subject: FAFSA Results - 2010-2011 Student Aid Report

Dear John Smith,

Your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) has been processed and the data will be made available to the school(s) listed on your FAFSA. The financial aid office at your school will contact you if additional information is required.

Your Student Aid Report (SAR), which contains a summary of your FAFSA information, is now available for you online. Review your SAR as soon as possible to see if any additional information or corrections may be needed.

Use the link below to view your SAR. You can select the link or copy the entire link and paste it into the address or location line of your Web browser. Make sure you copy and paste the entire link; it may appear on multiple lines.

<https://fafsa.ed.gov/FOTWebApp/sar/90?key=rmBPycvCU5ingPxKSadblvJt2KC5m>

If you are an ADL user, click here:

View SAR

If you encounter any problems retrieving your SAR, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov/fac016.htm for assistance.

You may also call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

Thank You,
U.S. Department of Education
Federal Student Aid

Sample California Aid Report (CAR)

You'll receive a notification from the California Student Aid Commission to access your CAR

California Aid Report (CAR)

Search = SSN GO

Congratulations! The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) has awarded you an estimated Entitlement Cal Grant award. This CAR contains important information about your Cal Grant. Please note that the information provided below is based on the information you provided on your FAFSA and is considered an estimated award. Please be aware that this award offer may be withdrawn or reduced pending approval of the final State budget.

MATTHEW G JONES Date issued: 03/04/11 SSN: 55555555

School Choice	Cal Grant A	Cal Grant B	Cal Grant C
CSU-SAN FRANCISCO	SEE CODE #99	\$1,881	NOT APPL.

[Code Descriptions](#) [New Recipient Change Form](#)

The award amounts listed above indicate the type and estimated amount of your Cal Grant award for the first time qualifying schools that you listed on your FAFSA application and reflect the amount you may receive for one academic year of full-time attendance.

My Cal Grant Awards:

- If the first school listed above is not the school you plan to attend, when you decide on the school you will attend, please log on to your WebGrants for Students account and change your school of attendance.
- If your Cal Grant award does not appear on your financial aid award notification from your school, contact the college Financial Aid Office at the school you plan to attend and notify them of your Cal Grant offer.
- To be eligible for this Entitlement Cal Grant award, you must have satisfied all high school graduation requirements. In late spring, CSAC will ask for confirmation of your high school graduation.
- Read the [Important Facts About Your New Cal Grant Award](#) as it contains important information on how to activate, retain and renew your Cal Grant award offer.
- Continually monitor your Cal Grant Award by checking your WebGrants For Students account.

Changes to the Cal Grant program may occur through the State budget process that might impact your award offer. The final amount of your award will be determined based on your school of attendance, enrollment status, and confirmation of the State budget.

If you have been offered a Cal Grant A and you choose to attend a California Community College, you will not receive any payments while attending community college. Instead, CSAC will hold the potential grant in a status called Community College Reserve for up to two years and, potentially, for an additional year with an extension request from the student. You may activate the Cal Grant A award by putting a school change request on WebGrants and by attending in an AA or BA/BS program at a non-community college in California. To keep your eligibility for a Community College Reserve award, you must be enrolled for the fall term.

PRIVACY STATEMENT: Please be aware, grant award information for students who are 18 years of age or older will only be released to parents or guardians with written authorization from the student.

Diana Fuentes-Michel, Executive Director
California Student Aid Commission

Important!

1. Review your SAR and CAR right away.
2. Make corrections in a timely manner.
3. Access your CAR online at www.webgrants4students.org.
4. In addition to the SAR and CAR, also watch for financial aid offers from each college to which you've been accepted. It should include the school's cost of attendance (COA); what types of grants, loans or work-study are being offered; and the amount you and your family are expected to contribute.



If you submitted both your FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the March 2 deadline but don't receive a notification about your CAR by April 30, or if you have questions, go to www.webgrants4students.org, email studentsupport@csac.ca.gov or call 1-888-224-7268. If you haven't received your SAR within two weeks, go to www.fafsa.gov or call 1-800-433-3243.

8 Evaluate your financial aid offers

The financial aid office at each college you list on your FAFSA (that you have been or will be accepted to) will provide you with an evaluation of your eligibility for financial aid if you submitted the required financial aid applications and met the deadlines. If your college asks for additional information, be sure to respond promptly.

Your offer may list your college's annual COA; the amount you and your family have to contribute; and the amount that will be covered by a mix of grants, work-study, loans or other aid.

Your offers will typically vary from college to college, so you may want to wait until you've heard from each one before making a decision—but don't wait so long that you miss deadlines. Or you may want to accept one college's offer while waiting to hear from the school of your choice. Just be sure to let the first college know if you decide later to decline its offer.

Keep in mind that **you don't have to accept your entire student aid package. Select the aid you want.** If you do decide to decline aid, however, that aid may not be available later if you change your mind. If you're offered a loan, remember that accepting a loan means accepting the responsibility of repaying it. To help you evaluate your financial aid offers, use the worksheet on page 15. You can also compare your financial aid awards online at http://apps.collegeboard.com/fincalc/compare_aid.jsp.



Let's review the eight steps:

- 1 Collect your information
- 2 Fill out the FAFSA on the Web Worksheet
- 3 Complete the FAFSA online
- 4 Apply for a Cal Grant
- 5 Submit any other applications
- 6 Review your Student Aid Report
- 7 Review your California Aid Report
- 8 Evaluate your financial aid offers



Financial aid offers: Questions to ask when comparing colleges

- What deadlines should you be aware of?
- What is the college's net price—the COA minus your financial aid?
- Do you have any special circumstances such as job loss or change in family circumstances? If so, let the financial aid office know.
- How much have costs increased in each of the last three years?
- Does the college offer a payment plan that will let you spread your payments over the school year?
- How much of the aid is grants and scholarships? Are they renewable each year? Will the dollar amount increase if your tuition or other costs go up? Are there specific terms and conditions for renewal?
- Are scholarships available? If so, how do you apply? What about other need-based aid?
- If you're offered work-study or student employment, how many hours will you need to work each week? What is the hourly pay rate and the availability of jobs? Are there jobs related to your major or career goal?
- How much loan aid is offered? What's the interest rate? What are the terms and conditions of each loan?
- What fees will you have to pay on your federal student loan?
- If grants, scholarships or federal student loans don't cover your total calculated financial need, can you dip further into savings, get a part-time job, cut your expenses or attend a less-expensive college? Or do you need to borrow more?
- What is the average loan debt of the college's graduates overall—and of graduates in your program of study?
- What happens to your financial aid if you receive an outside scholarship?
- What might your financial aid award look like in subsequent years?



If your financial situation changes after you submit your FAFSA, contact your financial aid office. Ask if your college has a formal process to handle appeals and be prepared to provide supporting documentation. Don't be shy—it's your future.

Evaluate your financial aid offers

A quick way to compare offers and determine your net costs is to subtract all your grant, scholarship and other free aid from your cost of attendance. Keep in mind that colleges have different ways of awarding financial aid as well as different costs of attendance.¹

COLLEGE			
Cost of attendance			
Tuition and fees			
Room and board ²			
Books and supplies			
Computer allowance			
Other fees			
Other costs			
Total college costs (A)			
GRANT/SCHOLARSHIP AID			
Federal Pell Grant			
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)			
TEACH Grant			
Cal Grant			
Other grants			
Scholarships			
Institution-based aid			
Total grant/scholarship aid (B)			
Your net costs (A - B)			
LOANS			
Federal subsidized Stafford loan			
Federal unsubsidized Stafford loan			
Federal Perkins loan			
Federal PLUS loan			
Private loan			
Total loan aid (C)			
Total financial aid (B + C = D)			
Your out-of-pocket costs (A - D)			
Work-study or student employment (E)			

¹ Not all colleges participate in all of the financial aid programs listed above.

² If room and board aren't part of your housing contract, check with the college's housing office or check the local paper or online for rental costs.



Cal Grants are free money— apply by March 2!

There are several types of Cal Grant awards administered by the California Student Aid Commission. Apply by the **March 2** Cal Grant deadline, and we'll determine which Cal Grant you qualify to receive. Your Cal Grant follows you to whichever California school you choose, and you don't have to pay it back. See page 10 to apply.

Cal Grant A Entitlement Awards can be used for tuition and fees at public and private colleges as well as some private career colleges. At CSU and UC schools, this Cal Grant covers systemwide fees up to \$5,472 and \$12,192 respectively. If you are attending an independent college, it pays up to \$9,708 toward tuition and fees. To get this Cal Grant, you need to be working on a two-year or four-year degree.

You can also attend any of California's 112 community colleges, or begin at a California Community College (CCC) and transfer to a four-year California college. A Cal Grant is available for up to four years of education. Talk to your campus financial aid office about using the Cal Grant A Reserve Grant or the Cal Grant B Transfer Entitlement Award at a community college near you. Visit or call your campus transfer center to make sure you are taking the transferable classes that you will need for your four-year degree.

Cal Grant B Entitlement Awards provide low-income students with a living allowance and assistance with tuition and fees. Most first-year students receive an allowance of up to \$1,551 for books and living expenses. After the freshman year, a Cal Grant B also helps pay tuition and fees in the same amount as a Cal Grant A. For a Cal Grant B, your coursework must be for at least one academic year.

Cal Grant C Awards help pay for tuition and training costs at occupational or career technical schools. This \$576 award is for books, tools and equipment. You may also receive up to an additional \$2,592 for tuition at a school other than a California Community College. To qualify, you must enroll in a vocational program that is at least four months long at a California Community College, private college or a career technical school. Funding is available for up to two years, depending on the length of your program. Go to www.whodouwant2b.com to learn more about career technical pathways.

Cal Grant A and B Competitive Awards are for students who aren't eligible for the Entitlement Awards. The main difference is that these awards are not guaranteed.

Cal Grant A Competitive Awards are for students with a minimum 3.0 GPA who are from low- and middle-income families. These awards help pay tuition and fees at qualifying California schools with academic programs that are at least two years in length.

Cal Grant B Competitive Awards are for students with a minimum 2.0 GPA who are from disadvantaged and low-income families. These awards can be used for tuition, fees and access costs at qualifying California schools whose programs are at least one year in length.



