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future®

CALIFORNIA 2009-10

Free Money for College!

Grants & Scholarships

Cal Grant:

Your Ticket To Success
Where Will It Take You?

2 Forms + 2 Steps, page 16

Look Out —
That's Real Money!
Be Careful With Loans

CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION

EdFund® Guaranteeing dreams™

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Web Sites That Click

Explore different college search sites, learn about special scholarships, know how much you can expect to earn in your field, and so much more.

College in this workbook refers to any college, university, graduate or professional school, career college, technical or vocational program, or other educational institution beyond high school.

www.csac.ca.gov
www.calgrants.org
www.edfund.org

This publication includes information on federal student aid programs. While the California Student Aid Commission and EdFund have made every effort to ensure the information is accurate, the U.S. Department of Education has not reviewed this publication.

CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION

EdFund Guaranteeing dreams™

This workbook is produced for students and families by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) and EdFund. CSAC is the state's principal provider of intersegmental statewide grant aid to postsecondary students. CSAC is also one of the nation's leading guaranty agencies under the Federal Family Education Loan Program. Loans guaranteed by CSAC are managed in partnership with EdFund, its nonprofit student loan services provider. EdFund maintains regionally based staff located throughout the country.

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This publication is provided free as a service of the California Student Aid Commission and EdFund. Schools may order additional copies by calling 877.2EdFund or going to **www.csac.ca.gov** or **www.edfund.org**. This workbook is also available in Spanish.

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College is an investment in you… and there's money to help you pay for it.

While most colleges expect you and your family to contribute toward your education, financial aid can help narrow the gap between your resources and your costs. Financial aid is available from the federal government, states, colleges and private sources:

Grants are money you don't have to repay and are typically based on financial need.

Scholarships are also free money for college and are usually based on your area of study or merit, such as good grades, high test scores, athletic, musical or other special talents, community service, and sometimes financial need.

Work-study or student employment programs—federal and college—let you earn money in certain jobs on or off campus to help pay for your education.

Loans are borrowed money that you must pay back, usually with interest.

Your first step to getting money for college is to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. Some financial aid offered by your state or college may require you to submit additional information or applications. Apply early and meet the deadlines because many financial aid funds are limited.

Also explore private scholarships, tax credits and other options—flip to page 25. Ask if your college offers a plan that will let you spread your payments over the school year.

Your school counselor or career center is the place to start. Also, browse the Web, starting with the sites listed on the back cover.

The Power of Education Not only can you earn much more during your lifetime than someone with only a high school diploma, but you'll also have a better chance of earning it in a career you enjoy.

You should know:

- Cal Grants are free money you don't have to pay back.
- Financial aid can cover more than tuition and books. Paying rent, eating and getting from one place to another add up. Luckily, most state and federal grants and scholarships, as well as federal loans, take that into account.
- College isn't just for the wealthy. See pages 25-27 to learn more.
- You don't have to attend full time to get financial aid. You can use your federal Pell Grant and other aid if you only go to college half time. Even if you take one or two classes, you may still be able to use your Pell Grant.
- Money is set aside for foster youth. If you are or were in foster care, you may be eligible for thousands of dollars a year for college or job training on top of any other financial aid you receive.
- You don't need to be a U.S. citizen to receive financial aid—and your parents don't need to be citizens either. The majority of U.S. permanent residents and other eligible noncitizens qualify for most federal and state aid. If you're an undocumented student, you aren't eligible for state or federal aid, but in California you may qualify for in-state tuition rates at public colleges. See page 19.
- Completing the FAFSA is not as difficult as it may first appear. The form is available in English and Spanish, and has step-by-step instructions; ask your school for help. You can also attend a free college application workshop. For dates and locations, go to **www.californiacashforcollege.org**.

fyi

Apply for financial aid even before finding out if you've been accepted to college. Otherwise you may miss out on scholarships, grants and other free money for education.

Cracking the Codes: Financial Aid Acronyms

Here are the major ones:

CAR	California Aid Report
COA	cost of attendance
DRN	Data Release Number
EFC	expected family contribution
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
GED	General Educational Development (high school graduation equivalency certificate)
GPA	grade point average
MPN	master promissory note for federal loans
PIN	personal identification number
SAR	Student Aid Report
SSN	Social Security number

terms to **know**

Ability-to-benefit test: one of the ways to determine eligibility for federal aid for students who aren't high school graduates or don't have a GED certificate.

Assets: an item of value, such as real estate, stocks, bonds, cash savings, trust funds, money market funds, college savings plans, retirement plans (previous year's contributions only) and prepaid tuition plans.

California Aid Report (CAR): the report from the California Student Aid Commission summarizing the information you provide on your FAFSA; estimates your Cal Grant award.

California residency: you're considered a California resident if you're an unmarried student, under 18, and your parents have been legal California residents for one year prior to the residence determination date of the college you will attend, or September 20, if your college does not have a residence determination date; if you've lived for two years with a legal California resident, other than a parent; or if a parent is in the U.S. Armed Forces, stationed in California and on active duty when you enroll. All married students, regardless of age, and unmarried students 18 or older, must establish their own residency. Students with questions regarding their residency should contact their campus financial aid office.

Campus-based aid: the three federal programs administered by colleges: Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work-Study.

Capitalization: when interest is added to the principal balance of a loan rather than being paid as it accrues; any future interest is based on the higher loan amount.

Citizen/national: U.S. citizens are those born in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or abroad to a U.S. citizen. Nationals include citizens of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands and natives of American Samoa and Swain's Island.

Cost of attendance (COA): the total cost of college for the school year as calculated by colleges, including tuition, fees, books, supplies, transportation, food, housing, personal expenses, and sometimes the rental or purchase of a computer; also known as the student budget.

CSS/Financial Aid Profile®: the financial aid application administered by the College Board and required by some independent colleges and scholarship organizations to award private aid.

Data Release Number (DRN): the four-digit number assigned to your FAFSA by the federal processor. You'll need the DRN to make corrections to your mailing address or the schools you listed on your FAFSA.

Default: failure to make loan payments or otherwise honor a loan's terms.

Eligible noncitizen: a U.S. permanent resident who has a Permanent Resident Card (I-551 or I-151); a conditional permanent resident (I-551C); or a noncitizen who has an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services with one of the following designations: Refugee (including noncitizen victims of human trafficking), Asylum Granted, Parolee (the I-94 confirms paroled for a minimum of one year and status has not expired), T-Visa holder, or Cuban-Haitian Entrant.

Expected family contribution (EFC): the portion of your own and your family's financial resources that should be available to pay for college, based on a federal formula using the information on your FAFSA.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid; the application used to apply for federal and most state financial aid, and sometimes institutional aid.

Federal methodology: the formula the federal government uses to determine a family's ability to contribute toward a college education using the information submitted on the FAFSA to calculate the expected family contribution (doesn't count home equity and certain other assets); also used by states and some colleges.

Federal processor: the federal government's computer system that analyzes the information on your FAFSA, calculates your expected family contribution and sends out the Student Aid Report.

Financial aid eligibility: the difference between your expected family contribution and the college's cost of attendance; also known as your financial need.

Financial aid package: the total amount of financial aid offered by a school; usually a combination of grants, scholarships, loans and work-study.

GED: General Educational Development test/certificate used to measure high school academic achievement.

GPA: grade point average.

Grant: financial aid that doesn't need to be repaid; usually based on financial need.

Home equity: current home value minus the amount still owed.

Independent college: a nonprofit, private college that is not run by a government organization.

Institution-based aid: financial assistance offered and controlled by individual colleges, such as alumni scholarships and endowments from private donors; also called institutional aid.

Institutional methodology: the formula used by some colleges to determine your eligibility for institutional aid; may count home equity and other assets the FAFSA does not.

Interest: the money lenders charge you for borrowing their money.

Master promissory note (MPN): a legally binding contract between a borrower and lender listing all terms and conditions of a loan; federal loans require an MPN.

Merit-based aid: financial aid that is based on merit—grades, test scores, athletic ability, talents or other criteria—and not income or assets.

Need-based aid: financial aid that is based on your own or your family's income and assets; most financial aid offered by the government is need-based.

PIN: personal identification number from the U.S. Department of Education that serves as your e-signature on the electronic FAFSA; also can be used to check on the status of your FAFSA.

Principal (loan): the sum you owe, not including interest, when you borrow money.

Private career college: a for-profit institution offering a course of study or job skills beyond high school.

Satisfactory academic progress: (as established by your college) the progress you must maintain toward obtaining a degree or certificate to continue receiving financial aid, and the GPA you must maintain.

Scholarship: money for college you don't have to repay, awarded based on grades, test scores, major, heritage or other criteria, and sometimes, financial need.

Selective Service registration: most males (citizens and eligible noncitizens) age 18-25 who are not currently on active duty in the Armed Forces must register with the Selective Service for military draft to receive federal student aid.

Student Aid Report (SAR): the report from the federal processor summarizing the information you provide on the FAFSA.

Student budget: the total cost of attending a college; also known as the cost of attendance (COA).

Undocumented students: students who live in the U.S. and are not U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens and who don't have an Alien Registration Card, visa or other legal documentation; includes students or their families who entered the country legally on tourist or work visas and chose to stay after their visas expired.

Untaxed income: all income you receive that's not taxed or may not be reported to the IRS.

Verification: the procedure by which a college checks the information reported on the FAFSA, usually by requesting a copy of your (and/or your parents') signed tax return and other documentation.

