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7 Things You Need Before You Fill Out the 2019–20 FAFSA® Form



7

*things you'll need before you fill
out the FAFSA® form*

If you need financial aid to help you pay for college, you must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form. The 2019–20 FAFSA form will be available on Oct. 1, 2018. You should fill it out as soon as possible on or after Oct. 1 at the official government site, fafsa.gov.

It'll be easier to complete the FAFSA form if you gather what you need ahead of time. Below is what you'll need to fill it out.

U.S. citizen, but meet Federal Student Aid's [basic eligibility requirements](https://studentaid.ed.gov/eligibility/basic-criteria) (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/eligibility/basic-criteria>), you'll also need your Alien Registration number.

3. Your driver's license number

If you don't have a driver's license, then don't worry about this step.

4. Your 2017 tax records*

In case you didn't hear about the [changes we made to the FAFSA process](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/about/announcements/fafsa-changes) (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/about/announcements/fafsa-changes>), beginning with the 2017–18 FAFSA form, we now require you to report income information from an earlier tax year.

- On the 2019–20 FAFSA form, you (and your parents, as appropriate) will report your 2017 income information, rather than your 2018 income information.
- Since you'll probably already have filed your 2017 taxes by the time the FAFSA form launches, you'll be able to import your tax information into the FAFSA form right away using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT). (No more logging back in to update after filing taxes!)
- Not everyone is eligible to use the IRS DRT; and the IRS DRT does not input all the financial information required on the FAFSA form. Therefore, you should have your 2017 tax return and 2017 IRS W-2 available for reference.

The IRS DRT is the fastest, most accurate way to input your tax return information into the FAFSA form. To address security and privacy concerns related to the IRS DRT, the tax return information you transfer from the IRS will not be displayed on fafsa.gov or the IRS DRT web page. Instead, you'll see "Transferred from the IRS" in the appropriate fields on fafsa.gov.

- You **cannot use** your 2018 tax information. We understand that for some families, 2017 income doesn't accurately reflect your current financial situation. If you have experienced a reduction in income since the 2017 tax year, you should complete the FAFSA form with the info it asks for (2017), and then contact each of the schools to which you're applying to explain and document the change in income. They have the ability to assess your situation and make adjustments to your FAFSA form if warranted.
- You cannot update your 2019–20 FAFSA form with your 2018 tax information after filing 2018 taxes. 2017 information is what's required. No updates necessary; no updates allowed.

5. Records of your untaxed income*

* If you're a *dependent student* (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/dependency>), you will need this information for your parents as well.

Ready to start?

Once you're ready, you have several ways to complete the FAFSA form (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out#log-in>), including the [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.ed.gov/) (<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>) website or the new myStudentAid mobile app. Using the app, you can fill out the FAFSA form safely and securely from your mobile device. On the app, you can also manage your FSA ID, view your federal student aid history and loan information, and more. The myStudentAid app is available from both the [Apple App Store \(iOS\)](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/mystudentaid/id1414539145) (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/mystudentaid/id1414539145>) and [Google Play \(Android\)](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.fsa.mystudentaid) (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.fsa.mystudentaid>).

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