The federal College Access Challenge Grant Program funds the California Cash for College initiatives and workshops and ECMC provides funding for Cash for College scholarships. Find out more about free California Cash for College workshops and how you can apply to qualify for a \$1,000 scholarship at www.californiacashforcollege.org.

 www.facebook.com/cashforcollegecalifornia

If you get a Cal Grant B Competitive Award it can only be used for access costs in the first year. These costs include living expenses, transportation, supplies and books. Beginning with the second year, you can use your Cal Grant B Competitive Award to help pay tuition and fees at public or private four-year California colleges or other qualifying schools.

Are you eligible?

Cal Grant award amounts are based on full-time attendance, so if you attend less than full time, your award may be reduced. To receive your Cal Grant, you must be meeting your school's satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements and be enrolled at least half time—six semester units or the equivalent. An exception may be made in the final term of your four-year program if you only need a few units to graduate.

To be eligible for a Cal Grant, you must:

- submit the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the deadline (see page 10),
- be a U.S. citizen, permanent resident or other eligible noncitizen (your parents don't need to be),
- be a California resident (see pages 18 and 37),
- meet any minimum GPA requirements,
- have a Social Security number,
- attend a qualifying California college,
- be pursuing an undergraduate associate or bachelor's degree, or an occupational training program,
- not have a bachelor's or professional degree (except for the Cal Grant Extended Awards for a teaching credential program),
- have financial need based on your college costs and your EFC (see page 9),
- have family income and assets below the established maximum levels (see pages 7 and 18),
- be in a program leading to an undergraduate degree or certificate,
- be enrolled at least half time,
- register with U.S. Selective Service (males age 18-25), and
- not owe a refund on a state or federal grant, or be in default on a student loan.

You're guaranteed to receive a Cal Grant award if you:

- are a high school senior or recent graduate, or just received your GED,
- apply by **March 2**,
- graduate from a California high school,
- meet the eligibility requirements, and have financial need*.

**financial need is determined by whether or not your family falls under established income and asset ceilings. For more information, see pages 7 and 18.*

Cal Grant Entitlement Award: When can you apply?

- In your senior year of high school
- Within one year after graduating from a California high school or receiving your GED
- As a California Community College transfer student, as long as you are under the age of 28

Military Service Deferment

If you're on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces or the Coast Guard, you may have your Cal Grant deferred for up to three years. Simply fill out a G-12 Deferment Request Form at www.webgrants4students.org. Choose "Forms/Applications" on the right.

Going to a community college first?

Cal Grant A Held in Reserve If you are a Cal Grant A participant and attending a California Community College, you will not receive any payment. Your award will be held in reserve for two years for use when you transfer to a tuition or fee-charging California college. To keep your eligibility for a community college reserve award, you must be enrolled at least half time for the fall term. If you have financial, personal or educational circumstances that were beyond your control, and these circumstances kept you from completing your community college education in two years, you may submit the G-18 Cal Grant Appeals Form located at www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=80 to apply for a one-year extension of community college reserve.

Ready to transfer? So that your Cal Grant eligibility can be re-evaluated, go to www.webgrants4students.org and complete a G-10 Grant Record Change Form for Students (choose "Forms/Applications" on the right). Also, let your new college know that you have a Cal Grant A Held in Reserve.

Cal Grant B If you receive a Cal Grant B, you can use your \$1,551 living allowance to help pay for books and other community college costs. (If you do, however, keep in mind that you'll be using up Cal Grant eligibility that you may instead want to save if you're planning to transfer to a four-year college.)

What's the difference between "Entitlement" and "Competitive"?

Cal Grants were created by the California Legislature to provide financial aid to low- and middle-income families.

Cal Grant Entitlement Awards are guaranteed for every high school graduate who has at least a 2.0 GPA, meets the Cal Grant requirements (including financial need) and applies by **March 2** of his or her senior year or the year following graduation. The guarantee extends to high school seniors who attend a California Community College and meet the requirements when they're ready to transfer to a four-year college.

Students who aren't high school seniors nor recent graduates can compete for **Cal Grant Competitive Awards**. These awards aren't guaranteed and only a limited number are available each year—half are set aside for students who apply by the **March 2** deadline, and the other half are for California Community College students who meet the September 2 application deadline.



Other ways to use your Cal Grant

- Pursuing a career or technical education? You can use a Cal Grant at many California career technical schools. You're not required to submit your verified GPA, but it can help. You'll receive notification and instructions to complete the Cal Grant C Supplement Form.
- You can receive a Cal Grant for up to four years—and up to five years if you're getting your teaching credential or attending certain programs that require five years. Go to www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=80 to review eligible programs and complete the G-42 Request for Cal Grant Fifth Year Benefits Form.
- At some colleges, you can use your Cal Grant to attend summer sessions, but remember that this will be counted toward your total four-year Cal Grant award amount. If you take advantage of this option, you may not have enough remaining Cal Grant funds for your fourth year of college.
- You can use your Cal Grant to study abroad if the program is officially recognized by a California college.

The California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)

The CAHSEE is a requirement for most California public high school students. If the CAHSEE was required for you to graduate, you must have passed the exam to qualify for a Cal Grant. If you graduated before the CAHSEE went into effect in 2005-06, you may qualify for a Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement Award or a Cal Grant Competitive Award without having to pass the CAHSEE.

If you're a California high school senior, you have until December 31 of the award year to complete your high school graduation requirements and be considered for a Cal Grant Entitlement Award. If you meet this deadline—and all other Cal Grant requirements—you can start receiving your Cal Grant benefits the next school term. If you don't meet the high school graduation requirements by December 31, you'll need to apply again the following year by the **March 2** postmark deadline.



Don't qualify for a Cal Grant?

You should still submit your FAFSA. A federal Pell Grant, work-study, federal student loan or other financial aid might be available to you. Visit your local college financial aid office or see your counselor for more information. Or, if your financial circumstances have changed, check with the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend.



Income and assets

Family income and asset ceilings, or maximum income and asset amounts, are used to determine whether new and renewing Cal Grant recipients meet the financial eligibility requirements for a Cal Grant. These must be entered on the FAFSA even if the FAFSA instructions state they are not required. Even if you think your parents or you make too much money, you should still apply for a Cal Grant. Many things can change between the time you submit your FAFSA and the start of school.

And don't forget: retirement savings, home equity, and certain other assets are not reported on the FAFSA and are not counted as assets that apply to the Cal Grant ceilings.

Income and asset ceilings for the 2012-13 school year will be available beginning December 1 at www.csac.ca.gov; choose "Income and Asset Ceilings."

California residency

Students attending California public colleges and universities will be considered residents of California if they meet the residency requirements of the school they attend. Generally, this will be residence of at least one year in the state with the intent to make California their permanent home. However, students planning to attend California public institutions are advised to inquire with their school to determine if they meet the school residency requirements.

Students attending California independent colleges, universities and trade schools must be legal California state residents and physically present in California for one year prior to the residence determination date to be classified as resident students. A temporary absence for business, education or pleasure will not result in loss of California residence if, during the absence, the person always intended to return to California and did nothing inconsistent with that intent. Physical presence within the state solely for educational purposes does not constitute establishing California residence regardless of how long the student was in the state. Students with questions regarding their residency status should contact their campus admissions or registrar's office. See more information on page 37.

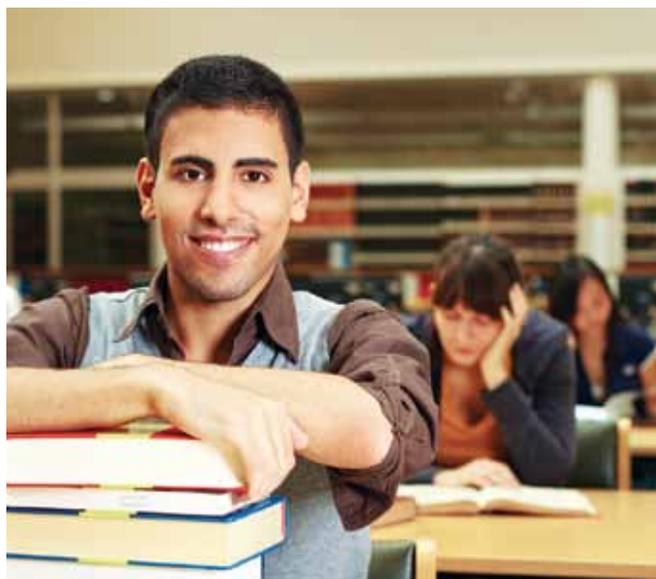


Interested in studying abroad? You may be able to use your Cal Grant, federal grants and federal loans to pay for it. Also look into private scholarships, such as those available from your local Rotary International, and check out scholarships specifically for those studying abroad at www.fastweb.org, www.finaid.org, www.edupass.org and www.nafsa.org/students.sec/studying_abroad_from.

Financial aid from California colleges

Your college's financial aid office is a great resource and can provide:

- Information on financial aid programs offered by the federal government, the state and your college, as well as the forms and deadlines for applying
- Help completing the FAFSA and any other applications the college may require
- An explanation of how your expected family contribution was calculated
- An explanation of the types and amounts of aid for which you qualify
- Advice on how to manage your money for college
- Directories and websites that list scholarships
- Advice on campus and community job opportunities
- Information on federal loans, including interest rates and repayment plans
- Details on your college's tuition payment plan, if it offers one



Work-study or student employment

Through work-study or student employment programs, you can earn money to pay for your college costs. Whether you're offered Federal Work-study, which is administered through select colleges, or your college's own program, you'll receive help lining up a part-time job on campus or with a local nonprofit agency. Employment related to your studies may also be available. The amount of your award will depend on how

early you apply, your financial need and your college's work-study or student employment funds. For more information go to www.studentaid.ed.gov. Most colleges also have career centers that help with general employment opportunities.

California Community Colleges (CCCs)

The California Community Colleges are a system of two-year public colleges. There are 112 community colleges located throughout the state, all of which offer courses that meet lower-division requirements (first two years) of a four-year university. Find details at www.cccapply.org. At all of the CCCs, fees for full-time students are less than \$1,080* a year. Financial aid is available year-round at CCCs. If you need money for college—fees, books, supplies and sometimes even the rent—go to www.icanaffordcollege.com. Choose “Financial Aid Info.”