Veteran: a person who has engaged in active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces or is a National Guard or Reserve enlistee called to active duty for purposes other than training, or who was a cadet or midshipman at one of the service academies, and who was released under a condition other than dishonorable; or who'll be a veteran by June 30, 2010.

Do You Qualify for Financial Aid?

Most financial aid is based on your financial need rather than your grades, so much of the information in this chapter focuses on need-based aid. To learn more about financial aid that's not based on your family's income or assets, see "13 Other Ways to Pay for College" starting on page 25.

The FAFSA

You apply for most financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The easiest and fastest way is online at **www.fafsa.ed.gov**. The FAFSA asks for information about you, your family, your finances and your college plans. You'll find more information starting on page 6.

FAFSA4Caster—Get a peek into your future

Get an estimate of your eligibility for federal student aid instantly, even before your senior year, and shorten the time it takes you to complete the FAFSA by using FAFSA4caster. You'll find the new planning tool at **www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov** in English and Spanish. You'll need your Social Security number and about 30 minutes to answer questions.

Are you dependent or independent?

Whether you're a dependent or an independent student will determine whose financial information you'll need to report on the FAFSA and the types and amounts of financial aid you may be eligible to receive.

You're considered an independent student if at least one of the following situations describes you—not whether you live on your own, or if your parents no longer list you as a dependent on their tax return or feel it's not their responsibility to help you pay for college:

- You were born before January 1, 1986.
- You'll be working on a master's or doctorate degree or graduate certificate in the fall of 2009.
- You're married as of the date you complete the FAFSA.
- You have children who receive more than half their support from you.
- You have dependents other than your spouse or children who live with you and who receive more than half their support from you.
- You had no living parent (biological or adoptive) when you were age 13, even if you are now adopted.
- You are or were in foster care or were a ward or dependent of the court at any time when you were 13 or older (even if you aren't anymore).
- You're an emancipated minor or are in legal guardianship as determined by the court in your state of legal residence.
- You're a self-supporting unaccompanied youth who is homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- You're a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces (or will be a veteran as of June 30, 2010), or you attended a service academy and were released under a condition other than dishonorable.
- You're currently serving on active duty (other than training) in the U.S. Armed Forces.

If none of these apply to you, but you believe your situation makes you independent, contact the financial aid office of the college you hope to attend and ask about "dependency override."

Your Assets and Financial Aid

The FAFSA asks for information about the value of certain assets, including savings, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, money market funds, real estate investments and trusts as of the day you complete your FAFSA. You'll also need to report any education savings accounts owned by your parents (or you, if you're an independent student), including Coverdell savings accounts, 529 college savings plans and the refund value of 529 prepaid tuition plans.

The FAFSA doesn't count the value of your family home or farm, or the value of annuities, life insurance plans, or any non-education IRAs, 401(k), Keogh or other retirement plans (but you must report contributions for 2008 to any tax-deferred pension or savings plan).

Your Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

Your expected family contribution, or **EFC**, is the amount of money the government believes you and your family could reasonably contribute toward your education for the school year. Calculated using a federal formula to evaluate the information you provide on your FAFSA, you'll find your EFC on your Student Aid Report (SAR), which you'll receive after submitting your FAFSA.

Your EFC will stay the same no matter which college you attend. However, you may be eligible for different types and amounts of aid at different colleges, since each college has its own cost of attendance (COA) and financial aid funds.

Keep in mind that your EFC may or may not be the actual amount you end up paying for college. For example, your college's cost of attendance includes *actual* costs for tuition and fees, as well as *average* costs for housing, food, transportation and personal expenses. You may spend less or more than these averages. If your college is unable to meet all of your financial need, your actual contribution may be more than your calculated EFC.

Your College Cost of Attendance (COA)

Each college has its own student budget or **cost of attendance (COA)**, which includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing, food, transportation and personal expenses for the school year. It may also include money for a computer.

Your COA will vary depending on where you live (with your parents, on or off campus) and the college you attend. If you have children or other dependents who require care while you go to class, your COA may also include these expenses. If you have a disability, let your college's financial aid office know about any related expenses that aren't already covered.

Your Financial Need

Each college you list on your FAFSA, and are accepted to, will determine your eligibility for financial aid, also known as your financial need.

Your COA
– Your EFC
= Your financial need

Your financial need will vary from college to college because each college has its own COA. Find more information on financial aid offers and how to review them on pages 9-10 and page 39.

YOUR EFC

Your EFC will determine the types and amounts of federal and state aid you qualify for.

If you're a dependent student, your EFC will be based on:

- your income and your parents' income
- your assets and your parents' assets
- the age of your older parent living in your household
- the number of family members living in your household
- the number of family members other than your parents in college during the coming school year
- your state of legal residence
- your parents' state of legal residence

If you're an independent student, your EFC will take into account:

- your income and assets, and your spouse's, if married
- the number of children and other dependents in your household
- the number of family members in college during the coming school year
- your state of legal residence

top10 important things

To qualify for most federal and state student aid, you must:

1. Submit the FAFSA.
2. Submit any other applications or information your college or state may require.
3. Demonstrate financial need (except for unsubsidized federal Stafford loans and federal PLUS loans).
4. Have a high school diploma or its equivalent, complete a high school education in a state-approved home-school setting or pass one of the "ability to benefit" requirements approved by the U.S. Department of Education (for federal aid).
5. Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen.
6. Be a state resident (California residency required for California state aid).
7. Enroll in an eligible degree or certificate program.
8. Maintain satisfactory academic progress as determined by your college.
9. Have a Social Security number (unless you're from the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia or the Republic of Palau).
10. Register with the U.S. Selective Service (males age 18-25).

To learn more, go to
www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov

fyi

*Interested in studying abroad? You may be able to use your Cal Grant, federal grants and federal loans to pay for it. Also look into private scholarships, such as those available from your local Rotary International, and check out scholarships specifically for those studying abroad at **www.fastweb.org** and **www.nafsa.org/students.sec/studying_abroad_from**.*

To protect yourself against identity theft:

1. Keep your Social Security number, date of birth, driver's license, passwords, PINs and banking information confidential.
2. Never give any personal or financial information over the phone unless you made the call and know who you're talking to.
3. Never respond to e-mails that look like they're from your bank, lender, college or others asking for personal or financial information. Real companies will never ask you for this information by e-mail.
4. Don't leave your personal or financial information lying around in your dorm room or apartment.
5. Be careful about sharing personal information in chat rooms, blogs or discussion groups, including MySpace and FaceBook.
6. Make sure Web sites are secure before providing your credit card number or other personal information. Look for sites that begin with "https" or display a small padlock icon next to the address field (but outside the Web-page viewing area).
7. Be on the lookout for "pharming" scams where you type in an almost-correct Web address but are redirected to a fake look-alike site.
8. Check your credit report at least every six months. Look for unfamiliar accounts and incorrect addresses—signs of identity theft. Get your free credit report at **www.annualcreditreport.com**.
9. Shred all documents with your Social Security number, bank account numbers and other personal information before tossing.
10. Throwing out your old cell phone or computer? Be sure to destroy any stored information about yourself first.

To learn more, go to
www.idtheftcenter.org
www.ftc.gov/idtheft

How do you apply?

7 ways to get started now.

1

Collect your information

* **Your Social Security number.** You'll need it to apply for most federal and state aid. If you don't have one, apply at your local Post Office or Social Security office. You'll also need your parents' Social Security numbers, if you're a dependent student. (If your parents don't have Social Security numbers, enter all zeros when asked for them on the FAFSA.) To learn more, go to **www.ssa.gov** or call 800.772.1213 (TTY 800.325.0778).
* **Your Federal Student Aid PIN, and one of your parents' PINs, if you're a dependent student.** Go to **www.pin.ed.gov** to get your Federal Student Aid personal identification number, or PIN, in real time. You can even select your own PIN.

  Your PIN can be used to e-sign your FAFSA, make corrections to it, add another school, and more. You can use it each year to apply for aid. It's important not to share your PIN with anyone.
* **Your financial records.** It's easier to fill out the FAFSA and other financial aid forms if you've completed your 2008 federal tax return (if you file a return). *But don't miss a deadline just because you or your parents haven't filed your federal tax return yet. Submit your FAFSA on time using estimated income figures and make corrections later.*
* **An e-mail address.** If you provide one, you'll receive your FAFSA results sooner.
* **Your driver's license number**, if you have one.
* **Your Alien Registration number**, if you're not a U.S. citizen.

2

Fill out the FAFSA on the Web Worksheet

That way, you'll have all the information you need in front of you when you're ready to complete the FAFSA. The FAFSA on the Web Worksheet lists all the questions in the same order as they appear on the online FAFSA. English and Spanish versions are available starting in November from your school or online at **www.fafsa.ed.gov**. You can also order a Braille version of the worksheet by calling 800.433.3243.

Taxes not filed?

Don't wait until your parents have filed their tax return to submit the FAFSA. Instead, get your FAFSA in early using estimated income figures based on last year's return or payroll stubs. (If your estimates are significantly higher or lower than your actual numbers, your EFC may change and your financial aid offers may be revised.)

You'll also need your W-2 forms or other records of money earned, current bank statements, business and investment records, and any records of untaxed income (Social Security, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, General Assistance or veteran benefits).

There's plenty of **Free Help**—you should never have to pay for the FAFSA or to have it completed for you.

Attend a **Free** workshop! **www.californiacashforcollege.org**

EXTRA $1,000 FOR COLLEGE IF YOU APPLY BY MARCH 2!

