

# Student Financial Aid Checklist

Use this simple checklist to guide you through the steps needed to maximize the amount of college financial aid that you can receive.

## **Step1: Complete Your Off-to-College Tasks**

Make sure you have everything in order for college admission. This includes essays and application forms, college visits, housing selection and other.

Our quick calendar events can help:  
[www.OfftoCollege.com](http://www.OfftoCollege.com)

## **Step2: How Much Is College Going to Cost**

College costs include tuition, housing, food, books, transportation, and more. Your college will be required to provide this information.

**TIP:** use our FREE student tally sheet to keep track of costs and financial aid received:  
[www.SayStudent.com/tally](http://www.SayStudent.com/tally)

## **Step3: What is EFC**

EFC is the Expected Family Contribution for higher education. In other words, it is the portion the family has to pay after factoring in all of your student financial aid.

Link to our Student Aid Note1 to understand EFC and to see if you qualify for federal financial aid:  
[www.SayStudent.com/note1](http://www.SayStudent.com/note1)

## **Step4: FAFSA Submission**

Financial aid begins with your filing of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This form is required for all federal aid program and many college aid programs. You can file the FAFSA form starting in January for the upcoming Fall academic year.

Link to our Student Aid Note2 for FAFSA submission forms and requirements: [www.SayStudent.com/note2](http://www.SayStudent.com/note2)

## **Step5: Understand the Aid Process**

First comes the FAFSA form, then the SAR, and then the Financial Aid award letter from your school.

Link to our Financial Aid Steps to view the process:  
[www.SayStudent.com/aid-steps](http://www.SayStudent.com/aid-steps)

## **Step6: View the Types and Sources of Aid**

Financial aid programs include grants, scholarships, loans, state programs, and other special aid.

You can view a summary charts for students and parents: [www.SayStudent.com/charts](http://www.SayStudent.com/charts)

## **Step7: Check with Your Financial Aid Office**

Your school's financial aid office is the control center for student financial aid. Talk with your college's financial aid center to see how they can help. Ask questions like:

- 1: *what are the filing deadlines?*
- 2: *what forms are required?*
- 3: *what percentage of costs covered by the aid package?*
- 4: *can the award package be negotiated?*

## **Step8: Start Searching for Scholarship Money**

Scholarship awards can go fast, so start early — usually in the Fall of your High School senior year.

Check your field of study, ethnic background, social and religious affiliations, parent's employment, family club memberships, and local businesses:

[www.SayStudent.com/scholarships](http://www.SayStudent.com/scholarships)

## **Step9: Learn About Stafford Student Loans**

Student loans are the most widely used form of financial aid. These loans are backed by the Federal Government to guarantee low-interest rate loans.

Link to: [www.SayStudent.com/stafford](http://www.SayStudent.com/stafford)

## **Step10: Graduates Can Use the PLUS Loan**

Graduates and professional students can borrow up to the full cost of education. Deferment plans are available. But graduates must use the full borrowing amounts from Stafford student loans prior to borrowing from Plus loans.

[www.SayStudent.com/gradplus](http://www.SayStudent.com/gradplus)

## **Step11: How Parents Can Help**

Parents of undergraduate students can assist with their child's education by applying for the Federal PLUS loan. You can borrow up to the full cost of education minus any financial aid received by the student.

[www.SayStudent.com/plus](http://www.SayStudent.com/plus)

## **Step12: Private Student Loans**

Many financial aid awards do not cover the full costs. So many students are turning to private education loans to finance college. You can borrow up to the full cost of education as certified by your institution.

[www.SayStudent.com/private](http://www.SayStudent.com/private)

## **Step13: Home Equity Financing**

Parents or students with equity value in their home can use home equity programs to pay for college. Funds are borrowed when needed, giving you more flexibility and control of costs. You don't need to file federal forms










You can also use the Bank Equity program to get the overall best benefit: [www.SayStudent.com/bank](http://www.SayStudent.com/bank)

## **Step14: Managing Your Money**

Money will be tight during school. Students (and parents) want to control spending and avoid unnecessary debt. View our tools for tips on building a budget and using pre-paid cards to manage spending.

You can download budgeting forms and other tools FREE: [www.SayStudent.com/tools](http://www.SayStudent.com/tools)

## Free Student Tools

-  student aid tally sheet
-  student financial aid map
-  summary financial aid chart for undergrads
-  summary financial aid chart for parents
-  student loans pros and cons chart
-  college moving checklist
  
-  **cost comparison wkst:**  
use to compare costs among colleges
-  **building success:**  
free how-to book download
-  **link to:**  
[www.SayStudent.com/tools](http://www.SayStudent.com/tools)

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