**These fees are subject to change by the California State Legislature*

CCC Board of Governors (BOG) Fee Waiver

You won't pay any enrollment fees at a CCC if you're a California resident and:

- you're eligible for a Cal Grant or other need-based financial aid,
- you receive CalWORKs/TANF, SSI or General Assistance (or if you're a dependent student and one of your parents receives this assistance),
- your total family income is within the income standards, or
- you fall into a special classification that includes dependents of veterans.

If you haven't submitted the FAFSA, you'll need to complete a separate Board of Governors Fee Waiver (known as the BOG Fee Waiver) application. For details on the waiver or for an application, go to www.icanaffordcollege.com and choose “Financial Aid Info” or contact your community college's financial aid office.

Community college programs can consist of one course or a series of courses leading to a career technical education/vocational certificate, an associate degree, or transfer to a four-year university or college. Career technical education/vocational programs can vary at each CCC campus. Many career paths start with taking career technical education classes at a high school or community college. For more information, visit www.whodouwant2b.com and then talk to a counselor or college career center representative.



Explore different types of colleges. Learn about California career colleges at www.cappsonline.org; the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities at www.aiccu.edu; and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities at www.naicu.edu. Also check out www.californiacolleges.edu.

Average college costs in California (academic year 2011-12)

	Living at home & commuting	Living off campus	Living on campus
California Community Colleges ¹	\$12,875	\$19,330	\$15,757
California State University ²	\$16,469	\$23,561	\$22,577
University of California ³	\$23,362	\$28,367	\$31,173
Independent colleges ⁴	\$36,868	\$43,161	\$41,704
Private vocational schools ⁵	\$33,776	\$40,246	N/A

This chart shows the average annual costs for single students during the 2011-12 school year, including tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, and personal expenses such as clothing, laundry and entertainment.

¹ Listed costs include fees that are subject to change. CCC fees in 2011-12 are \$36/unit. (\$36 x 12 units x 2 terms).

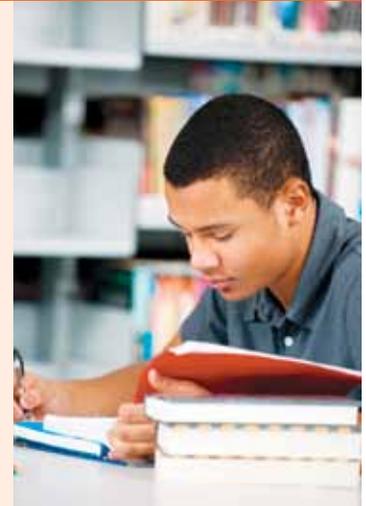
² Averages provided by the California State University Office of the Chancellor are preliminary and subject to change.

³ Averages provided by the University of California Office of the President.

⁴ Averages are based on a nine-month academic year.

⁵ Averages are based on programs from nine to 12 months in length.

Source: California Student Aid Commission



Also explore:

Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)

provides grants, counseling and tutorial services to low-income, educationally disadvantaged students who are accepted to the program.

Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE)

provides counseling, transportation, textbooks and supplies, as well as grants and services for child care for students who are single parents of children under 14 years old, are receiving welfare benefits, and are EOPS students.

California Community Colleges CalWORKs programs

coordinate financial aid and work-study; counseling; assistance with books, supplies and transportation; job placement; and child care for students receiving CalWORKs who are in good standing with the county social services office. Assistance may also be available for former CalWORKs recipients in job-skill upgrade activities.

California State University (CSU)

Visit www.csumentor.edu or www.calstate.edu for more information about financial aid at CSU campuses.

State University Grant

- Offered by all 23 CSU campuses to California residents with demonstrated financial need.
- Amount varies according to campus priorities and student need, but may cover at least part of the State University Fee. For the neediest students who don't have a Cal Grant, this grant covers at least the full State University Fee.

Educational Opportunity Program

- Provides grants of up to \$2,000 a year, in addition to counseling and tutorial services, to low-income and educationally disadvantaged undergraduates.

- Summer programs are available to strengthen math, reading or other academic skills.

Check out one of the college search and cost calculator tools at www.collegenavigator.gov; www.collegeboard.org; or www.finaid.org/calculators.

University of California (UC)

University Student Aid

All 10 UC campuses offer grants. Undergraduate awards are given to financially eligible students who are unable to cover the full costs of attending a UC campus through a combination of a parent contribution (if applicable), grants from federal or state sources, and a reasonable level of student earnings and borrowing. Nearly two-thirds of all undergraduate students receive UC grant and scholarship aid, with an average award of about \$14,000 per student. In addition, many students receive fellowships or scholarships.

To find out more about financial aid for UC students, go to www.universityofcalifornia.edu (select "Financial Aid" from the Quick Links drop-down menu).

Independent colleges/career colleges and trade or technical schools

To learn more about student aid offered by one of the state's independent colleges or universities, go to www.californiacolleges.edu, where you'll find links to individual colleges and an online guidebook.

Federal and state aid can help you pay your costs at many private career, trade or technical schools. Contact each college's financial aid office or search the U.S. Department of Education's database of accredited postsecondary institutions at www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation.



If you're the child of a California city, county or state law enforcement or fire prevention worker who died as a result of active duty, or the dependent of a veteran or National Guard member who died or became disabled in active service, you may qualify for a fee waiver at a UC, CSU or CCC campus. Contact your college's financial aid office or its bursar's or registrar's office for more information.

Financial aid for specific populations

Athletes

If you plan to play a sport in college, you may need to register with the National Collegiate Athletic Association, depending on your sport, division or college. You may also need to complete certain academic requirements in high school. To learn more, visit www.ncaa.org, or call 1-877-262-1492. Even if you hope for a sports scholarship, submit the FAFSA and verified Cal Grant GPA to take advantage of other financial aid.

California Conservation Corps

Get paid to work in the outdoors serving your state and take community college classes, adult education classes or pursue your high school diploma at night. After a year, if you successfully complete classes in career development and conservation awareness, and 48 hours of volunteer service, you could get up to \$2,000 for college or vocational training. Learn more at www.ccc.ca.gov.

Students with dependents

If you're both a parent and a student, you may be eligible for financial support and help with child care, transportation and job or training expenses through the CalWORKs program at California Community Colleges. Contact your county social services office for more information if your child's other parent is absent from the home or deceased, or if you or your spouse is physically or mentally disabled, unemployed or working less than 100 hours a month.

Students with disabilities

All public and many independent colleges provide services to disabled students including (but not limited to) counseling, tutoring, readers, interpreters, note takers, special parking zones or the loan of special equipment. Your cost of attendance should include all expenses necessary to accommodate your disability that aren't already covered by insurance or other sources. Be sure to work with your college's financial aid office when you're applying for admission.

For more information, contact your college's disabled student office or the national or local organizations serving your particular disability. You may also contact the local office of the California Department of Rehabilitation or go to www.dor.ca.gov and choose the "Consumers" tab to view services and apply. Or visit the HEATH Resource Center, an online clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities at www.heath.gwu.edu.

Foster youth

Program	More information
Chafee Grant for Foster Youth	Provides up to \$5,000 a year in grant aid in addition to any other federal or state aid www.chafee.csac.ca.gov
College-based tuition waivers/scholarships	Some colleges offer their own tuition waivers and scholarships for foster youth www.calyouthconn.org
Orphan Foundation of America	Provides scholarships for former foster youth www.orphan.org

A growing number of colleges provide scholarships and other support to former foster youth through the Guardian Scholars or the Renaissance Scholars programs. Check with your college to see if they participate. Another helpful resource is www.calyouth.org.

Military and their dependents

Through the Montgomery GI Bill, active-duty service members and veterans can receive a monthly tax-free benefit to be used for tuition, books, fees and living expenses while earning a degree or certification (including undergraduate and graduate degrees), or attending trade school.

If they served after September 11, 2001, veterans may be eligible under the Post-9/11 GI Bill for full tuition and fees, a monthly housing stipend, and a stipend of up to \$1,000 a year for books and supplies. (The amount is based on time served, and cost of in-state tuition and fees plus books and housing; unused benefits can be transferred to a spouse or children.) Guard and Reserve members activated for more than 90 days since September 11, 2001 have access to the same GI Bill benefits.

Education benefits are also available for disabled veterans, and survivors and dependents of veterans. You may be eligible for a fee waiver at a California public college if you have financial need and are the child or dependent of a service-connected disabled or deceased veteran, or the recipient or child of a recipient of a Congressional Medal of Honor. If your parent or guardian died as a result of military service performed in Iraq or Afghanistan after September 11, 2001, you may be eligible to receive the Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant, which is equal to the amount of a maximum Pell Grant for the award year (you must be under 24 or enrolled in college at least part time at the time of the parent's or guardian's death).



If you're hearing impaired, call TTY 1-800-730-8913 to learn more about federal student aid, or listen to *Audio Highlights on the Web* at www.studentaid.ed.gov/audioguide. The FAFSA and other publications are available online through the use of a screen reader and in Braille by calling 1-800-433-3243 (the Braille FAFSA is for reference only and cannot be submitted).

For more information on GI Bills and other education benefits for the military, veterans and their dependents, contact your college’s veterans affairs office, call the local office of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at 1-888-442-4551 or go to www.gibill.va.gov.

California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (CNG EAAP)

The CNG EAAP is a state-funded program designed to provide an education incentive to improve skills, competencies and abilities for active members of the California National Guard, State Military Reserve or Naval Militia who have completed at least two years of service.

Eligible program participants must be California residents; remain active members of the California National Guard, the State Military Reserve, or the Naval Militia throughout the participation period in the CNG EAAP; maintain enrollment in at least three academic units per term and maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average at a qualifying institution. The office of the Adjutant General will review all applicants and rank eligible applicants by an established, predetermined criteria. The Adjutant General will select up to 1,000 participants for the CNG EAAP. For more information, click on “Money for College” at www.calguard.ca.gov.

AB 540 in-state tuition for undocumented students

If you’re an undocumented or underdocumented student, you may qualify for in-state tuition rates at UC, CSU and California Community College campuses. To qualify, you must have completed at least three years of high school in California and graduated from a California high school or received your GED in California, and signed an affidavit promising to start

the process to legalize your residency as soon as you’re eligible to do so (the affidavit will be kept by your college and remain confidential). For more information, ask your college’s admissions office about in-state tuition rates for “AB 540” students. Download the *College and Financial Aid Guide for AB 540 Undocumented Immigrant Students* at www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/pdf/AB_540_final.pdf.