High school seniors: Attend a California Cash for College workshop in January or February. You'll not only get help completing your FAFSA, if you complete an exit evaluation and submit the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by March 2 you could also qualify for a $1,000 scholarship. At least one scholarship will be awarded for each workshop held across the state—more than 500 scholarships in all. Scholarship recipients will be randomly selected from qualifying applicants and notified in May. You can use the scholarship beginning in fall 2009 at an accredited two-year or four-year degree-granting institution. For dates and locations of workshops, go to **www.californiacashforcollege.org** or call 888.224.7268 during business hours. Workshops that are held at high schools, colleges and community centers across the state often have staff who speak Spanish and other languages, and provide information about AB 540 in-state tuition assistance.

FAFSA ON THE WEB easy, fast and secure

You'll find the FAFSA for school year 2009-10 at **www.fafsa.ed.gov** starting January 1. Don't have a computer? Look into using one at your school or library. You can save your FAFSA for up to 45 days at a time, so you don't have to complete it in one sitting.

* **Read all the instructions, work through each step and review your answers carefully.** Careless errors can delay processing, which could mean missed deadlines and dollars.
* **Be sure your name matches your name as it appears on your Social Security card.** Using a nickname will delay processing. If you've changed your name, update your records with the Social Security Administration (**www.ssa.gov**).
* **Keep a copy of your FAFSA for your records.** Also keep copies of the financial records you used to complete the FAFSA. Your college may ask to see them.
* **E-sign your FAFSA using your Federal Student Aid PIN and provide an e-mail address to receive an estimate of your EFC instantly.** Your application will also be processed quickly, usually within three to five days.
* **If you don't already have a PIN, you can now receive one instantly when you're completing the FAFSA.** If your Social Security number and name are later found not to match, you'll have to manually sign your Student Aid Report.

  If you provide an e-mail address, you'll get an instant confirmation that your FAFSA was received, which you should print and save.
* **Use your PIN to check on the status of your FAFSA, correct or print your Student Aid Report, or view your federal financial aid records at www.nslds.ed.gov.** Be sure to keep your PIN confidential. Don't give your PIN to anyone—not even to someone who may be helping you fill out the FAFSA.
* **If you'd like additional colleges to receive your FAFSA information, add (or delete) them at www.fafsa.ed.gov (or by calling 800.433.3243).** You should wait until your first colleges have received your information.

GET FREE HELP

ON THE WEB

Find help for questions at **www.fafsa.ed.gov** or click on the Live Help button during business hours. Go to **www.studentaid.ed.gov/completefafsa** for help with the paper FAFSA.

PHONE

Call toll free 800.433.3243 Monday through Friday up to 9 p.m. Pacific Time and extended hours on the weekend—or 319.337.5665 if you don't have access to toll-free numbers (TTY 800.730.8913).

IN PERSON

Ask your school for help, attend your school's financial aid night or plan to attend a free California Cash for College workshop in January or February. Many workshops have staff who speak Spanish or other languages. Visit **www.californiacashforcollege.org** for dates and locations.

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The federal FAFSA processor only processes your application—it does not award or deny financial aid.

WHICH PARENT'S financial info should you use on your FAFSA?

It doesn't matter who claimed you as a tax exemption. For divorced or separated parents: Give answers for the parent you lived with more during the past 12 months. (If you didn't live with one parent more than the other, then answer for the parent who provided more support during the past 12 months.) If your parent is widowed or single, answer the questions about that parent. If your widowed parent has remarried as of the day you complete the FAFSA, answer the questions about that parent and the person your parent married (your stepparent).

If you don't know where your parents are or if you left home due to irreconcilable differences, let your high school counselor or college financial aid office know.

For the FAFSA, the following people are not your parents unless they've adopted you: grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians or older brothers or sisters. (For the education-level question, answer for your biological or adoptive parents only.)

CALIFORNIA STATE AID and Domestic Partnerships

When determining eligibility for state financial aid, California recognizes domestic partnerships. If your parents are in a registered domestic partnership, you'll be considered the same as a student with married parents, including financial and residency requirements. Likewise, if you're in a registered domestic partnership, you'll be considered the same as a married student. (For more information on registered domestic partnerships, visit **www.sos.ca.gov/dpregistry**.)

However, the federal government does not recognize domestic partnerships, so when completing your FAFSA, provide information only for the parent who provided more than half of your support. If you're an independent student in a domestic partnership, provide only your information. After receiving your California Aid Report, you'll need to go to **www.csac.ca.gov/pubs/forms/grnt_frm/g-37.pdf** to complete the Registered Domestic Partnership Reporting Form so that the California Student Aid Commission can further evaluate your eligibility for California state aid.

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If you're mailing the FAFSA, the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form or any other application form, it's a good idea to get a Certificate of Mailing from the Post Office ($1.10 in addition to postage) as proof you met the deadline.

You're Not Done Yet.

3 Complete the FAFSA online—It's fast and easy

Complete the FAFSA at **www.fafsa.ed.gov**. Or call 800.433.3243 to have a paper FAFSA mailed to you. Both versions are available in Spanish. Try to submit your FAFSA as soon as possible starting January 1—and before your earliest financial aid deadline.

- The FAFSA should take about one hour if you have your completed FAFSA on the Web Worksheet in front of you.
- If you mail (or date) your paper FAFSA before January 1, it will be returned to you unprocessed and you'll need to submit it again.
- Complete the 2009-10 FAFSA to apply for aid for the 2009-10 school year. (For schools with year-round admissions and rolling starts, contact the financial aid office to find out which FAFSA to submit.)
- Photocopies or faxes of the FAFSA aren't accepted.
- Don't send any tax forms, letters of explanation or other materials with your FAFSA—they'll only be shredded. If you or your family has unusual circumstances you feel should be considered, complete the FAFSA as best you can. Then send any additional information directly to the financial aid office of each college you're considering for a "professional judgment" review.

4 Submit any other applications

Some colleges use the FAFSA as well as additional applications, such as the CSS/Financial Aid Profile, to award their private financial aid dollars. Unlike the FAFSA, the Profile costs money to submit and is only available at **http://profileonline.collegeboard.com**.

Ask the financial aid office of each college you're considering what forms are required to apply for financial aid. Also, ask about deadlines—some may be early in the fall—and whether a deadline is the *postmark* (or electronically transmitted) date or the *received* date.

In addition, several California state aid programs require their own application forms as well as the FAFSA. To apply for a Cal Grant, you'll need to submit the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the March 2 deadline (see pages 10 and 16).

VERIFICATION

The federal government randomly selects about one in three FAFSAs each year for verification. If your FAFSA is selected (there'll be an asterisk after your EFC on your SAR), your college will ask you to verify your financial information, usually by requesting a copy of your most recent federal tax return, W-2 forms or other financial documents, and a completed Verification Worksheet. Your college may independently ask for your financial records to verify your eligibility for student aid; some colleges choose to verify every student's eligibility.

5 Review Your Student Aid Report

If you submit your FAFSA online and provide all the required e-signatures and an e-mail address, you'll usually receive your Student Aid Report, or **SAR**, within 72 hours. If you submit the paper FAFSA, it could take up to three weeks.

The SAR contains the information you provided on the FAFSA and lists your expected family contribution, or EFC, for the school year. Look for this number next to "EFC" at the top of your SAR—there won't be a dollar sign. If there are any numbers after the EFC, even zeros, then your EFC was calculated. An EFC of 02500, for example, means that your EFC would be $2,500 (see a sample SAR on page 14). Keep in mind that your EFC may be more or less than what you actually end up paying for college (see page 4).

If there are no numbers, your SAR is incomplete and you must provide additional information or corrections before your EFC can be calculated.

Review your SAR right away for accuracy and follow the instructions if you need to make corrections. If you don't receive your SAR within three weeks or if you need another copy, go to **www.fafsa.ed.gov** or call 800.433.3243.

Each college you list on your FAFSA will receive your SAR information. The California Student Aid Commission will also receive it to evaluate your eligibility for a Cal Grant and other California state aid as long as you list at least one California college and indicate you're a California resident.

fyi

Even if you think your family has too much money, you should still apply for financial aid. Don't miss out on scholarships, grants or other money such as low-interest loans for education.

6 Review Your California Aid Report

* **If you're offered a Cal Grant, you'll receive a California Aid Report, or CAR**, in the mail from the California Student Aid Commission with an estimate of your Cal Grant award (see a sample CAR on page 14). Your CAR will list the first three California colleges you listed on your FAFSA where you can use your Cal Grant. Your college will verify your Cal Grant eligibility and the amount of your award.
* **If you need to make corrections**, such as a college change, use the New Recipient Change Form that came with your letter or go to WebGrants for Students at **www.calgrants.org**.
* **If you submitted both the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA** but were not awarded a Cal Grant, you'll receive notification explaining why.
* **If you submitted only the FAFSA and no GPA**—and you're not pursuing a career or technical education—you won't receive a letter because you didn't meet the Cal Grant application requirements.
* **If you'll be attending a California Community College in the fall** and submitted both your FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the September 2 deadline, you'll receive a letter in early October indicating your eligibility for a Cal Grant.

7 Evaluate Your Financial Aid Offers

The financial aid office at each college you list on your FAFSA (that you have been or will be accepted to) will provide you with an evaluation of your eligibility for financial aid if you submitted the required financial aid applications and met the deadlines. If your college asks for additional information, be sure to respond promptly.

Your offer will usually list your college's cost of attendance for the year, the amount that will be covered by a mix of grants, work-study, loans or other aid, and the amount you'll have to contribute. It may also explain the terms and conditions for receiving the student aid and the deadline for accepting or declining it.

