

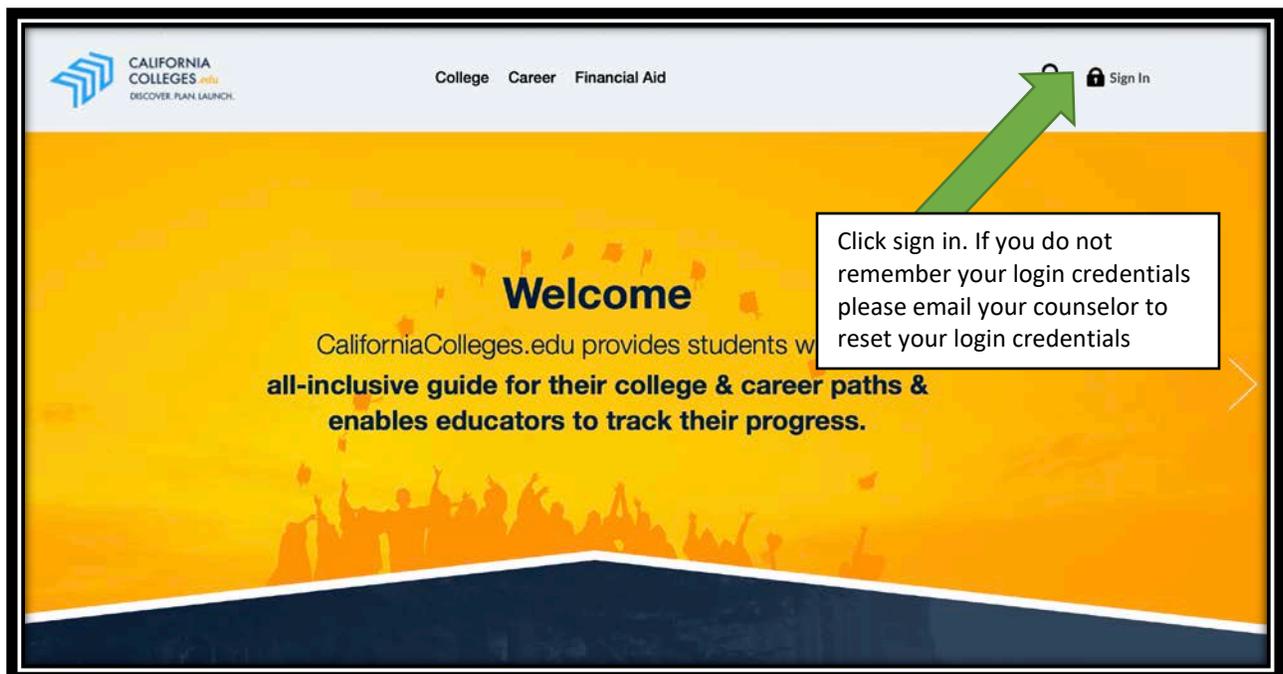
1. Create an account (FSA ID).

- **Student:** Create a username and password that will be used to access and sign your FAFSA application online. To create an FSA ID click the following link [get an FSA ID here](#), please do this as soon as possible. This FSA ID will be used to renew your FAFSA every year, be sure to write down your login information in a safe place.
- **Parent:** If your child is not considered independent, one parent must create an FSA ID in order to sign the FAFSA application online. [Create an FSA ID here](#). Create your FSA ID as soon as possible, as it may take up to three days to verify your information through the IRS.

IMPORTANT: Some of the [most common FAFSA errors](#) occur when the student and parent mix up their FSA IDs. If you don't want your financial aid to be delayed, it's extremely important that each parent and each student create his or her own FSA ID and that they do not share it with ANYONE, even each other.

2. Start the FAFSA® form at <https://www.californiacolleges.edu/#/>

The 2022–23 FAFSA form is now available! While the state deadline for your FAFSA application is not technically until March 2, you should complete the FAFSA form as soon as possible because some states and schools run out of financial aid early and have limited funds for financial aid. Don't wait until the last minute to apply!



The image shows a screenshot of the California Colleges.edu website. The header includes the logo for California Colleges.edu (Discover, Plan, Launch) and navigation links for College, Career, and Financial Aid. A 'Sign In' button with a lock icon is located in the top right corner. A green arrow points from a callout box to the 'Sign In' button. The main content area features a large 'Welcome' heading and a paragraph: 'CaliforniaColleges.edu provides students with an all-inclusive guide for their college & career paths & enables educators to track their progress.' The background is a vibrant orange and yellow gradient with silhouettes of people celebrating.