If you filed an application for permanent residency at least one year before enrolling in college, you may already be eligible for in-state tuition rates and California state aid—contact your college’s admissions office.

Useful scholarship websites

African American scholarships
www.uncf.org

Asian American scholarships
www.apiasf.org

Latino scholarships
www.hsf.net
www.latinocollegedollars.org
www.hispanicfund.org
www.maldef.org

Native American grants and scholarships
www.bie.edu
www.collegefund.org
www.aises.org/what/programs/scholarships



Money for future teachers

Considering a teaching career? Look into these financial aid programs. Also check out www.teachcalifornia.org

Cal Grant A and B extended benefits	Provides an additional year of your Cal Grant award if you enroll in an approved teacher credential program. Converts to a loan that must be repaid if teaching obligation is not met.	www.calgrants.org www.csac.ca.gov
Federal TEACH Grants	Provides \$4,000 a year for tuition if you qualify and plan to teach a high-need subject at a high-need school. Converts to a loan that must be repaid if teaching obligation is not met.	www.studentaid.ed.gov
APLE, California’s Assumption Program of Loans for Education	Assumes up to \$11,000 of student loan debt in return for four years paid teaching service in a designated subject shortage area or at a designated school and up to \$8,000 more if you teach math, science or special education at the lowest-performing schools.	www.calgrants.org www.csac.ca.gov
Federal Loan Forgiveness for Teachers	Forgives up to \$5,000 federal Stafford loan debt in return for five years of paid teaching service at a low-income school. Up to \$17,500 for highly qualified math, science or special education teachers.	www.studentaid.ed.gov
Federal Perkins Loan Forgiveness	Forgives part or all of a federal Perkins loan if you teach at a designated low-income public school, in a designated subject or to children with disabilities.	www.studentaid.ed.gov
Federal Pell Grants	May be used to attend a teacher credential program at a college that doesn’t offer a bachelor’s degree in education, even if you already have a bachelor’s degree.	See your college financial aid office
Teach for America	Offers forbearance and interest payment benefits on qualified student loans, plus up to \$5,350 a year to repay loans, if you teach for two years at a disadvantaged school.	www.teachforamerica.org
SNAPLE, California’s State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education	Assumes up to \$25,000 of student loans for persons who agree to teach at a California college or work as a registered nurse at a 24-hour state facility with a vacancy rate higher than 10 percent.	www.csac.ca.gov

Ways to reduce college costs

One of the best ways to ensure you can pay for college is for you and your parents to start saving early.

1) Private scholarships

Check with your school counselor—thousands of scholarships are available through:

- community organizations,
- foundations,
- religious organizations,
- neighborhood banks and businesses, and
- professional and trade organizations.

Next, use the free scholarship directories online (see pages 2 and 22). Ask your teachers, counselors or coaches about scholarships for students with your talents. Check magazines or websites devoted to your interests or skills. Also, contact your parents' employers or labor unions, as well as the personnel offices of large companies in your area.

You can apply for scholarships throughout your college years. Be prepared; you may need to write letters and essays or be interviewed as part of the application process.

2) National Merit Scholarships

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation awards more than 9,000 scholarships each year, ranging from \$500 to \$10,000. Taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in the fall of your junior year in high school will enter you in the competition. Plus, the PSAT is a chance to practice for the SAT. Learn more at www.nationalmerit.org or see your high school counselor.

3) Community service

AmeriCorps

By becoming an AmeriCorps volunteer, you'll earn up to \$5,550 each year for



up to two years to pay for college or repay your federal student loans. You may also be able to postpone your student loan payments while you're a volunteer. To learn more, go to www.americorps.gov, email questions@americorps.gov or call 1-800-942-2677.

Teach for America

Teach for America, an AmeriCorps program at www.teachforamerica.org, pays recent college graduates to teach for two years at disadvantaged schools. You'll participate under an alternative teaching certification program.

Peace Corps

At more than 40 colleges, you can incorporate your Peace Corps service into a master's degree program and you may receive financial assistance. In addition, you may be able to defer payments on your federal student loans, and up to 70 percent of your federal Perkins loan debt may be forgiven if you serve as a Peace Corps volunteer. Contact your college or go to www.peacecorps.gov to learn more.

4) Enlist in the military

The U.S. Armed Forces offer education benefits, including up to \$70,000 to enlistees for college tuition. Some will

even help you repay your federal student loans. In certain cases, you may receive an education first in exchange for a military service commitment.

Scholarships are available through the **Reserve Officers' Training Corps** programs at hundreds of colleges nationwide in return for serving at least four years of active duty after graduation. In the Reserves or National Guard, you can earn money for college or to repay your student loans in exchange for a service commitment.

You may also want to consider one of the five U.S. service academies. Your college costs will be paid in return for a five-year service commitment. Also, look into military colleges. More information at www.todaysmilitary.com.

5) Credit for experience

If you're a nontraditional student—maybe you didn't go to college immediately following high school or you're returning to college for career training—you may receive academic credit for your job, volunteer or travel experience through the College-Level Examination Program. See www.collegeboard.org/clep for more information. Your college may offer other ways to earn credit for your experience.



The Post-9/11 GI Bill pays up to the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition and fees or up to \$17,500 annually for a private school; but private institutions, graduate schools or out-of-state schools may exceed that amount. If you enroll at a **Yellow Ribbon** participating institution and the tuition and fees exceed the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition or fees, additional funds may be available for your education program without an additional charge. Go to www.gibill.va.gov and search for "Yellow Ribbon Program."



Free scholarship or a scam?

A scholarship or grant is free money—you should never have to pay to find, apply for or receive one. Watch out for companies that make promises, charge you money to apply for or receive a scholarship, or try to get you to send money by claiming you're a finalist in a scholarship contest. Be wary of seminars, websites or "consultants" that want to charge you for financial aid information that's readily available for free.

- Never give your credit card information, bank account information, Social Security number or student identification number over the phone or Internet unless you initiated contact and know who you're dealing with. You shouldn't need to provide financial information to obtain a legitimate scholarship or grant that you've been awarded.
- Don't fall for claims that "guarantee" a scholarship. Reputable companies neither guarantee scholarships nor use aggressive tactics.
- Do your own research before spending your money. If you choose to pay a scholarship search service, be sure you understand what you're paying for.

To learn more:

- Visit www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams and www.fraud.org.
- Visit the Looking for Student Aid website at <http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/lfa/index.html>.

If you believe you've been a victim of scholarship fraud, contact the California Attorney General's office at <http://oag.ca.gov/consumers>.

6) Earn credit in high school

Look into taking Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in high school and then take the exams to earn college credit. AP and IB exams are offered in a number of subjects, but some colleges limit the number of academic units you can earn this way. For details, see your high school counselor, or go to www.ibo.org or <http://apcentral.collegeboard.org>.

You may be able to take community college courses while in high school through a dual enrollment program. If your school doesn't offer one, try enrolling directly on your own. Visit www.cccco.edu for enrollment information.

7) Cooperative education

Work-learn programs incorporate paid work experience with classroom studies. You can alternate full-time work with full-time school, or work part time while attending classes. Cooperative education programs don't provide financial aid, but you'll often be able to earn enough to help pay for college. Contact your high school counselor or your college's cooperative education or career office for more information. Also check out www.workcolleges.org for schools that allow you to work to pay your expenses as part of the curriculum.

Some jobs actually give you both a paycheck and help you pay down your student loans.

8) Part-time work

Many students pay their way through college by juggling work and classes. A part-time, summer or holiday job can help. Check with your college's employment office or career center first. If you find you're working too many hours and it's affecting your school work, or if you're concerned that a summer job might negatively impact your financial aid awards, see your financial aid office.

9) Start at a California Community College

Save thousands of dollars in tuition and have your general education requirements behind you by starting at a California Community College. You can use financial aid to pay for fees, books and living expenses. Check with your community college before enrolling to make sure your credits will transfer to a four-year college, if that's your goal. Visit www.icanaffordcollege.com.

10) ScholarShare college savings plan

With California's ScholarShare, a 529 college savings plan, you deposit money that grows federal and state tax-free as long as it's used later for qualified college expenses. You can open an account with as little as \$15 when setting up automatic investments. You'll choose from a number of low-cost investment options, and use your money at any accredited college nationwide as well as many international schools. Learn more at www.scholarshare.com or by calling 1-800-544-5248. Also check out www.collegesavings.org and www.independent529plan.org.

11) Company-paid education

Sometimes employers may pay or reimburse you for some or all of your education and training. Some companies and labor unions also provide scholarships for children, and even grandchildren, of employees so be sure to have your family ask about scholarships available through work. Internships—paid or unpaid—can be rewarding experiences that help you explore career opportunities. Just be sure to talk to potential employers in depth and in advance to ensure your time is productive and rewarding. Find out how much direct supervision will be provided, and agree with your employer on your learning goals.

12) Tax benefits

Plan ahead—you may be able to take advantage of federal tax benefits for education. Most tax benefits have income limits; to learn more about each program, see IRS publication 970, *Tax Benefits for Education*, available at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p970.pdf or by calling 1-800-829-3676. Also, be sure to consult a professional tax advisor.

California loan assumption programs

Program	Eligibility is based on	Annual awards up to...	How to apply	Other requirements	For more information
Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE)	K-12 teacher candidates; credentialed teachers	\$19,000 (for four years of service)	Submit application by June 30	Agree to teach in a critical teacher shortage subject at a designated school	www.csac.ca.gov
State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education for Nursing Faculty (SNAPLE NF)	If you are a nursing student or enrolled in a nursing program or field related to nursing and you've completed at least a bachelor's degree in nursing or a field related to nursing, and you agree to teach nursing at a regionally accredited California college for up to three years	\$25,000 (for three years of service)	SNAPLE NF application (at www.csac.ca.gov ; click on "Financial Aid Programs")	Must have eligible education loans; if you are a student, you must be enrolled on at least a half-time basis; apply by June 30	www.csac.ca.gov
State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education for Nurses in a State Facility (SNAPLE NSF)	If you are a nursing student and you agree to practice nursing at an eligible 24-hour state facility with a vacancy rate higher than 10 percent for up to four years	\$20,000 (for three years of service)	SNAPLE NSF application (at www.csac.ca.gov ; click on "Financial Aid Programs")	Must have eligible education loans; schools submit nominations by June 30	www.csac.ca.gov

American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning tax credits allow you or your parents to subtract a portion of your college costs from the taxes you owe each year when you file your tax return.