Your offers usually will vary from college to college, so you may want to wait until you've heard from each one before making a decision—but don't wait so long that you miss deadlines. Or you may want to accept one college's offer while waiting to hear from the school of your choice. Just be sure to let the first college know if you decide later to decline its offer.

Keep in mind that you don't have to accept your entire student aid package but can pick and choose the aid you want. If you do decide to decline aid, however, it may not be available later if you change your mind. If you're offered a loan, remember that accepting a loan means accepting the responsibility of repaying it. To help you evaluate your financial aid offers, use the worksheet on page 39.

Your SAR—Online or Paper

How you submit the FAFSA—online or on paper—and whether or not you include an e-mail address will determine the type of SAR you receive. (If you submit the Spanish version of the FAFSA, you'll receive your SAR in Spanish.)

* Submit the FAFSA online or on paper and provide an e-mail address and you'll receive an e-mail with a link to your SAR information on the Web.
* Submit the FAFSA online without an e-mail address and you'll receive a paper SAR Acknowledgement. This SAR Acknowledgement will have all of the information you provided on the FAFSA, but it can't be used to make corrections—you'll need to make corrections to your SAR online using your PIN at **www.fafsa.ed.gov** or request a paper SAR.
* Submit the paper FAFSA and don't provide an e-mail address and you'll receive a paper SAR on which you can make any corrections—or use your PIN to make corrections at **www.fafsa.ed.gov**.

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*If you submitted both your FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the March 2 deadline but don't receive a California Aid Report or a letter by April 30, or if you have questions, go to WebGrants for Students at **www.calgrants.org**, call 888.CA.GRANT or e-mail studentsupport@csac.ca.gov.*

CAL GRANT DEADLINES

Cal Grants are free money—apply no later than March 2 by submitting both the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA. It's your responsibility to find out if your school will submit your verified GPA for you electronically or whether you need to submit it using the paper Cal Grant GPA Verification form (you'll need your school to certify it first, so don't wait until the last minute). Print the form from **www.calgrants.org**. Find more Cal Grant information starting on page 12.

Second deadline for California Community College students • September 2

If you'll be attending a California Community College in the fall and you missed the March 2 deadline, you have until September 2 to apply for a Cal Grant. However, do your best to apply by the March 2 deadline. Only a limited number of awards are available for those who apply in the fall.

Missed the Cal Grant deadline? Don't qualify for a Cal Grant?

You should still submit your FAFSA. A federal Pell Grant, federal student loan or other financial aid might be available to you. Visit your local college financial aid office or see your counselor for more information.

fyi

Take a look at your e-mail address and make sure it's appropriate for corresponding with colleges, lenders or employers. If not, you may want to get another one.

PURSUING A CAREER OR TECHNICAL EDUCATION?

You can use a Cal Grant at many career or technical colleges. You're not required to submit your verified GPA, but it can only help. You'll receive a letter and a Cal Grant C Supplement form to complete. Be sure to apply!

GOT A QUESTION ABOUT YOUR APPLICATION?

Simply call the California Student Aid Commission, anytime, toll free at 888.224.7268, select from a menu of options and check on the status of your application. You can get an update on your FAFSA or verified Cal Grant GPA, learn whether you received an award, and if so, the amount. If you still have questions or need to talk to someone, call to speak to a student support representative.

Questions to Ask

When comparing financial aid offers, be sure to ask:

- What is the college's cost of attendance? Make sure it includes all of your college costs and is realistic.
- How much of the aid is grants and scholarships? Are they renewable each year? Will the dollar amount increase if your tuition or other costs go up? Are there specific terms and conditions? For instance, do you need to maintain a certain GPA?
- Are merit scholarships available? If so, how do you apply?
- If you're offered work-study or student employment, how many hours will you need to work each week? What is the hourly pay rate and the availability of jobs? Are there jobs related to your major or career goal?
- How much loan aid is offered? Are the loans subsidized or unsubsidized? What are the terms and conditions of each loan?
- What fees will you have to pay on your federal student loan? Origination or federal default fees of up to 2 percent may be deducted from each loan disbursement.
- If grants, scholarships or federal student loans don't cover your total calculated financial need, can you dip further into savings, get a part-time job, look into other options, cut your expenses, or do you need to borrow more?
- Does the college offer a payment plan that will let you spread your payments over the school year?
- What is the average loan debt of the college's graduates overall—and of graduates in your major?
- What happens to your financial aid if you receive an outside scholarship?

Compare your offers using the worksheet on page 39.

fyi

If your financial situation changes after you submit your FAFSA, contact your financial aid office. Ask if your college has a formal process to handle appeals and be prepared to provide supporting documentation. Don't be shy—it's your future!

HOW WILL YOU get your financial aid?

At the beginning of each term, any federal or state financial aid you receive will go to your college first to pay for tuition and fees (and room and board, if provided by your school). Within the first few weeks of classes, you'll usually receive any remaining funds to cover your books, supplies, transportation expenses and other college costs. Any scholarships or grants you applied for yourself may be sent to you or your college. For work-study or student employment programs, you'll be paid after you've worked, usually every two weeks. However, some schools apply the wages you earn directly to your student account for unpaid balances.

Remember that colleges must apply any outside scholarships or grants toward your unmet financial need or reduce other aid—these awards can't replace your EFC. You can ask your school to reduce loan or student employment aid rather than grant aid, but most colleges have an established procedure for handling outside scholarships or grants.

It's your responsibility to create a spending plan to make sure your financial aid lasts the whole term. Refer to the Spending Plan worksheet on page 38.

Changing Schools?

If you'll be changing schools, keep in mind that your financial aid may not automatically go with you or stay the same. Contact your new school's financial aid office to learn more—and be sure to ask about deadlines. To find out if your Cal Grant or California Chafee Grant award will change at your new school, you can go to WebGrants for Students at **www.calgrants.org**.

FOLLOW YOUR Cal Grant 24/7 with WebGrants

Get fast answers to questions about your Cal Grant application or award—or your California Chafee Grant application or award—by going to WebGrants for Students at **www.calgrants.org**. When you first log on, you'll be invited to set up your own secure account that you can then use any time during the financial aid application process, and for as long as you have a Cal Grant or a Chafee Grant. You can make sure your GPA and applications were received, print a copy of your California Aid Report, review any grant payments or report a change of address or college.

REAPPLY EACH YEAR

Most financial aid awards are considered "new" each school year, so you'll need to submit the FAFSA each year. Use your PIN to find your FAFSA at **www.fafsa.ed.gov** starting January 1. Simply update any information that has changed, such as your income or family size; complete any blank areas; and review your list of colleges.

You should continue to get any other state or federal aid you received the year before as long as you still meet the requirements. In most cases, this includes making satisfactory academic progress, so be sure you understand your school's policy.

As you get closer to graduating from college, be sure to check in with your financial aid office to see if there is a maximum number of units you can take before you no longer qualify for financial aid.

(See page 5 for more information on eligibility for state and federal financial aid)

major financial aid programs at a glance

	program	who can apply	annual awards up to…	application deadline	forms required	eligibility requirements**
GRANTS Need-based financial aid that doesn't have to be repaid	Cal Grant A	undergraduates	$9,708	March 2 †	FAFSA, verified GPA	3.0 high school GPA or 2.4 college GPA, financial need
	Cal Grant B	undergraduates	$1,551 (first year) $9,708 + $1,551	March 2 †	FAFSA, verified GPA	2.0 high school GPA, financial need
	Cal Grant A and B Transfer Entitlement Awards	California Community College students	$9,708	March 2	FAFSA, verified GPA	2.4 California Community College GPA, financial need, graduated high school after 7.1.2000
	Cal Grant C	technical and career students	$3,168	March 2	FAFSA, Cal Grant C Supplement Form	financial need
	Federal Pell Grant	undergraduates	$4,731 (2008-09 maximum award)	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	financial need according to your EFC and COA
	Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	undergraduates	$4,000	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	financial need according to your EFC and COA (not all colleges offer FSEOGs)
	Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)	Pell Grant-eligible 1st & 2nd-year students attending at least half time	up to $750 first year up to $1,300 second year	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	must also receive a Pell Grant; must successfully complete a rigorous high school program; 3.0 cumulative college GPA
	National SMART Grant	Pell Grant-eligible 3rd & 4th-year students attending at least half time	up to $4,000 each year	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	must also receive a Pell Grant and major in physical, life or computer sciences, technology, math or engineering, or certain foreign languages; also see page 21
	University of California Student Aid	UC undergraduate/ graduate students	average grant award of $8,500	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	financial need
	State University Grant	CSU undergraduate/ graduate students	full systemwide fees	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	financial need
LOANS Money you borrow that must be repaid, with interest	Federal Stafford loan (subsidized and unsubsidized)	undergraduate/ graduate students	U - $3,500-$5,500 G - $8,500	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA and master promissory note	subsidized Stafford loans are based on financial need; must be enrolled at least half time. See page 5
	Additional unsubsidized federal Stafford loan	undergraduate/ graduate students	U - $2,000-$7,000 G - $12,000	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA and master promissory note	must be enrolled at least half time. See page 5
	Federal PLUS loan	graduate or professional students and parents of dependent students	total college costs minus any financial aid	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA and PLUS loan application and master promissory note	must be enrolled at least half time. See pages 5 and 31
	Federal Perkins loan	undergraduate/ graduate students	U - $5,5000 G - $8,000	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA and master promissory note	exceptional financial need (some schools don't offer these loans). See page 5
	Private Loans	students and parents (be sure to take out all you can in federal loans first)	varies	contact your lender or college	loan application and promissory note	ask your lender; some private loans are based on your credit rating