Click sign in. If you do not remember your login credentials please email your counselor to reset your login credentials

CALIFORNIA COLLEGES
DISCOVER. PLAN. LAUNCH.

College Career Financial Aid 🔍 👤

Financial Aid
Financial aid helps you pay for college. Educate yourself and your family about your options and the application process so you can get financial aid to meet your educational goals.

FINANCIAL AID OPTIONS

- Learn about Financial Aid
- Federal and State Aid
- Scholarships
- Student Loans

YOUR FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY

- Net Price Calculator
- Financial Aid for Foster Youth
- Financial Aid for Undocumented Students
- Financial Aid for Transfer Students
- Financial Aid for Community College Students

APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

- FAFSA
- CA Dream Act
- CSS Profile
- Cal Grant
- Chafee Grant for Foster Youth
- California College Promise Grant
- Financial Aid Checklist

AFTER YOU APPLY

- Post-Application Checklist
- Compare Your Financial Aid Offers

Important Links

- Vocabulary

Financial Aid Resources

- Financial Aid for Homeless Youth
- Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities
- Talk to Your Family about Financial Aid
- Making Smart Money Decisions

What Is the FAFSA, and Why Is It Important?

FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It's how U.S. citizens and [eligible non-citizens](#) get money for college, including:

- Federal financial aid, like grants, work-study, or loans.
- State financial aid, like the [Cal Grant](#).
- Some school-based financial aid, like scholarships or grants given out by colleges.

Fill out the FAFSA even if you're not sure you'll get financial aid. Each year, almost 90,000 California students miss out on major grant money because they choose not to fill out the FAFSA--*don't be one of them!*

When should you fill out the FAFSA?

- You can fill out your FAFSA online starting **October 1** of your senior year in high school.
- Be sure to apply by the **March 2** Cal Grant deadline so you can be considered for this big state grant.
- Your college may have earlier deadlines for school-based awards. Check with the financial aid office.

If you missed the March 2 deadline, fill out your FAFSA as soon as you can. You can still qualify for federal financial aid if you apply by June 30. Some federal aid is first-come, first-served. The earlier you apply, the better.

Launch your FAFSA from CaliforniaColleges.edu.

Complete the lessons in [My Financial Aid Plan](#)! They'll walk you through the steps to pay for college and filling out your application.

1. Go straight to [My Financial Aid Plan](#).
2. Click on a Module.
 - **Module 1: Complete Prep Work for FAFSA or CADAA**—Start here to make sure the FAFSA is right for you, and get ready to launch your application.
 - **Module 2: Launch and Submit the FAFSA or CADAA**—Ready to launch? Go for it! This module will guide you through the steps and help you contact a financial aid expert if you need it.

Click My Financial Aid Plan

The next screen will look like the one below. Click “Launch FAFSA/CADAA” and you should be redirected to the FAFSA website (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>)

The screenshot shows the 'My Financial Aid Plan' section of the 'My Plan' portal. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'My Plan', 'College', 'Career', and 'Financial Aid'. Below this, a blue banner reads 'My Financial Aid Plan' with a 'New' tag. A green arrow points to a yellow 'Launch FAFSA/CADAA' button. Below the button is a red notification bar: 'Your financial aid application was updated to FAFSA.' A table lists six steps for completing the FAFSA or CADAA application, each with a 'Not Started' status and a right arrow.

| Step | Month | Task | Status |
|------|-----------|---|-------------|
| 1 | September | Complete Prep Work for Your FAFSA or CADAA | Not Started |
| 2 | October | Launch and Submit the FAFSA or CADAA | Not Started |
| 3 | February | Review the Student Aid Report and Cal Grant GPA | Not Started |
| 4 | March | Check College Portals | Not Started |
| 5 | April | Review Financial Aid Offers | Not Started |
| 6 | May | Secure State Aid | Not Started |

TIP: Once redirected to the FAFSA website we recommend that the **student** start the FAFSA form using the instructions below. It makes the application process much easier.