Tuition and fees tax deduction and student loan interest deduction allow you to subtract a portion of your tuition and fees from your taxable income and to deduct up to \$2,500 of the interest you pay on your student loan each year (or on any student loans you take out for your spouse's or child's education).

In addition, funds from your IRA, 529 college savings plan or Coverdell Education Savings Account may be withdrawn without a tax penalty to pay for qualified education expenses. There's also a tax break if you use certain U.S. savings bonds to pay for college.

13 | Jobs that help you repay your loans

Some jobs actually give you both a paycheck and help you pay down your student loans. Unless otherwise noted, learn more about the following programs at www.studentaid.ed.gov or at your college.

Health care professionals

Your federal Perkins loan debt can be canceled if you work full time as a nurse or medical technician. The federal government may assume your student loan debt if you work as a health professional in an underserved area.

Go to www.oshpd.ca.gov/HPEF, <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov> and www.hhs.gov.

Child care providers

If you work in a designated child care site or for a Head Start program, your federal Perkins loan debt can be canceled.

National service volunteers

AmeriCorps awards can pay off your federal student loans. If you serve as a VISTA or Peace Corps volunteer, a portion of your federal Perkins loan debt can be canceled. Learn more at www.americorps.gov and www.peacecorps.gov.

Military personnel/ law enforcement officers

Certain branches of the U.S. Armed Forces offer loan assumption benefits. Visit www.todayismilitary.com. If you serve in the military in an area of hostility or imminent danger, 100 percent of your federal Perkins loan debt can be canceled.

If you're a law enforcement officer, you may be eligible to have a portion of your federal Perkins loan debt canceled. Contact your college for details.

Federal/public service employees

Some U.S. government departments offer loan assumption benefits for employees in certain public service fields. You may be eligible for forgiveness of any student loan debt you have remaining after 10 years.

Attorneys

Some law schools offer loan repayment benefits for graduates who work in public service. Contact your college or visit www.equaljusticeworks.org.

The John R. Justice Grant provides loan assumption benefits for prosecutors and public defenders. More information is available at www.calema.ca.gov and www.csac.ca.gov.

Teachers

See the chart on page 22 for information about loan forgiveness and grant programs for teachers.



Federal loans— The smart way to borrow

If you don't receive enough free money to pay for college and you aren't able to cover your costs with savings or other resources, consider federal student loans first. Federal student loans have a fixed interest rate, flexible repayment options and other benefits that most private student loans do not have. You can get a federal loan even if you don't demonstrate financial need, and there's no credit check for undergraduate loans. There are also federal loans for parents. For more information, visit www.studentloans.gov or www.nslds.ed.gov.

Some lenders offer private loans, but keep in mind private loans usually have higher interest rates and fewer benefits. If you need to borrow, your first option should always be federal loans.

Federal Stafford loans

These are the most common loans and are for students with or without demonstrated financial need at all types of colleges. To receive a federal Stafford loan, you must be enrolled at least half time (as determined by your college). There are two kinds of Stafford loans:

1. Subsidized Stafford loans

Based solely on financial need. The federal government pays the interest while you're in college and during the six-month grace period after you graduate, leave school or enroll less than half time—you'll make no loan payments until your grace period ends. To qualify, you must meet all the requirements for federal aid (see page 1).

2. Unsubsidized Stafford loans

For all eligible students, regardless of income or assets. You must meet the qualification requirements for federal aid (see page 1), except for demonstrating financial need. You'll pay all the interest on your loan, but you can defer interest payments while in school at least half time. If you do, when repayment begins the interest will be added to the amount you borrowed, and future interest costs will be based on the higher loan amount. If you pay the interest while you're in college, you'll pay less interest in the long run.

If you're an independent student (see page 7), you may be eligible to receive additional unsubsidized Stafford loans to help cover unmet financial need or replace some of your EFC.

Federal Perkins loans

Perkins loans may be available for students with exceptional financial need. These loans are made by colleges, you will not be charged interest during school and there are no fees. You'll have up to nine months after leaving school before you must start repaying your loan at 5 percent interest.

Depending on when you apply, your financial need and available funds, you can borrow up to \$5,500 for each year of undergraduate study (up to a total of \$27,500 for undergraduate study) and up to \$8,000 a year if you're a graduate or professional student (up to a total of \$60,000,



including any amount borrowed as an undergraduate)—and generally you can be enrolled less than half time. Funding is limited, however, and not all colleges offer federal Perkins loans.

Federal PLUS loans

Federal PLUS loans enable your parents or stepparents (whose information is reported on your FAFSA) to borrow up to the total cost of your undergraduate study, minus any other aid you may receive (legal guardians cannot take out PLUS loans for your study).

Graduate or professional students can also apply for a federal PLUS loan and borrow up to the total cost of their education, minus any other aid they may receive (such as federal Stafford loans).



How much can you borrow?

It depends on:

- your college's cost of attendance (COA),
- your expected family contribution (EFC),
- how many years you've been in school,
- whether you're a dependent or an independent student, and
- how much other financial aid you receive.

Your loan and any other financial aid you receive, including private aid, cannot be more than your cost of attendance. To find a repayment calculator and see how much you can afford to borrow and repay, visit www.ecmc.org and choose "Prepare to Pay."

A closer look at Stafford loans

Want to know	Details
How to get one	First submit the FAFSA; your college's financial aid office will contact you later to complete the required steps, including signing a master promissory note and completing loan counseling
Interest rate	Loans disbursed between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013 have a fixed 6.8 percent interest rate for the life of the loan
Fees	A 1 percent loan fee will be deducted from each loan disbursement
Enrollment requirement	At least half time
How you'll receive loan funds	Funds are sent directly to your college to pay for tuition, fees, room and board (if applicable); the remainder will be issued to you by your college
Repayment begins	Six months after you graduate, leave school or enroll less than half time

Federal Stafford loan limits

Year	Dependent undergraduates ¹	Independent undergraduates	Graduate and professional students
First year	\$5,500	\$9,500	\$20,500—no more than \$8,500 may be in subsidized loans ³
	No more than \$3,500 may be in subsidized loans		
Second year	\$6,500	\$10,500	
	No more than \$4,500 may be in subsidized loans		
Third and beyond (each year)	\$7,500	\$12,500	
	No more than \$5,500 may be in subsidized loans ³		
Teacher certification	\$5,500	\$12,500—no more than \$5,500 may be in subsidized loans ³	
Total amount you can borrow	\$31,000	\$57,500	
	No more than \$23,000 may be in subsidized loans ³		\$138,500 ² —no more than \$65,500 may be in subsidized loans ³ (includes any Stafford loans you received for undergraduate study)

¹ If you're a dependent student whose parents are unable to obtain a federal PLUS loan, you may be eligible to borrow the same amount in unsubsidized loans as an independent student.

² Graduate and professional students enrolled in certain approved health professions programs may borrow up to \$224,000.

³ No new **subsidized** Stafford loans will be made to graduate/professional students for periods of study beginning on or after July 1, 2012. Annual and aggregate loan limits for these students will not change.



If you withdraw from school, you may have to pay back some or all of the federal grant aid you received for the term (and you will have to pay back any student loans you took out). Contact your college's financial aid office and your academic advisor to understand the possible consequences before you decide to leave school.

A closer look at PLUS loans

Want to know	Federal PLUS loans for parents	Federal PLUS loans for graduate & professional students (Grad PLUS)
How to get one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the FAFSA Complete a PLUS loan master promissory note 	
Total amount you can borrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to the total cost of your child's undergraduate education, minus any other aid received (reapply each year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to the total cost of your education, minus any other aid received
Interest rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed at 7.9 percent Interest accrues from the date of disbursement until paid in full 	
Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A loan fee of up to 4 percent will be deducted from each loan disbursement 	
Enrollment requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least half time in a program leading to a degree or certificate 	
Other requirements	Basic qualification requirements for federal financial aid (see page 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic qualification requirements for federal financial aid (see page 1) Your eligibility for federal Stafford loans must first be determined
Credit eligibility requirements* (PLUS loans are not based on income or assets)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No debts delinquent 90 days or more (for mortgage or medical bill payments, no delinquencies greater than 180 days) No defaulted loans, outstanding tax liens, unpaid judgments, bankruptcy, foreclosure or wage garnishment within the past five years 	
Repayment begins	Within 60 days of the loan's last disbursement. You can defer payments until your child ceases to be enrolled at least half time and during the six-month, post-enrollment period. Interest accrues during deferment.	Within 60 days of the loan's last disbursement. You can postpone repayment while you're in school at least half time, and during the six-month, post-enrollment period. Interest accrues during deferment.

**If you or your parents cannot pass the credit check, you can still receive a PLUS loan if you know someone who can and is willing to co-sign (endorse) your loan.*



What are accrued interest and capitalization?

Let's say you borrow \$10,000 via an unsubsidized Stafford loan over a period of four years. You choose to defer paying the interest while you're in school for four years plus during the six-month grace period. The interest that accumulates is known as accrued interest. After four and a half years, about \$2,040 in interest will have accrued at a fixed rate of 6.8 percent. When you begin repayment, you'll owe \$12,040—the original \$10,000 plus the \$2,040 in accrued interest. The interest you'll repay will be based on this new higher amount. The process of adding interest to the amount borrowed rather than repaying it as it accrues is called "capitalization."

Remember, even if you don't graduate, can't find a job or aren't happy with your education, you still must repay your loan.

Federal student loan cancellation

In rare cases, your loan, or a portion of it, can be canceled—in other words, you won't have to pay it back. Your loan can be canceled if:

- your college closes and you're unable to complete your studies;
- your college falsely certified your eligibility for a loan;
- your identity was stolen and used illegally to take out student loans;
- your college failed to make a refund to the U.S. Department of Education when one was due (you don't need to repay the amount kept by the college); or
- you become totally and permanently disabled or die.

To learn more, contact your loan servicer or your college's financial aid office, or visit www.studentloans.gov.

Private loans

Private loans often carry higher interest rates and fees than federal loans, and may have less attractive repayment terms. Typically, the interest rates on private loans are variable and can change from month to month. Private loans are usually based on your credit rating and debt-to-income ratio—not financial need—and may require a co-signer. The information in your credit report will determine the interest rate you qualify for.