† Community college students have a second deadline of September 2 for Cal Grant A & B Competitive awards
†† Contact your financial aid office or the California Student Aid Commission
* Applications available February 1 from high schools
** Other eligibility requirements may apply

	program	who can apply	annual awards up to...	application deadline	forms required	eligibility requirements**
WORK-STUDY Money for college that you earn	Federal Work-Study	undergraduate/ graduate students	contact your financial aid office	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	financial need; depends on your college's available funds
	College Work-Study/ Student Employment Programs	undergraduate/ graduate students	contact your financial aid office	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	financial need; depends on your college's available funds
Special Programs	Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship	graduating high school seniors	$1,500	California nominations due by application deadline	application form* **www.csac.ca.gov**	high schools nominate academically outstanding high school seniors. See page 21
	Child Development Grant	undergraduates	$1,000-$2,000	application deadline at **www.csac.ca.gov**	FAFSA and application form †† **www.csac.ca.gov**	financial need; must be pursuing a child development permit and plan to work at a California licensed children's center. See page 20
	Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant	dependent or spouse of California peace officer, firefighter or certain other law enforcement employees totally disabled or killed in the line of duty	$11,259	applications accepted throughout the year	FAFSA and application form †† **www.csac.ca.gov**	financial need See page 20
	California Chafee Grant	current and former foster youth	$5,000	go to **www. chafee.csac.ca.gov**	FAFSA and application form **www.csac.ca.gov**	financial need; must be enrolled at least half time and maintain good grades. See page 20
	California Community College Board of Governors Fee Waiver	California Community College students	waives registration fees	applications accepted throughout the year	FAFSA or fee waiver application **www.icanaffordcollege .com**	financial need
	Federal TEACH Grant	undergraduate/graduate/ post-baccalaureate students pursuing a career in teaching	$4,000	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA	must agree to teach in a high-need field serving low-income students. See page 21
	Educational Opportunity Program	CSU undergraduates	$2,000	contact your financial aid office	contact your financial aid office	low income, educationally disadvantaged
	Extended Opportunity Programs and Services	California Community College students	contact your financial aid or EOPS office	contact your financial aid or EOPS office	contact your financial aid or EOPS office	low income, educationally disadvantaged
	Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education	California Community College students	contact your financial aid or EOPS office	contact your financial aid or EOPS office	contact your financial aid or EOPS office	single parents of children under 14, or receiving welfare benefits or EOPS students
	Assumption Program of Loans for Education	K-12 teacher candidates, out-of-state teachers	$19,000 (for four years of service)	June 30	application form **www.csac.ca.gov**	must agree to teach in low-performing California school. See page 20
	Special Fee Waivers	surviving dependents of law enforcement or firefighters	waives registration fees at UC, CSU and CCC	contact your bursar's or registrar's office	contact your bursar's or registrar's office	varies
	Institution-Based Scholarships, Grants, Work-Study, Loans	undergraduate/ graduate students	contact your financial aid office	contact your financial aid office	contact your financial aid office	varies

samples SAR & CAR

Here are samples of the Student Aid Report (SAR) and California Aid Report (CAR), so that you'll know what they look like. (The SAR is usually several pages long.)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
FEDERAL STUDENT AID
START HERE. GO FURTHER.

STUDENT AID REPORT

WWW.FAFSA.ED.GOV 1-800-4-FED-AID (TTY: 1-800-730-8913) OMB No.1845-0008

APRIL 17, 2008 DATA RELEASE NUMBER (DRN): 2401
EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION (EFC): 02500 C

000117C041

CHRISTOPHER E. STUDENT
1234 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZABCD
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQ, MD 12345

Dear CHRISTOPHER E. STUDENT,

Your Student Aid Report (SAR) summarizes the information you submitted on your 2008 - 2009 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Application Status (review the checked boxes)

☑ Your FAFSA appears to be complete. **Review the data on pages 3-8 of your SAR** and make corrections or updates if necessary. The school(s) listed on your FAFSA will receive your information.

Federal Student Aid Eligibility (review the checked boxes)

The data submitted on your FAFSA is used to calculate your Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is 02500. The EFC is **not** the amount of money that your family must provide. Rather, you should think of the EFC as an index that colleges use to determine how much financial aid you would receive if you were to attend their school. Financial aid may include grants, loans, and/or work-study. This award information will vary from college to college because the cost of attending each is different. Please note that your EFC is subject to change if you update or correct your FAFSA.

☑ Based on your EFC it appears that you may be **eligible** for a Federal Pell Grant. You may also be eligible for other Federal grants, low-interest student loans, and work-study opportunities.

☑ We sent your information to other federal agencies to verify your eligibility for federal student aid and there appears to be an issue with the information provided on your application. **Review the checklist on page 3 for instructions on how to resolve these issues.**

You should keep this SAR for your records!

X9XX999999 999 PAGE 1 OF 8 123456789ST01

Cal Grant Program Award Notification
California Aid Report (CAR)

Congratulations! The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) has offered you an *estimated* Entitlement Cal Grant award. This CAR contains important information about your Cal Grant. Please note that the information provided below is based on the information you provided on your FAFSA and is considered an estimated award. Please be aware that this award offer may be withdrawn or reduced pending approval of the final state budget.

Date	02/15/08
Grant ID Number	E08
CSAC ID Number	1003
Academic Year	2008-09

Award Information

School Choice, as listed on your FAFSA:	Cal Grant A	Cal Grant B
EL CAMINO COLLEGE	SEE CODE #1A	$1,551

Award amounts listed above designate the type and estimated amount of your Cal Grant award for the first three qualifying schools that you listed on your FAFSA and indicate the amount you may receive for one academic year of full-time attendance. (See codes on back of CAR.)

How to activate your Cal Grant award:

1. Log on to https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov and create your WebGrants for Students account. You can use this site to view the status of your Cal Grant, make changes to your information and request a leave of absence.
2. If the first school listed above is not the school you plan to attend, log on to your WebGrants for Students account and change your school of attendance.
3. Contact the college Financial Aid Office at the school you plan to attend and notify them of your Cal Grant offer.
4. To be eligible for this Cal Grant Entitlement award, you must have satisfied all high school graduation requirements. In late spring, CSAC will be requesting confirmation of your high school graduation.

Changes to the Cal Grant program may occur through the state budget process that might impact your award offer. The final amount of your award will be determined based on your school of attendance, enrollment status, and confirmation of the State budget.

If you have been offered a Cal Grant A and you choose to attend a California Community College, you will not receive any payments while attending Community College. Instead, CSAC will place your award on Community College Reserve for up to three years. You may use your Cal Grant A award when you transfer to a tuition or fee-charging school. To keep your eligibility for a Community College Reserve award, you must be enrolled for the fall term 2008-09.

PRIVACY STATEMENT: Please be aware, grant award information for students who are 18 years of age or older will only be released to parents or guardians with written authorization from the student.

Diana Fuentes-Michel, Executive Director
California Student Aid Commission

L08760102/15/081003 PAGE 1 OF 2
E1CAR2 (02/08) (over)

Applying for a Cal Grant? Watch for both of these important forms:

SAR = Student Aid Report [from the federal government]

CAR = California Aid Report [from the California Student Aid Commission]

Cal Grants are Free Money!

fyi

There are three kinds of Cal Grants—A, B and C—but you don't have to figure out which one to apply for. Your FAFSA responses, your Cal Grant GPA, the type of California colleges you list on your FAFSA and whether you're a recent high school graduate will help determine your eligibility.

You can receive up to $9,700 for college or up to $3,000 for career or technical training each year from the state of California. Your Cal Grant follows you to whichever California school you choose. A Cal Grant can be used at any University of California, California State University or California Community College, most independent colleges, and many career and technical schools in California. You can even use it to transfer from a community college to a four-year college or university.

And you don't have to pay it back.

The Cal Grant Guarantee
Don't miss out!

You're guaranteed to receive a Cal Grant award if you:

- are a high school senior;
- meet all the requirements;
- have financial need*;
- apply by March 2; and
- graduate from a California high school.

* *financial need is determined by whether your family falls under established income and asset ceilings. For more information, see page 16.*

When can you apply?

- In your senior year
- Within one year after graduating from high school or receiving your GED
- As a California Community College transfer student, if you meet the requirements

Are You Eligible?

To qualify for a Cal Grant, you must:

- submit the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA by the deadline (page 10)
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen (your parents don't need to be)
- be a California resident
- meet any minimum GPA requirements
- have a Social Security number
- attend a qualifying California college
- not have a bachelor's or professional degree (except for the Cal Grant extended awards for a teaching credential program)
- have financial need based on your college costs and your EFC
- have family income and assets below the established maximum levels
- be in a program leading to an undergraduate degree or certificate
- be enrolled at least half time
- have registered with U.S. Selective Service (males age 18-25)
- not owe a refund on a state or federal grant, or be in default on a student loan

Cal Grant award amounts are based on full-time attendance, so if you attend less than full time, your award may be reduced. To receive your Cal Grant, you must be enrolled at least half time—at least six semester units or the equivalent. However, an exception may be made in your final term of your four-year program if you only need a few units to graduate.

Cal Grant eligibility is based on financial need, but not all financial aid programs are. Be sure to explore all your options.

How do you apply for a Cal Grant?

Two forms
Two steps

1. Submit the FAFSA as soon as possible starting January 1 and no later than the postmark (or electronically transmitted) deadline of March 2.
2. Submit your verified Cal Grant GPA (or GED, SAT or ACT score under some circumstances) by the March 2 deadline.