- **If you are the student:** Click “(New to the FAFSA Process) START HERE”
 - Then click “I am a student and want to access the FAFSA form”
 - Click log in and enter your FSA ID login credentials
- **If you are the parent:** Click “(New to the FAFSA Process) START HERE”
 - Then click “ I am a parent filling out a FAFSA form for a student”
- Click “Enter the student’s information.” Then provide the student’s name, Social Security number, and date of birth, and click “Next.”

- **Make sure you select 2022–23 FAFSA form**
- Remember, the FAFSA form is not a onetime thing. You must complete a FAFSA form for each school year so do not use your Mesa email address

Create a save key.

- This save key will allow both student and parent to return to the application at a later date without losing information. This is especially helpful if you and your parent are not in the same place.

3. Fill out the Student Demographics section.

This section is basic information about the student such as: Name, date of birth, etc. If you have already created an FSA ID prior to beginning the application a lot of your personal information will be prepopulated to save you time. Your personal information must match exactly to your social security card. If you do not have a social security number please see the CADAA application to see if you qualify. (<https://www.californiacolleges.edu/#/ca-dream-act-signed-in>)

Reminder: The FAFSA application belongs to the students , so when the application says “you” or “your,” it’s referring to the student.

When in doubt, the banner on the left side will indicate whether you’re on a student or parent page.

The image shows two side-by-side screenshots of the FAFSA application interface. The left screenshot is titled "Search for High School" and shows the "STUDENT INFORMATION" section. A green arrow points to the "STUDENT INFORMATION" banner. Below the banner, there is a success message: "Application was successfully saved." followed by a reminder: "Because the FAFSA belongs to the student, 'you' and 'your' always (unless otherwise noted) refer to the student." and a prompt: "Enter the name, city, and state of your high school, then click Confirm." The form fields are filled with "Murrieta Mesa High school", "Murrieta", and "California". A "CONFIRM" button is at the bottom. The right screenshot is titled "Personal Information for Parent" and shows the "PERSONAL INFORMATION" section. A green arrow points to the "PERSONAL INFORMATION" banner. Below the banner, there is a prompt: "Enter information for your first parent (father/mother/stepparent)". The form fields are empty. A "PREVIOUS" button is at the bottom left and a "NEXT" button is at the bottom right.

4. List the schools to which you want your FAFSA® information sent.

- You can list up to 10 schools, (We recommend listing all 10 even if you haven't applied or gotten accepted yet.) A FAFSA application is not a commitment to attend that school.
- If you are applying to more than 10 schools, please click the following link. [If you're applying to more than 10 schools, here's what you should do.](#)
-

5. Dependent or Independent

Based on a series of questions, the FAFSA application will determine if you, as the student, are considered dependent or independent. Based on certain factors, if you are deemed an independent applicant, you will not have to provide financial information about your parents. If this applies to you, skip to the next step. If you are deemed a dependent student, this is where your parents FSA ID will save you some time on your application if it is completed prior to initiating the application.

6. Parent Demographics section.

If you are an independent student please skip to the next instruction.

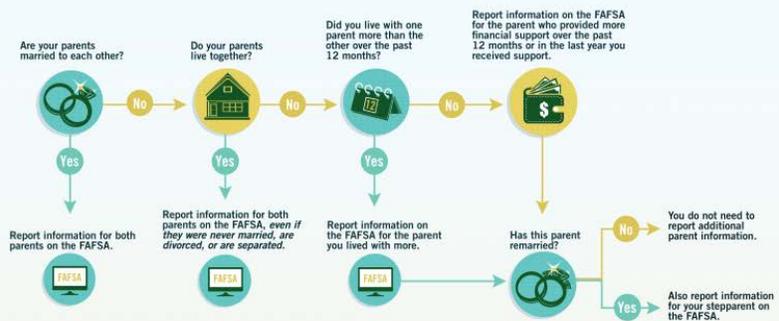
This section is about the income of your parents, even if you don't live with your parents but were deemed a dependent you must include this information in your application.

NOTE: Some family dynamics may differ, please see the diagram below to determine who qualifies as your parent.

WHO'S MY PARENT WHEN I FILL OUT MY FAFSA?

Dependent students are required to report parent information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).¹ For reporting purposes, "PARENT" means your legal (biological or adoptive) parent or stepparent, or a person that the state has determined to be your legal parent.

Use this guide to figure out which parent's information to include (depending on your family situation).