A number of lenders offer private loans. Ask questions and compare lenders to make the best choice for you.

Considering a private loan: What questions should you ask?

- What's the interest rate? Fixed or variable? If variable, how often will it be adjusted? When does interest capitalize and how often?
- Is there a maximum amount you can borrow?
- Is a co-signer required? Will having a co-signer lower the interest rate?
- Is there an application fee? Are there any disbursement fees? Any repayment fees?
- Is the loan check payable to you or your college? How long does it take to receive funds?
- Are there reduced interest rates for on-time payments or automatic bill pay?
- What will your minimum payment be? When does repayment begin? How long do you have to repay? Is there a prepayment penalty?
- Will you receive one bill for all your private loans?
- Will your payments be deferred while you're in school? If so, will interest continue to accrue?
- What happens if you can't make your payments due to a job loss or other economic hardship? Do you have any deferment or forbearance options?

Federal and private loans: What does it mean to accept a loan?

It means accepting the responsibility for repaying the money you borrow, with interest. It's worth noting that federal laws make it nearly impossible to discharge a student loan through bankruptcy, except in rare instances. Before you borrow, ask:

Is the college or program a good investment? You have the right to be fully informed about the college's tuition and refund policies, academic and training programs, financial aid programs, faculty and facilities, and its graduates' success rate in finding jobs. You also have the right to ask how many students complete their degrees at the college and how many of them transfer out. Federal regulations require some colleges



to prove that a percentage of former students are successfully paying their loans, or the college could lose its access to federal grants and loans.

Does your loan make good financial sense? Are there jobs in your chosen field and how well do they pay? Some jobs and careers are more stable or higher paying than others. Learn more about hundreds of jobs, including required training, prospects and earnings, in the federal *Occupational Outlook Handbook* available at www.bls.gov/oco.

Are there other options? If you still need money for college after reaching the federal loan borrowing limits, cut expenses or check out ways to reduce college costs, starting with those listed on page 23.

What is the true cost of your loan? It costs money to borrow money. Make sure you know the true cost of your loan by keeping track of how much you borrow and how much you owe, including interest costs and fees (you can see all your federal student loans at www.nslds.ed.gov). If you don't make your payments on time, you may have to pay late fees and collection costs.

Can you repay it? Before applying for a loan, determine how much you'll be able to afford to repay. Estimate what you can expect to earn after graduation, what your monthly loan payments and expenses will be, and how much you'll need for basic living costs. Borrow only what you need and can pay back. Also, remember that the longer you take to pay off your loan, the more interest you'll pay overall. Determine your monthly student loan payments at www.ecmc.org. Choose "Prepare to Pay" to find a repayment calculator.

What are your rights and responsibilities? When you accept a loan, you accept legal and financial obligations that last until the loan is repaid. You'll sign a promissory note, a legal contract between you and the U.S. Department of Education (or private lender) in which you promise to repay the amount you borrow and agree to the loan's terms and conditions. Before signing, understand all of your rights and responsibilities.

Repaying federal student loans

When it comes time to pay back your federal student loans, there are five repayment options, including payments that stay the same each month (standard); payments that begin lower and increase over time (graduated); payments that stretch over a longer period of time (extended); and payments that are dependent on your income (income-based and income-contingent).

You'll usually have up to 10 years to repay your loan, but you could have as long as 25 years, depending on your loan amount and repayment plan. To learn more, visit www.dl.ed.gov or www.ecmc.org and click on "Prepare to pay," or talk to your college's financial aid office.

Borrow conservatively, budget wisely and plan ahead. Knowing the monthly payments for the amount you borrow is a great start.



Repay your loan

Interest rate	5.00%		6.80%		7.90%	
Total amount borrowed	120 monthly payments of	Total interest	120 monthly payments of	Total interest	120 monthly payments of	Total interest
\$5,500	\$58	\$1,500	\$63	\$2,095	\$65	\$2,473
\$12,000	\$127	\$3,273	\$138	\$4,572	\$145	\$5,395
\$19,500	\$207	\$5,319	\$224	\$7,429	\$236	\$8,767
\$27,500	\$292	\$7,502	\$316	\$10,477	\$332	\$12,364
\$31,000	\$329	\$8,456	\$357	\$11,810	\$374	\$13,938
\$35,000	\$371	\$9,547	\$403	\$13,334	\$423	\$15,736
\$45,000	\$477	\$12,275	\$518	\$17,143	\$544	\$20,232
\$57,500	\$610	\$15,685	\$662	\$21,905	\$695	\$25,852
\$60,000	\$636	\$16,367	\$690	\$22,858	\$725	\$26,976
\$138,500	\$1,469	\$37,781	\$1,594	\$52,764	\$1,673	\$62,269

•
 If you don't repay your loan, you'll damage your credit rating, making it harder and more expensive to borrow money in the future.
 •

Making repayment easier

Pay as you go. Deferring interest payments on your unsubsidized loans may be attractive in the short run, but you'll pay a lot more in the long run. By paying as little as \$20 each month during school, you can save hundreds of dollars over the life of your loan.

Sign up to have your loan payments taken directly from your bank account. You may get a lower interest rate if you make automatic payments and always pay on time.

See if loan consolidation makes sense. If you have several federal student loans, you may want to ask your loan servicer about consolidating them into a single new loan with a new interest rate and an extended repayment term of up to 30 years. Loan consolidation isn't right for everyone so be sure you know the advantages and disadvantages.

Let your loan servicer know if you can't make your payments. If you fall behind, your delinquency will likely be reported to a national credit reporting bureau, which could damage your credit rating, making it harder and more expensive if you want to get a loan for a car, home or other major purchase. Ask your loan servicer about changing your repayment plan, consolidating or combining your loans; or look into a deferment or a forbearance to temporarily postpone, reduce or extend your payments.

Several options are available for repayment of your federal student loan, allowing you to choose the one that best meets your financial needs. If you prefer to switch to another plan, you can do so at least once a year by contacting your loan servicer.

Don't default. If you don't repay your loan, you'll face serious consequences:

- The entire amount of your loan will become due.
- You'll no longer be eligible to receive additional federal financial aid (grants or loans).
- A portion of your paychecks or tax refunds can be taken to pay back your loan.
- You can be hit with collection costs.
- You may not be eligible for certain jobs, as some employers check credit.

You'll damage your credit rating, making it harder and more expensive to borrow money in the future.

Repayment options

Once your federal student loans go into repayment (after you graduate, leave school or drop below half-time enrollment), you will have several options for repaying them. You also have the option to change repayment plans once each year by contacting your loan servicer.

Standard

The standard plan allows you to pay the same amount each month, with up to 10 years to repay. Your monthly payment must be at least \$50. **Example:** 6.8 percent interest for 10 years → \$11.51 monthly per \$1,000 borrowed.

Graduated

Your payments start out low (as little as interest only) and gradually increase over time, with up to 10 years to repay. **Example:** 6.8 percent interest for 10 years → \$5.67 monthly per \$1,000 borrowed for the first two years, then \$13.53 monthly per \$1,000 for the remaining eight years.

Extended

This plan is for outstanding student loan debt greater than \$30,000. Payments can be fixed or may gradually increase over time, with up to 25 years to repay. **Example:** 6.8 percent interest for 25 years → \$6.94 monthly per \$1,000 borrowed.

Income-Based

Payments are based on your income and family size. Payments can be as low as \$0 and unpaid interest may be subsidized by the federal government for up to three years. After 25 years of qualifying payments, any remaining balance will be forgiven and considered taxable income.



Income-Contingent

Each year, your monthly payments will be calculated on the basis of your income, family size, and the total amount of your federal student loans. You will pay each month the lesser of:

- the amount you'd pay if you repaid your loan in 12 years multiplied by an income percentage factor that varies with your annual income, or
- 20 percent of your monthly discretionary income.

If your payments are not large enough to cover the interest that has accumulated on your loans, the unpaid amount will be capitalized once each year. However, capitalization will not exceed 10 percent of the original amount you owed when you entered repayment.

If you haven't fully repaid your loans after 25 years under this plan (time spent in deferment or forbearance does not count), the unpaid portion will be forgiven. You may have to pay taxes on the amount that is forgiven.

Graduate and professional student Direct PLUS loan borrowers are eligible to use this plan. Parent Direct PLUS loan borrowers are not eligible.



You can change repayment plans on federal student loans once each year—contact your loan servicer, or visit www.dl.ed.gov.

Sample college financing plan

Here is one possible scenario illustrating how one student pays for college. See more sample college financing plans at <http://californiacolleges.edu/finance/finance.asp>.

Student: Serena Age: 18 Status: Single (dependent on parents) Housing: At home with parents Parent income: \$40,000	(A) 2011-12 CSU cost of attendance (living at home with parents): Fees/tuition: \$5,472 Books/supplies/room/board/misc. expenses: \$9,756	\$15,228
	(B) Grant assistance total Serena is eligible for grant assistance based on her family's financial resources. The campus aid office pulls together grant aid from a variety of sources, including federal Pell Grants, state Cal Grants and the CSU's own grant funding.	\$9,680
	(A - B) = Net cost to family The net cost is the amount that Serena's family must pay after need-based grants are taken into account.	\$5,548
MANAGING THE NET COST Parents and students work together to cover the net cost using resources provided by the college, including parent and student education loans, part-time work during the academic year, and savings from summer earnings. The net cost is not due all at once. Many costs, such as living expenses, are incurred over time. Here is a sample of how Serena's family might cover her net cost.	Serena's parents Combination of current earnings, savings or a parent loan: Serena's parents would be expected to contribute \$926 for the year.	\$926
	Serena Student part-time work during academic year: Student education loans: Savings from summer jobs:	\$0 \$2,981 \$1,641

What is the biggest obstacle keeping people from college? Perceived cost.

To make it easier for prospective students to figure out how much it will cost them to go to college, Congress passed a higher education law requiring all colleges to offer a "net price calculator" on their websites by October 2011.



How will you receive your financial aid?

At the beginning of each term, any federal or state financial aid you receive will go to your college first to pay for tuition and fees (and room and board, if provided by your school). Within the first few weeks of classes, you'll usually receive any remaining funds to cover your books, supplies, transportation expenses and other college costs. Any non-federal or state scholarships or grants you applied for yourself may be sent to you or your college. For work-study or student employment programs, you'll be paid after you've worked, usually every two weeks. However, some schools may apply the wages you earn directly to your student account for unpaid balances.