- **If you're a high school senior**, you must apply for a Cal Grant Entitlement award between January 1 and March 2 of your senior year, or by March 2 of the year after you graduate or receive your GED.
- **If you plan to attend a California Community College in the fall**, you have a second deadline of September 2. However, you should still try to meet the March 2 deadline because there are a limited number of Cal Grant awards available for students who apply in the fall.
- **If you qualify for a Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement award**, you must submit the FAFSA and your verified community college GPA between January 1 and March 2 of the year in which you plan to transfer to a four-year college.
- **Cal Grants provide tuition and fee assistance** and/or access cost assistance depending upon the type of Cal Grant (Entitlement, Competitive or Cal Grant C).

2.0 GPA (Minimum) + **2** Forms (FAFSA, GPA Verification) + **1** Deadline (March 2) = Up to **$9,700** annually

fyi

Apply early! If you need to correct or update your FAFSA information, and you wait until just before March 2, there may not be enough time to make corrections before your eligibility is determined for a Cal Grant award.

Your Verified Cal Grant GPA

You can submit your verified GPA before your FAFSA, beginning November 1. Some schools automatically submit GPAs electronically for their students—check with your school counselor. If your school does not electronically submit GPAs, you'll need to fill out the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form and give it to a school official for verification before mailing it to the California Student Aid Commission—it can't be submitted online. You'll find the form at **www.calgrants.org**. Give your school plenty of time to certify it before March 2.

If you'll be pursuing a technical or career education, you can be considered for a Cal Grant C award even if you don't submit a verified GPA. You're still encouraged to submit your GPA because it can only help your chances of receiving an award.

Cal Grant Income and Asset Ceilings

Family income and asset ceilings, or maximum income and asset amounts, are used to determine if you meet the financial eligibility requirements for a Cal Grant. Even if you think your parents or you make too much money, you should still apply for a Cal Grant. Many things can change between the time you submit your FAFSA and the start of school. And don't forget, home equity, retirement savings and certain other assets are not reported on the FAFSA and are not counted as assets that apply to the Cal Grant ceilings. Income and asset ceilings for the 2009-10 school year will be available beginning December 1, 2008, at **www.calgrants.org**.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "ENTITLEMENT" AND "COMPETITIVE"?

Cal Grant Entitlement awards are guaranteed for every high school graduate who has at least a 2.0 GPA, meets the Cal Grant requirements (including financial need) and applies by March 2 of his or her senior year or the year following graduation. The guarantee extends to high school seniors who attend a California Community College and meet the requirements when they're ready to transfer to a four-year college.

Students who aren't high school seniors or recent graduates can compete for **Cal Grant Competitive** awards. These awards aren't guaranteed and only a limited number are available each year—half are set aside for students who apply by the March 2 deadline, and the other half are for California Community College students who meet the September 2 application deadline.

Facts You Need to Know About Cal Grants

The High School Exit Exam

The California High School Exit Exam, or CAHSEE, is a requirement for most California public high school students who graduated during or after the 2005-06 school year. If the CAHSEE was required for you to graduate, you must have passed the exam to qualify for a Cal Grant. If you graduated before the CAHSEE requirement went into effect, you may qualify for a Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement award or a Cal Grant Competitive award without having to pass the CAHSEE.

If you're a high school senior, you have until December 31 of the award year to complete your high school graduation requirements and be considered for a Cal Grant Entitlement award. If you meet this deadline—and all the other Cal Grant requirements—you can start receiving your Cal Grant benefits the next school term. If you don't meet the high school graduation requirements by December 31, you'll need to apply again next year by the March 2 postmark deadline if you can show you meet the requirements.

Using Your Cal Grant

- You can receive a Cal Grant for up to four years—and up to five years if you're getting your teaching credential or attending certain programs that require five years. See eligible programs at **www.csac.ca.gov/pubs/forms/grnt_frm/G-42.pdf**.
- You can use your Cal Grant to study abroad if the program is officially recognized by a California campus.
- At some colleges, you can use your Cal Grant to attend summer sessions, but remember that this will be counted toward your total four-year Cal Grant award amount. If you take advantage of this option, you may not have enough remaining Cal Grant funds for your fourth year of college.

Cash for College Workshops

Get help filling out your FAFSA and qualify for a $1,000 scholarship! Attend a Cash for College workshop in January or February. For dates and locations:
www.californiacashforcollege.org

Cal Grant Renewal

Your Cal Grant will be renewed automatically if you continue to meet the requirements, maintain satisfactory academic progress (attend class regularly and keep up your grades) and have financial need. You'll need to submit the FAFSA again but not your GPA. The campus you'll be attending will evaluate your eligibility, so be sure to list that college on your FAFSA. If you'll be changing schools, you'll need to notify the California Student Aid Commission using WebGrants for Students at **www.calgrants.org**, or the Renewal Recipient Change Form attached to your Cal Grant renewal letter. Or ask your new college to notify the Commission directly.

Military Deferments

If you're on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces or the Coast Guard, you may have your Cal Grant deferred for up to three years. Simply fill out a G-12 Deferment Request Form, available at **www.csac.ca.gov** (Click on "Financial Aid Programs" under the "Students and Parents" tab), or write to the California Student Aid Commission, P.O. Box 419028, Rancho Cordova, California 95741-9028.

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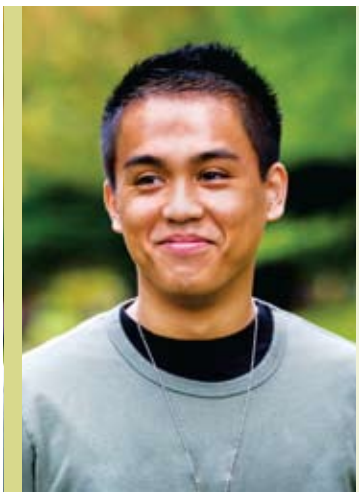
It takes two—you're responsible for making sure both your FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA are submitted by the Cal Grant application deadline.



Going to a community college first?

Cal Grant A Held in Reserve If you are selected for a Cal Grant A and then decide to attend a California Community College first, your award may be delayed for up to three years until you transfer to a four-year college (as a Cal Grant recipient, your community college fees will be waived).

When you're ready to transfer, be sure to notify the California Student Aid Commission so that your Cal Grant eligibility can be re-evaluated. Also, let your new college know that you have a Cal Grant Held in Reserve.

Cal Grant B If you receive a Cal Grant B, you can use your $1,551 living allowance to help pay for books and other community college costs. (If you do, however, keep in mind that you'll be using up Cal Grant eligibility that you may instead want to save if you're planning to transfer to a four-year college.)

Calculating Your Cal Grant GPA

High School Students

Your Cal Grant GPA will be calculated on a 4.00 scale (to two decimal places) and **extra weight will not be added for honors, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes**.

Your GPA must include all grades from your sophomore year, the summer following your sophomore year, your junior year and the summer following your junior year, except those for physical education, Reserve Officers Training Corps and remedial courses. (Remedial courses are those that aren't counted toward high school graduation.) If you apply after your senior year, your GPA must include your senior-year grades.

Failing grades for classes you haven't repeated before your verified GPA is submitted also must be included. (Keep in mind that your GPA for college admission will be calculated differently.)

Don't have a 2.0 GPA?
If your GPA for your sophomore and junior years is below 2.0—and if you're not pursuing a technical or career education—you'll need to improve your grades in your senior year. You can apply for a Cal Grant by the September 2 deadline if you'll be attending a California Community College, or by March 2 the year after you've graduated, when your GPA will include your high school senior-year grades or you've had a chance to improve your GPA by taking community college courses.

Recent High School Graduates
You will need to go to your high school to request your Cal Grant GPA to apply for a Cal Grant by March 2 of the year after you graduated.

College Students

Improve Your GPA for Cal Grant B
You can improve or "re-establish" your GPA for the Cal Grant B Competitive award by taking courses at a California Community College. Your new GPA will be calculated if you have earned at least 16 but fewer than 24 degree-applicable semester units.

Your College GPA
If you've completed at least 24 degree-applicable semester units, 36 quarter units or the equivalent at any college or career school, your Cal Grant GPA will be calculated using the grades from college course work completed by the date your college certifies your GPA. (If you've completed fewer than 24 semester units, you'll need to work with your high school to submit a GPA calculated using your high school grades or your re-established GPA, which can be used only for the Cal Grant B Competitive award.)

Other Options
If you were home-schooled, or you attended a school that doesn't provide grades, isn't fully accredited by a regional accrediting agency or doesn't have a course list approved by the University of California, you must submit your GED, SAT or ACT score. If you have a GPA that's more than five years old, you may choose to submit a test score instead of your GPA. All test scores must be submitted using the paper Cal Grant GPA Verification form available at **www.calgrants.org**.

CALIFORNIA RESIDENCY FOR CAL GRANTS

Students attending California public colleges and universities will be considered residents of California if they are considered as meeting the residency requirements of the school they attend. Generally, this will be residence of at least one year in the state with the intent to make California their permanent home. However, students attending California public institutions are advised to inquire with their school to determine if they meet the school residency requirements.

Students attending California private colleges, universities and trade schools must be legal California state residents, physically present in California for one year prior to the residence determination date to be classified as resident students. A temporary absence for business, education or pleasure will not result in loss of California residence if, during the absence, the person always intended to return to California and did nothing inconsistent with that intent. Physical presence within the state solely for educational purposes does not constitute establishing California residence regardless of how long the student was in the state.

Students with questions regarding their residency status should contact their campus financial aid office.