The following people are not your parents unless they have legally adopted you:



Widowed Stepparent



Grandparents



Foster Parents



Legal Guardians



Older Brothers or Sisters



Aunts or Uncles

If you're not sure whom to report as a parent, you can visit StudentAid.ed.gov/afsa/filling-out/parent-info or call 800-4-FED-AID (800-433-3243).

If you're not sure whether you are a dependent student, go to StudentAid.gov/afsa/filling-out/dependency

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[Read specific guidance about reporting your parents' information as a dependent student. Learn what to do if you are not able to provide parent info due to special circumstances.](#)

7. Supply your financial information.

Even if your parents link their information through the IRS DRT tool, they will be required to manually enter a couple of answers about their income and tax information in the beginning of this section. *(To access the tool you must be able to select "already completed" on the parent finances page.)* See instructions below on how to link your account.

If your parent does not link their information through the IRS DRT tool, they will have to enter all of their tax information manually.

Students who filed taxes in 2020 should use this tool to link their taxes as well.

It is important that the information on this application match exactly to your 2020 Tax return.

SIMPLE STEPS TO TRANSFER TAX INFORMATION INTO YOUR FAFSA® FORM

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

WHY

EASY Transfer info with the click of a button.

FAST Instantly retrieve your information.

ACCURATE Correctly fill in your information.

HOW



INCOME TAX INFO



1 Log in to your current FAFSA form or start a new application at fafsa.gov.

3 Click the "Link to IRS" button and log in with your FSA ID to be transferred to the IRS to retrieve your info.

5 Check the "Transfer My Tax Information into the FAFSA form" box, and click the "Transfer Now" button.*

2 In the finances section of the online form, you will see a "Link to IRS" button if you are eligible to use the IRS DRT.

4 Once at the IRS site, enter your information exactly as it appears on your federal income tax return and click the "Submit" button.

6 You will know that your federal tax return information has been successfully transferred because the words "Transferred from the IRS" will display in place of the IRS information in your FAFSA form.

*For your protection, your tax information will not be displayed on either the IRS site or fafsa.gov.

The IRS DRT can be used by both students and parents.

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To learn more about the IRS DRT, visit StudentAid.gov/irsdrt

If you're eligible, you'll see a **"LINK TO IRS"** button. Choose that option and follow the prompts.

Parent Tax Filing Status

Student Demographics
School Selection
Dependency Status
Parent Demographics
Parent Financials
Student Financials
Sign & Submit
Confirmation

✓
✓
✓
✓
✎

PARENT INFORMATION

✓ Application was successfully saved.

i **Attention!** You must provide financial information from your parents' **2019 tax return** on the following pages.

For 2019, have your parents completed their IRS income tax return or another tax return? ?

Already completed
▼

What type of income tax return did your parents file for 2019? ?

IRS 1040
▼

For 2019, what is your parents' tax filing status according to their tax return? ?

Head of Household
▼

☰ **IRS Data Retrieval Tool**

Based on your responses, your parents are not eligible to transfer their information from the IRS into this FAFSA.

Click **Next** to continue.

Use this tool if possible, it saves times and allows for less error

← PREVIOUS

NEXT →

The data transferred from the application will not appear, rather the message “Transferred from the IRS” will appear in place of your financial information. Make sure to answer all questions about finances that were not filled by the IRS DRT tool.

8. Sign and submit your FAFSA form.

This is the final step, your FAFSA will not be submitted if it is not signed (By you and your parent if you were a dependent student). The simplest way to do this is for both student and parent to enter their FSA IDs. Pay attention to the student signature and parent signature and make sure the FSA IDs match up to the proper signature.

Note: If you (the student) logged in to the FAFSA form with your FSA ID, you won't need to provide it again on this page.

- The parent who signed into the FAFSA form must sign under the correlating parent. If your social and information was entered under parent 1 make sure to sign as parent 1, and visa versa.
- [Here's what you should do if you get an error saying that your FSA ID information doesn't match the information provided on the FAFSA form.](#)
- If for some reason you cannot get your FSA ID to work as the signature. You can print out the signature page and mail it in (This process takes longer to successfully process than if you used the electronic signature).
- If you must manually sign, simply select Other options to sign and submit" then choose "Print A Signature Page"



Congratulations class of 2022,
You have completed the FAFSA application!
Please take a screenshot of your
confirmation page and send it to your
counselor
If you have any questions, please feel free to
reach out, we are happy to help!