Since you cannot receive more financial aid than the cost of attendance, colleges must apply any outside scholarships or grants toward your unmet financial need or reduce other aid—these awards can't replace your EFC. You can ask your school to reduce loan or student employment aid rather than grant aid, but most colleges have an established procedure for handling outside scholarships or grants.

It's your responsibility to create a spending plan to make sure your financial aid lasts the whole term. Refer to the Spending plan worksheet on page 36.



Even if you think your family has too much money to qualify, you should still apply for financial aid. Don't miss out on scholarships, grants, work-study or other cash for college, such as low-interest loans for education.



Verification

The federal government randomly selects about one in three FAFSAs each year for verification. If your FAFSA is selected (there'll be an asterisk after your EFC on your SAR), your college will ask you to verify your FAFSA information, usually by requesting a copy of your or your parents' most recent federal tax return, W-2 Forms or other financial documents, and a completed verification worksheet. Your college may independently ask for your financial records to verify your eligibility for student aid; some colleges choose to verify every student's eligibility.

Reapply each year

Most financial aid awards are considered "new" each school year, so you'll need to submit the FAFSA each year. Use your PIN to submit your FAFSA at www.fafsa.gov on or after January 1. Each year, keep a copy of what you've submitted.

Simply update any information that has changed, such as your income or family size; complete any blank areas; and review your list of colleges.

You will need to requalify to continue to receive any other state or federal aid you received the year before. You still must meet the requirements, which include remaining below income and asset ceilings (see page 7). In most cases, this also includes making satisfactory academic progress (SAP), so be sure you understand your school's policy. You can usually find SAP information on your school's website or in the course catalog.

Rights and responsibilities

You have the right to ask the college:

- What it costs to attend and what its refund policies are if you withdraw.
- How it determines whether you're making satisfactory academic progress and what happens if you're not.
- To disclose the percentage of its students who complete its programs and the percentage who transfer out.
- To explain its accreditation and licensing.
- For the percentage of students who are placed in jobs related to their course of study after graduation.
- What financial help is available, including information on all federal, state and college financial aid programs—not just loans.
- About the deadlines for submitting applications for each financial aid program and how recipients are selected.
- How your financial need is determined, including how costs for tuition, fees, housing, food, transportation, books, supplies, personal and miscellaneous expenses are considered in your COA.
- What income, assets and other factors are considered in your EFC calculation, and how much of your financial need, as determined by the college, is met.
- To explain the various elements in your financial aid package, and how and when you'll receive your aid.
- To explain how your financial aid offer was determined.
- What portion of your financial aid is grant or gift aid, and how much must be paid back. If you're offered a loan, you have the right to know the interest rate, the total amount that must be repaid, your repayment options, when repayment begins and how long you have to repay.
- How to be considered for additional aid if your financial circumstances change.
- About the effect outside scholarships may have on your financial aid award.
- How to reapply for financial aid for subsequent years.

You have a responsibility to:

- Research the colleges you're considering.
- Review and consider all information about the college's programs before enrolling.
- Know and comply with the deadlines for applications or reapplications for aid. Intentional misrepresentation on an application for federal financial aid is a crime.
- Respond promptly and provide to the appropriate place all requested verification documentation, corrections to your financial aid application or additional information.
- Read and keep copies of all forms and agreements you sign.
- Ask your college's financial aid office whether you were awarded student employment, and for details about hours, duties, pay rate and how you'll be paid.
- Complete loan entrance counseling before you receive your first disbursement of a federal loan, and exit counseling before you leave school.
- Compare your anticipated monthly student loan payments and other expenses to your expected take-home pay after college.
- Understand your school's return-of-aid policy if you receive federal or state financial aid and withdraw from school.
- Repay your student loans, even if you don't complete your education, can't get a job or aren't happy with your education.
- Notify your college and loan servicer promptly of changes in your name, permanent mailing address, telephone number, enrollment or marital status, or financial resources.
- Request a deferment or forbearance, or a change in repayment plan if you're having trouble making your monthly payments.
- Reapply for financial aid each year you attend college.



Spending smart

Get organized. Set up separate files for your bank statements, household bills, insurance payments, college applications, financial aid papers, loan documents and correspondence with your college and your loan servicer. Keep them in a safe place.

Create a monthly spending plan and stick to it. First, you'll need to know your income and expenses. To figure out your expenses, write down all your purchases every day for at least two weeks to understand where your money is going. Also, look at your bank or credit card statements at the end of the month. You'll get a good idea of the number of coffees you bought, how many times you ate out, any clothes, shoes, books or other items you bought, and your regular household expenses, such as rent, utilities and food.

Shop around for textbooks. Research new and used textbooks online. Compare ISBNs (every book has its own International Standard Book Number, located on the copyright page) to make sure you get the right edition. Also, ask if your college has a book rental or buyback program. If you don't mind reading on a computer screen instead of a printed book, there are several low-cost options for downloading textbooks.

Avoid using credit cards. It can be easy to get a credit card and even easier to get into trouble. Shop around and be wary of low introductory rates that quickly jump higher. Look out for hidden fees. Consider a debit card instead, but you'll still need to read the fine print. If you have a credit card, pay your balance in full each month. If you can't, try to pay more than just the minimum payment.

Start saving. No matter how little, set aside something every month. Even \$20 a month will get you in the habit of saving and help build a cushion for a financial emergency.

Know how much you need. Your expenses during college amount to more than just tuition and fees. Find out the current costs of nearly every college in the country by exploring the College Navigator website at www.collegenavigator.gov and the College Board's website at www.collegeboard.org.

Plan to transfer. What can two years and 60 semester units of transferable community-college credit do for you? If you meet the GPA and admissions requirements, you can transfer to a four-year college knowing that you have saved thousands of dollars in tuition and fees. Every California Community College has an agreement with at least one UC or CSU campus, making transferring easier if you meet the requirements. Some also have transfer agreements with out-of-state or independent colleges. Register with your community college's transfer center—it's important to know the courses you need so you can meet the admissions requirements and take full advantage of your financial aid options. You can also visit www.assist.org to learn more about transfer opportunities.

Learn to cut costs

As a student, you'll likely have more independence when it comes to money—but you'll also be responsible for staying within a budget. Cutting costs is easier than you think:

Save a little:

- Stick to a grocery list
- Don't shop when hungry
- Clip coupons
- Buy in bulk, then split costs with others
- Bring your lunch instead of buying it
- Leave credit cards at home
- Don't carry too much cash

Save some more:

- Shop at consignment/thrift stores
- Use public transportation or carpool
- Eat out only once a week
- Rent a DVD vs. going to the movies
- Lower thermostat in winter, raise in summer

Save even more:

- Eat out only once a month
- Share expenses with a roommate or two



Top 10

ways to protect yourself against identity theft:

- 1 Keep your Social Security number, date of birth, driver's license, passwords, PINs and banking information confidential. Don't leave your personal or financial information lying around in your dorm room or apartment.
- 2 Never give out any personal or financial information over the phone unless you made the call and know who you're talking to. Be wary of scams preying on your generosity in the wake of natural disasters.
- 3 Never respond to emails asking for personal or financial information (including your PIN), even if they look like they're from your bank, college or loan servicer. Real companies will never ask you for this information by email.
- 4 Be careful about sharing personal information online in blogs or social networking sites, including Facebook® and Twitter™.
- 5 Make sure websites are secure before providing your credit card number or other personal information. Look for sites that begin with "https" or display a small padlock icon next to the address field or on the lower right (but outside the Web page viewing area).
- 6 Keep your computer current with the latest virus protection software to reduce its vulnerability to online hackers.
- 7 If you use a shared computer, clear the browser's cache (the temporary Internet files that may contain private information). In the browser menu select the Tools menu and then Delete Browsing History or Clear Recent History.
- 8 Go to www.annualcreditreport.com and get your free credit report (you can receive one free annual report from each of these agencies: TransUnion, Experian and Equifax). Check it at least once a year. Look for unfamiliar accounts and incorrect addresses—signs of identity theft.
- 9 Shred all documents with your Social Security number, bank account numbers and other personal information before tossing.
- 10 Throwing out your old cell phone or computer? Be sure to destroy any stored information about yourself first.

To learn more, go to www.idtheftcenter.org and www.ftc.gov/idtheft.

How much will it cost?

You know the price of a music download and a latté, but how about the cost of items you'll need to buy as a college student or to set up an apartment?

- The average cost of a college textbook is around \$100; you can expect to spend about \$400–\$600 or more each semester on books, depending on your course of study. By the time you graduate, your total book bill could be as high as \$3,500. Purchase used textbooks, download e-texts or borrow books from others who have taken the same classes.
- Plan to pay about \$115 per month for utilities (gas and electricity).
- You'll probably spend up to \$400 a month on food, including snacks and eating out.
- The average washer takes about \$2 in quarters for a single load and drying can cost another \$2. Even if you only do one load a week, that's more than \$200 a year, without counting laundry detergent.
- You could spend \$2,500–\$3,500 annually on gas, insurance and other costs if you own a car (not including car payments). And with gas prices always changing, this amount could be even higher.
- Household cleaning supplies could cost you around \$230 per year. Even the most frugal person still needs to buy soap, dishwashing detergent, paper towels and other essentials.

Thinking about using your credit card to pay for college? **Think again.**

Borrowing \$1,400 on a typical credit card will cost you \$714 in interest and take 97 months to pay off. The same \$1,400 borrowed with a federal student loan will cost you \$129 in interest and be paid off in 31 months.



Spending plan worksheet

Use this worksheet to help get a clear picture of your income and expenses. If your expenses are more than your income, you'll need to look for ways to reduce expenses and/or supplement your income.

INCOME SOURCE	Estimated monthly total	Estimated yearly total
Earnings		
Money from savings		
Money from parents		
Work-study / student employment		
Scholarships		
Grants		
Loans		
Spouse's wages		
Other		
Total income	\$	\$
EXPENSES	Estimated monthly total	Estimated yearly total
Tuition		
Fees		
Loan payments		
Books / supplies		
Rent / housing		
Gas / electricity		
Cell phone service		
Internet service / TV service		
Other		
Child care		
Transportation: Car gas and maintenance		
Car insurance and registration		
Car payment		
Public transportation		
Parking		
Food: Groceries		
Restaurants		
Coffee, snacks		
Clothing: Clothes		
Laundry / dry cleaning		
Entertainment		
Credit card payments		
Medical / dental insurance and expenses		
Miscellaneous		
Total expenses	\$	\$
Total income minus total expenses	= \$ (available funds)	= \$ (available funds)

Terms to know [The most important definitions are highlighted.]

