

FAFSA Facts and Fiction: Get the Truth – and the Money You Need for College Don't let misconceptions about the FAFSA prevent you from getting the money you need for college. Here's the truth behind some questions you might have about filling out this critical financial aid form:

Fiction: I need a computer to file the FAFSA

Fact: You can file your FAFSA on your phone by visiting [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov)

Fiction: I need to pay a fee to file the FAFSA.

Fact: Filing the FAFSA is free – it's right there in the name! Avoid any website or mobile app that requires a payment – that means it isn't the official FAFSA site.

Fiction: It takes a really long time to fill out the FAFSA.

Fact: The average time to complete a FAFSA is about 30 minutes. There's lots of help available, contact us for help or view videos on the [FAFSA YouTube channel!](#)

Fiction: The FAFSA asks for a lot of information and I won't be able to find it.

Fact: The information the FAFSA collects includes things you can easily access, like your Social Security number, bank statements and driver's license. You don't even have to have your tax forms on hand: there's a tool that can pull them in automatically for you! See a [checklist](#) of the information you need to file the FAFSA.

Fiction: I need both parents' information to complete the FAFSA.

Fact: It depends. There are many situations when you only need one parent's information to complete the FAFSA – and you might not even need that. [Learn more about parent involvement.](#)

Fiction: I don't need to fill out the FAFSA.

Fact: The FAFSA not only enables you to apply for federal grants and low-interest loans, it's also the form that states and individual colleges use to determine your need-based aid. [Check the FAFSA submission deadline for your state here.](#)

Fiction: I need to be a U.S. citizen to be eligible for financial aid.

Fact: Students who fall into certain non-citizen statuses are eligible for federal financial aid. [See a list here.](#) Your parents' citizenship does NOT impact your eligibility. For information on financial aid options for DACA recipients, [click here.](#)

Fiction: My family must have filed their tax returns before I can file the FAFSA.

Fact: You must use what's called "prior-prior year" taxes to complete the FAFSA. That means that for the 2024 FAFSA, you must use 2022 information.

It's so important not to let false impressions steer you away from filing the FAFSA – this form is the key to getting the money you need to attend college. If you're confused about something you hear or read, contact your school's financial aid office and they'll set the record straight!

Our Office of Financial Aid will work with you to ensure you have access to the resources you need to pay for college. Our goal is to make sure all qualified applicants can invest in an education here.

If you have any questions about financial aid, need help filling out the FAFSA or encounter special financial circumstances your family is experiencing, please call us at (616) 222-1424 or email us.