

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND TIPS FOR COMPLETING YOUR FAFSA ONLINE

(International students need not complete this step.)

1. To complete the FAFSA online, log on to www.fafsa.ed.gov. If you would prefer to fill out the paper FAFSA, copies are available from the Financial Aid Office. (Note: Students are *strongly* encouraged to complete the FAFSA online.) In order to help you gather the information needed to fill out the FAFSA, review the Pre-application Worksheet available on the site.
2. Before you begin, it will be helpful to have a copy of your completed 2008 federal income tax return (1040/1040A/1040EZ) available. If you will be filing but have not yet completed a tax return, you may use the “Student’s Income Estimator” worksheet that will be provided in Step 2 of “Filling Out Your FAFSA” on the Web, or use the Pre-Application Worksheet to collect your data .
3. When you start filling out your FAFSA, you will first be asked whether you will:
 - Electronically sign your application; or
 - Print the signature page after submitting your FAFSA electronically and then mailing the signed page to the Department of Education.
4. You will also be given the option to either sign electronically or print the signature page at the completion of your FAFSA in Step 8.
5. Students who filed a FAFSA or Renewal Application last year have had a Personal Identification Number (PIN) mailed to their permanent address. The PIN allows you to complete your FAFSA or Renewal Application and electronically sign your application.
6. If you do not have a PIN and wish to sign your application electronically, you may apply for a PIN online. Click on the “Register for Your PIN” or “Forgot Your PIN?” links available on the “Filling Out a FAFSA Overview” page. These links will take you to the <http://www.pin.ed.gov> web site for PIN registration.
7. If you choose not to use a PIN to sign your application electronically, be sure to print out the signature page, sign it, and mail it to the Department of Education. Otherwise, your FAFSA will not be official, and the processing of your financial aid will be delayed.
8. After you begin your FAFSA, you may save it and complete it later by clicking on the option provided on each page. You will be asked to provide a password for your FAFSA. Be sure to record the password you decide to use. If you forget your password, you will not be able to access your saved FAFSA and will need to start over again. You will also need your PIN each time you reopen your FAFSA.
9. You need not complete Step 4—the parent section. Graduate students are considered independent regardless of their tax filing status.
10. You must complete Steps 7-10 in one sitting. Once you begin Step 7, you will no longer have the option of coming back to complete the application.
11. Be sure to print the final copy of your FAFSA in Step 8, and the Submission Confirmation page in Step 10, for your records. Do NOT send a copy of your FAFSA or submission confirmation to the Financial Aid/Enrollment Offices. Your financial aid can only be determined based on the electronic copy SFTS receives from the Department of Education. SFTS does not need your copy.

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