



Each year families prepare for the annual ritual of completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). If you've never experienced "FAFSA Time", it's time to get ready. Completing the FAFSA has never been easier, if you are prepared.

The FAFSA is used to apply for federal, state and institutional financial aid that includes grants, scholarships, work-study, and loans. The application process begins in January when you start gathering the required information. You will need the following for *you and your parent(s)*:

- ✓ driver's license and social security number
- ✓ Alien registration number, if you are not a U.S. citizen
- ✓ completed tax returns
- ✓ most recent W-2s
- ✓ records of untaxed income received during the previous tax year
- ✓ value and debt of business and/or farm (excluding a farm on which you live)
- ✓ value of investments, excluding retirement accounts and home equity
- ✓ a PIN (you each need one) - go to [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov) to get the PIN that will act as your electronic signatures
- ✓ if you choose to file a paper FAFSA, get a copy from your high school counselor or from a college/university near you

Many sources of financial aid are limited in funding, so you are strongly encouraged to annually complete the FAFSA by the priority date. You are encouraged to complete the FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov), but paper FAFSAs are available upon request. Eligible students who complete their financial aid file after the priority date usually receive less need-based grant aid.

You may file your FAFSA using information provided on your tax returns without actually filing your taxes until the due date. If you do not have your tax forms completed, you may use estimated figures. However, you need to make necessary changes to your FAFSA once your tax returns are complete. For additional assistance with completing the FAFSA, contact the Federal Processor at 1-800-433-3243.

\* Check with the schools where you are sending FAFSA results to determine their specific application deadlines/priority dates and add this information to your calendar.