MONEY FOR FUTURE TEACHERS

Considering a teaching career? Look into these financial aid programs. Also check out www.teachcalifornia.org.

Cal Grant A and B extended benefits	Provide an additional year of your Cal Grant award if you enroll in an approved teacher credential program.	**www.calgrants.org**
New Federal TEACH Grants	Provide $4,000 a year for tuition if you qualify and plan to teach a high-need subject at a high-need school.	**www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**
APLE, California's Assumption Program of Loans for Education	Assumes up to $11,000 of student loan debt in return for 4 years paid teaching service in a designated subject shortage area or at a designated school. Up to $8,000 more if you teach math, science or special education at the lowest-performing schools.	**www.calgrants.org** **www.csac.ca.gov** see page 20
Federal Loan Forgiveness for Teachers	Forgives up to $5,000 federal Stafford loan debt in return for 5 years of paid teaching service at a low-income school. Up to $17,500 for highly qualified math, science or special education teachers.	**www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**
Federal Perkins Loan Forgiveness	Forgives part or all of a federal Perkins loan if you teach at a designated low-income public school, in a designated subject or to children with disabilities.	**www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**
Federal Pell Grants	May be used to attend a teacher credential program at a college that doesn't offer a bachelor's degree in education, even if you already have a bachelor's degree.	See your college financial aid office
Teach for America	Offers forbearance and interest payment benefits on qualified student loans, plus up to $4,725 a year to repay loans, if you teach for 2 years at a disadvantaged school.	**www.teachforamerica.org**
SNAPLE, California's State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education	Assumes student loan debt for nursing students who agree to teach at a California college or state facility.	**www.csac.ca.gov** see page 20

Foster Youth

In addition to the California Chafee Grant outlined on page 20, some colleges offer their own tuition waivers and scholarships for foster youth. Also, look into the Guardian Scholars or Renaissance programs at a growing number of colleges that provide scholarships and other support to former foster youth. Check out **www.orangewoodfoundation.org/programs_scholars.asp**. Learn more about many other scholarship programs available to foster youth at **www.calyouthconn.org** (select "Legislation," then "Resources" on the left, then "Scholarship Info").

See the charts on pages 20 and 24 for more information about programs for foster youth.

AB 540: In-State Tuition for Undocumented Students

If you're an undocumented or under-documented student, you may qualify for in-state tuition rates at UC, CSU and California Community College campuses. To qualify, you must have completed at least three years of high school in California and graduated from a California high school or received your GED in California, and signed an affidavit promising to start the process to legalize your residency as soon as you're eligible to do so (the affidavit will be kept by your college and remain confidential). For more information, ask your college's admissions office about in-state tuition rates for "AB 540" students. Download the College and Financial Aid Guide for AB 540 Undocumented Immigrant Students at **www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/pdf/AB_540_final.pdf**.

If you filed an application for permanent residency at least one year before enrolling in college, you may already be eligible for in-state tuition rates and California state aid—contact your college's admissions office.

You can also get more information about scholarships which may not require legal permanent residency at **www.latinocollegedollars.org**. You may also want to approach friends, neighbors, family members, teachers, local businesses, and large companies to request financial support to pursue your education beyond high school.

OTHER CALIFORNIA AID PROGRAMS

	ELIGIBILITY IS BASED ON:	AWARD AMOUNT:	HOW TO APPLY:	OTHER REQUIREMENTS/ INFORMATION:	FOR MORE INFORMATION:
California Chafee Grant	▪ You are or were in foster care ▪ Financial need	Up to $5,000 a year for job training or college in addition to any other state or federal aid you receive	FAFSA and Chafee Grant application available at **www.chafee.csac.ca.gov**	▪ Does not require a Social Security number ▪ Must stay in school and maintain good grades ▪ Must be enrolled at least half time ▪ Remember to establish your independent status on your FAFSA ▪ Apply for a Cal Grant by submitting a FAFSA and verified GPA by March 2	▪ **www.chafee.csac.ca.gov** ▪ Call toll-free 888.224.7268 ▪ Contact your school, caseworker or Independent Living Coordinator ▪ Or contact California's Foster Care Ombudsman toll-free at 877.846.1602 or go to **www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov**
Child Development Grant	Must be employed full time at a licensed California children's center for one year for each year of grant assistance received	$1,000 a year (at a California Community College) or $2,000 a year (at a four-year college) up to $6,000 total	FAFSA and Child Development Grant application form	▪ Must be pursuing a child development permit and plan to work at a licensed children's center in California ▪ Financial need ▪ Apply by application deadline at **www.csac.ca.gov**	▪ **www.csac.ca.gov** click on "Financial Aid Programs" ▪ Call toll-free 888.224.7268 ▪ Automatically renewed for 1 year, reapply after that
Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant	If you're the dependent or spouse of a California peace officer, firefighter or certain other law enforcement employees who were killed or totally disabled in the line of duty	Up to $11,259 a year	FAFSA and Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant application	▪ Need based ▪ Applications accepted year-round	▪ **www.csac.ca.gov** click on "Financial Aid Programs" ▪ Call toll-free 888.224.7268

LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAMS

	ELIGIBILITY IS BASED ON:	AWARD AMOUNT:	HOW TO APPLY:	OTHER REQUIREMENTS/ INFORMATION:	FOR MORE INFORMATION:
APLE	If you are a student pursuing a teaching career and you agree to teach for four years in either a designated subject shortage area or at a designated school	▪ Up to $11,000 ▪ Up to $8,000 more if you teach math, science or special education at the lowest-performing schools	Complete California's Assumption Program of Loans for Education application	▪ Must have eligible education loans ▪ Apply by June 30	▪ **www.csac.ca.gov** click on "Financial Aid Programs" ▪ Call toll-free 888.224.7268
SNAPLE NF	If you are a nursing student or practicing nurse, you've completed at least a bachelor's degree in nursing, and you agree to teach nursing at an eligible California college for up to three years	Up to $25,000	State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education for Nursing Faculty application	▪ Must have eligible education loans ▪ Apply by June 30	▪ **www.csac.ca.gov** click on "Financial Aid Programs" ▪ Call toll-free 888.224.7268
SNAPLE NSF	If you are a nursing student and you agree to practice nursing at an eligible state facility for up to four years	Up to $20,000	State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education for Nurses in State Facilities (SNAPLE NSF) application	▪ Must have eligible education loans ▪ Schools submit nominations by June 30	▪ **www.csac.ca.gov** click on "Financial Aid Programs" ▪ Call toll-free 888.224.7268

FREE MONEY FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

	Award amount:	How to apply:	Eligibility is based on:	Other requirements/information:	To learn more:
Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)	Up to $750 for freshman year of college, up to $1,300 for sophomore year	FAFSA	▪ Receiving a Pell Grant ▪ Successfully completing a rigorous high school program	▪ Second-year students must have at least a 3.0 cumulative college GPA ▪ Must attend at least half time	**www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**
Federal Pell Grant	From $890 to $4,731 a year†	FAFSA	▪ Your EFC and COA ▪ Whether attending full or part time	▪ May be used to pay tuition, fees and living expenses at any qualifying college ▪ Must not already have a bachelor's degree*	**www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	From $100 to $4,000 a year	FAFSA	▪ Your EFC and COA ▪ Whether attending full or part time ▪ Priority given to Pell Grant recipients with the lowest EFCs	▪ Unlike Pell Grants, funds are limited and there's no guarantee you'll receive one ▪ Not all colleges offer them	**www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**
National SMART Grant	Up to $4,000 for junior and senior years of college	FAFSA	▪ Receiving a Pell Grant ▪ Majoring in physical, life or computer sciences, technology, math or engineering, or certain foreign languages	▪ Must have at least a 3.0 cumulative college GPA in the courses for your program ▪ Must attend at least half time ▪ To receive the grant in any given term, you must be enrolled in at least one course required for your major	**www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**
Federal TEACH Grant	Up to $4,000 a year	FAFSA	▪ Must sign agreement to serve as paid full-time teacher in high-need field serving low-income students ▪ Agree to teach for at least 4 academic years within 8 years of completing your program of study ▪ If you fail to complete your obligation, grant converts to an unsubsidized Stafford loan you must repay	▪ Must be enrolled in, or plan to complete, coursework to begin a teaching career ▪ Must maintain cumulative GPA of at least 3.25 ▪ Not all colleges offer them	Contact the financial aid office at the college or university you plan to attend, and/or **www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**
Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship	$1,500 a year for up to 4 years	Applications available at high schools beginning February 1	▪ Academically outstanding high school seniors who show promise of continued achievement in college ▪ Each high school can nominate two graduating seniors	▪ Can be used at any accredited college nationwide ▪ Individual school deadlines vary ▪ California nominations due by application deadline at **www.csac.ca.gov**	Contact the California Student Aid Commission **www.csac.ca.gov**

** Except for students working toward teacher certification or enrolled in a five-year baccalaureate program. †Award amounts for 2008-09*

GEAR UP Awards

If you received a federal GEAR UP award for college while in middle school, you may use the funds to pay for college if you complete your high school education on time and enroll in an eligible postsecondary school within a year. Your annual fall letter from the California Student Aid Commission will explain how to access your award. You'll find general information on the GEAR UP program at **www.castategearup.org**. For questions, call toll-free 888.224.7268 or e-mail Gear-Up@csac.ca.gov.

New Post-9/11 G.I. Bill

Under the new Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008, if you served at least 30 days of continuous active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces after September 10, 2001, you may be eligible for the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill. This program provides funding for tuition, fees and other education-related expenses. For eligibility and benefit information, visit **www.gibill.va.gov**.