Ability-to-benefit test: one way to determine eligibility for federal aid for students who aren't high school graduates or don't have a GED certificate.

Asset: an item of value, such as real estate, stock, bond, cash savings, trust fund, money market fund, college savings plan, retirement plan or prepaid tuition plan.

California Aid Report (CAR): the report from the California Student Aid Commission reporting your Cal Grant eligibility; estimates your Cal Grant award.

California residency: you're considered a California resident if you're an unmarried student, under 18, and your parents have been legal California residents for one year prior to the residence determination date of the college you will attend, or September 20, if your college does not have a residence determination date; if you've lived for two years with a legal California resident, other than a parent; or if a parent is in the U.S. Armed Forces, stationed in California and on active duty when you enroll. All married students, regardless of age, and unmarried students 18 or older, must establish their own residency.

Campus-based aid: federal programs administered by colleges: federal Perkins loan, federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work-study.

Capitalization: when interest is added to the principal balance of a loan rather than being paid as it accrues; any future interest is based on the higher loan amount.

Citizen/national: U.S. citizens are those born in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or abroad to a U.S. citizen. Nationals include citizens of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands and natives of American Samoa and Swain's Island.

Cost of attendance (COA): the total cost of college for the school year as calculated by the college, including tuition, fees, books, supplies, transportation, food, housing, personal expenses and sometimes the rental or purchase of a computer; also known as the student budget.

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE: the financial aid application administered by the College Board and required by some independent colleges and scholarship organizations to award private aid.

Default: failure to make the required payments on your student loan or otherwise honor a loan's terms.

Deferment: temporary postponement of payment on your student loan. Interest accrues unless your loan is subsidized by the federal government. Common reasons for deferment include attending school at least half time, and economic hardship/unemployment.

Delinquency: the state of being behind on your loan payments.

Direct Loan Servicing Center: all federal student loans disbursed on or after July 1, 2010 are handled by the Direct Loan Servicing Center, the U.S. Department of Education's agent contracted to collect Direct loans and handle deferments, forbearances and repayment options.

Eligible noncitizen: a U.S. permanent resident who has a Permanent Resident Card (I-551 or I-151); a conditional permanent resident (I-551C); or a noncitizen who has an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services with one of the following designations: Refugee (including noncitizen victims of human trafficking), Asylum Granted, Parolee (the I-94 confirms paroled for a minimum of one year and status has not expired), T-Visa holder or Cuban-Haitian Entrant.

Expected family contribution (EFC): the portion of your own and your family's financial resources that should be available to pay for college, based on a federal formula using the information on your FAFSA.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid; the application used to apply for federal and most state financial aid, and sometimes institutional aid.

Federal processor: the federal government's computer system that analyzes the information on your FAFSA, calculates your expected family contribution and sends out the Student Aid Report.

Financial aid eligibility: the difference between your expected family contribution and the college's cost of attendance; also known as your financial need.

Financial aid package: the total amount of financial aid offered by a school; usually a combination of grants, scholarships, work-study and loans.

Forbearance: temporary postponement or reduction of

your monthly payment. Interest continues to accrue, increasing the loan balance. Forbearance must be approved by your loan servicer.

GED: General Educational Development test/certificate used to measure high school academic achievement (in place of a diploma).

GPA: grade point average.

Grant: financial aid that doesn't have to be repaid; usually based on financial need.

Independent college: a nonprofit, private college that is not run by a government organization.

Institution-based aid: financial assistance offered and controlled by individual colleges, such as alumni scholarships and endowments from private donors; also called institutional aid.

Institutional methodology: the formula used by some colleges to determine your eligibility for institutional aid; may count home equity and other assets the FAFSA does not.

Interest: the money you will be charged for taking out a loan.

Loan servicer: a company that handles all the administrative tasks associated with a loan, such as establishing repayment terms, handling deferment and forbearance requests, and accepting and collecting payments.

Master promissory note (MPN): a legally binding contract between a borrower and the U.S. Department of Education listing all terms and conditions of a loan; federal student loans require you to sign an MPN.

Merit-based aid: financial aid based on grades, test scores, athletic ability, talents or other criteria, not income or assets.

Need-based aid: financial aid that is based on your own or your family's income or assets; most financial aid offered by the government is need-based.

Net cost of attendance or net price: what a student pays to attend a higher education institution; the school's cost of attendance minus money for college that doesn't have to be repaid, including grants and scholarships.

PIN: personal identification number from the U.S. Department of Education that serves as your e-signature on the electronic FAFSA; also can be used to check on the status of your FAFSA, correct or print

your Student Aid Report, sign your master promissory note, and view your federal financial aid records.

Principal (loan): the amount you originally borrowed, plus any capitalized interest.

Private career college: a for-profit institution offering a course of study or job skills beyond high school.

Satisfactory academic progress (SAP): as established by your college, the progress you must maintain toward obtaining a degree or certificate to continue receiving financial aid, and the GPA you must maintain.

Scholarship: money for college that you don't have to repay; awarded based on grades, test scores, major, heritage or other criteria, and sometimes, financial need.

Selective Service registration: males (citizens and eligible noncitizens) age 18-25 who are not currently on active duty in the Armed Forces must register with the Selective Service for military draft to receive federal student aid.

Social Security number (SSN): nine-digit number issued to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and temporary (working) residents by the U.S. Social Security Administration.

Student Aid Report (SAR): summarizes the information you provide on the FAFSA.

Undocumented students: students who live in the U.S. and are not U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens and who don't have an Alien Registration Card, visa or other legal documentation; includes students or their families who entered the country legally on tourist or work visas and chose to stay after their visas expired.

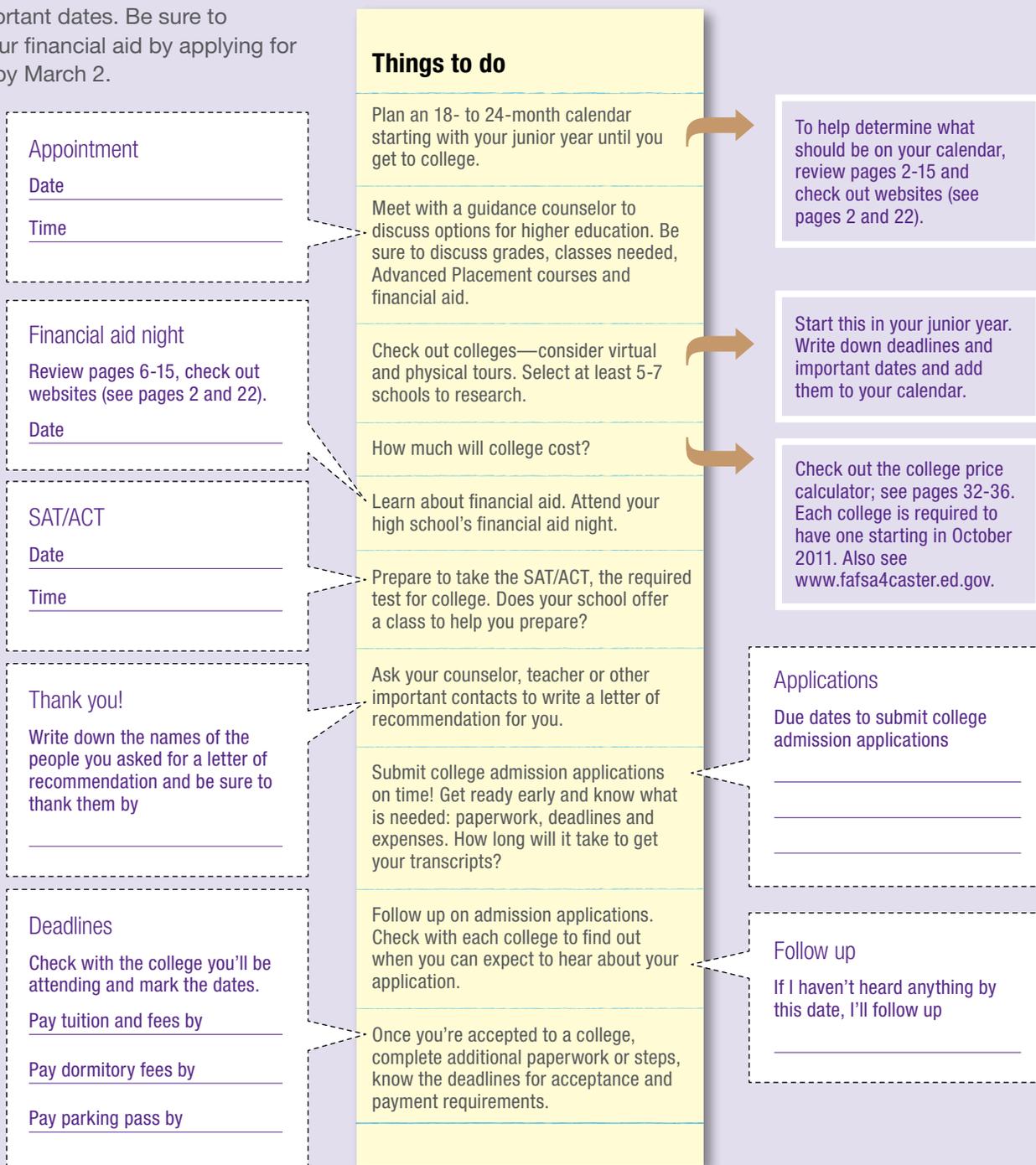
Untaxed income: all income you receive that's not taxed or may not be reported to the IRS.

Verification: the procedure by which a college verifies the information reported on the FAFSA, usually by requesting a copy of your (and/or your parents') signed tax return and other documentation.

Veteran: a person who has engaged in active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces; or is a National Guard or Reserve enlistee called to active duty for purposes other than training; or who was a cadet or midshipman at one of the service academies; and who was released under a condition other than dishonorable or who'll be a veteran by June 30, 2013.

My action plan

Use this page to help you plan ahead and capture important dates. Be sure to maximize your financial aid by applying for a Cal Grant by March 2.



ECMC

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