Financial Aid From California Colleges

Your college's financial aid office is a great resource and can provide:

* information on the major financial aid programs offered by the federal government, the state and your college, as well as the forms and deadlines for applying
* help completing the FAFSA and any other applications the college may require
* an explanation of how your EFC was calculated
* an explanation of the types and amounts of aid for which you qualify
* advice on how to manage your money for college
* directories and Web sites that list scholarships
* advice on campus and community job opportunities
* information on federal loans, including interest rates and repayment plans
* details on your college's payment plan, if it offers one

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At all of the California Community Colleges, fees for full-time students are ***less than $600 a year****.*

Work-Study or Student Employment

Through work-study or student employment programs, you can earn money to pay for your college costs. Whether you're offered Federal Work-Study, which is administered through selected colleges, or your college's own program, you'll receive:

- help lining up a part-time job on campus or with a local nonprofit agency—employment related to your studies may be available.
- at least the federal minimum wage—and you don't have to report your earnings on the FAFSA.

The amount of your award will depend on how early you apply, your financial need and your college's work-study or student employment funds. For more information on Federal Work-Study, go to **www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**. Most colleges also have career centers that help with general employment.

Independent Colleges

Learn about nonprofit, private colleges throughout the nation at **www.naicu.edu.**

California Community Colleges

To learn more about financial aid for community college students, go to **www.icanaffordcollege.com** and choose "Financial Aid Info."

California Community Colleges Fee Waiver

You won't pay any enrollment fees at a California Community College if you're a California resident and are eligible for a Cal Grant or other need-based financial aid, you receive CalWORKs/TANF, SSI or General Assistance (or if you're a dependent student and one of your parents receives this assistance), or your total family income is within the income standards.

For details on the Board of Governors Enrollment Fee Waiver (known as the BOG Fee Waiver), go to **www.icanaffordcollege.com** and choose "Financial Aid Info" or contact your college's financial aid office.

Also explore:

- **Extended Opportunity Programs and Services** provides grants, counseling and tutorial services to low-income, educationally disadvantaged students who are accepted to the program.
- **Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education** provides counseling, transportation, textbooks and supplies, as well as grants and services for child care, for students who are single parents of children under 14 years old and/or receiving welfare benefits, and for those who are EOPS students.
- **CalWORKs campus programs** coordinate financial aid and work-study, counseling, assistance with books, supplies and transportation, job placement and child care for students receiving CalWORKs who are in good standing with the county social services office. Assistance may also be available for former CalWORKs recipients in job-skill upgrade activities.

Plan to Transfer!

What can two years and 60 semester units of transferable community-college credit do for you? If you meet the GPA and admissions requirements, you can transfer to a four-year college knowing that you have saved thousands of dollars in tuition and fees. Every California Community College has an agreement with at least one UC or CSU campus making transferring easier if you meet the requirements. Some also have transfer agreements with independent or out-of-state colleges. Register with your community college's transfer center—it's important to know the courses you need so you can meet the admissions requirements and take full advantage of your financial aid options. You can also visit **www.assist.org** to learn more about transfer opportunities.

California State University

For more information about financial aid at CSU campuses, visit **www.csumentor.edu** or **www.calstate.edu**.

State University Grant

- Offered by all CSU campuses to California residents with financial need.
- Award amount varies according to campus priorities and student need, but may cover at least a portion of the State University Fee. For the neediest students who don't have a Cal Grant, the State University Grant covers at least the full State University Fee.

Educational Opportunity Program

- Provides grants of up to $2,000 a year, plus counseling and tutorial services to low-income and educationally disadvantaged undergraduates.
- Summer program available to strengthen math, reading or other academic skills.

University of California

University Student Aid

All University of California campuses offer grants. Undergraduate awards are given to financially eligible students who are unable to cover the full costs of attending a UC campus through a combination of a parent contribution (if applicable), grants from federal or state sources, and a reasonable level of student earnings and borrowing. More than half of all undergraduate students receive UC grant and scholarship aid, with an average award of about $8,500. In addition, many students receive fellowships or scholarships.

To find out more about financial aid for UC students, go to **www.universityofcalifornia.edu** (select "Students and Parents," then "Paying for UC: Financial Aid" under "Applying to UC").

Independent Colleges/Career Colleges and Trade or Technical Schools

To learn more about student aid offered by one of the state's independent colleges or universities, go to **www.californiacolleges.edu**, where you'll find links to the individual colleges and an online guidebook.

Federal and state aid can help you pay your costs at many private career colleges or trade or technical schools. There are many career colleges in California and most have year-round admissions and rolling start dates. To learn more, contact each college's financial aid office or search the U.S. Department of Education's database of the nation's accredited postsecondary institutions at **www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation**.

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If you're the child of a California city, county or state law enforcement or fire prevention worker who died as a result of active duty, or the dependent of a veteran or National Guard member killed or disabled in active service, you may qualify for a fee waiver at a UC, CSU or California Community College campus. Contact your college's financial aid office or its bursar's or registrar's office for more information.

The College Navigator Web site at www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool has a college search tool that provides cost information (and much more) for different types of colleges and universities. Also try www.collegeboard.com.

Average College Costs in California (Academic Year 2008-09)

	Living at home & commuting	Living off campus	Living on campus
California Community Colleges[1]	$10,110	$16,068	$12,422
California State University	$12,937	$19,253	$18,116
University of California	$18,156	$22,953	$25,089
Independent Colleges[2]	$33,638	$39,596	$38,533
Private Career Colleges[3]	$32,276	$40,135	––

This chart shows the average annual costs for single students during the 2008-09 school year, including tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, and personal expenses such as clothing, laundry and entertainment.

1 Listed costs include estimated fees. CCC fees were $20/unit in 2008-09. ($20 x 12 units x 2 terms)
2 Averages are based on a nine-month academic year.
3 Averages are based on programs from nine to 12 months in length.

Source: California Student Aid Commission

Financial Aid for Specific Populations

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*If you're hearing impaired, call TTY 800.730.8913 to learn more about federal student aid. You can also listen to Audio Highlights on the Web at **www.studentaid.ed.gov/audioguide**. The information will help you prepare for college, find funding and more. The FAFSA and other publications are available online through the use of a screen reader and in Braille by calling toll-free 800.433.3243 (the Braille FAFSA is for reference only and cannot be submitted).*

VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

At the federal level, the Montgomery G.I. Bill provides education benefits for participating individuals who served on active or reserve duty, or in the Selective Reserves. Benefits are available through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Veterans Educational Assistance, Work-Study and Tutorial Assistance programs. **If you're a veteran, you could get up to $36,000** to pay for tuition, books, living expenses and other costs you may have within 10 years of your service. Or get assistance within 15 years of your service through the Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008 (amount is based on time served, and cost of in-state tuition and fees plus books and housing).

Education benefits are also available for disabled veterans, and survivors and dependents of veterans.

You may be eligible for a fee waiver at a California public college if you have financial need and are the child or dependent of a service-connected disabled or deceased veteran, or the recipient or the child of a recipient of a Congressional Medal of Honor.

For more information, contact your college's veteran affairs office or the local office of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, call toll-free 888.442.4551 or go to **www.gibill.va.gov**.

FOSTER YOUTH

Chafee Grant for Foster Youth	➜	Provides up to $5,000 yearly grant in addition to any other federal or state aid	**www.chafee.csac.ca.gov**
College-based tuition waivers/scholarships	➜	Some colleges offer their own tuition waivers and scholarships for foster youth	**www.calyouthconn.org**
Casey Family Scholars/Orphan Foundation of America	➜	Provides scholarships for former foster youth	**www.orphan.org**

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California Conservation Corps

*Get paid to work in the outdoors serving your state and take community college, adult education or GED classes at night as a member of the California Conservation Corps. After a year, if you successfully complete classes in career development and conservation awareness, and 48 hours of volunteer service, you could get up to $2,000 for college or vocational training. Learn more at **www.ccc.ca.gov**.*

ATHLETES

If you plan to play a sport in college, you may need to register with the National Collegiate Athletic Association, depending on your sport, division or college. You may also need to complete certain academic requirements in high school. To learn more, get the free brochure, *The Guide for College-Bound Student Athletes*, at **www.ncaaclearinghouse.net**, or by calling 800.638.3731. Even if you're looking for a sports scholarship, you should still submit the FAFSA so that you can take advantage of other financial aid options.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All public and many independent colleges provide services to disabled students including counseling, tutoring, readers, interpreters, note takers, special parking zones or the loan of special equipment. Your cost of attendance should include all expenses necessary to accommodate your disability that aren't already covered by insurance or other sources. Be sure to work with each college's financial aid office when you're applying for admission.

For more information, contact your college's disabled student office or the national or local organizations serving your particular disability. You may also contact the local office of the California Department of Rehabilitation or go to **www.dor.ca.gov** and select "Services to People with Disabilities." Or visit **www.heath.gwu.edu** to find the Heath Resource Center's online publication, *Creating Options: Financial Aid for Students With Disabilities*.

FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENTS

If you're both a parent and a student, you may be eligible for cash aid and help with child care, transportation and job or training expenses through the CalWORKS program at California Community Colleges. Contact your county social services office for more information if your child's other parent is deceased or absent from the home, or if you or your spouse is physically or mentally disabled, unemployed or working less than 100 hours a month.

13 Other Ways to Pay for College

1 PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Check with your school counselor—thousands of scholarships are available through:

- community organizations such as Rotary International and 4-H
- foundations
- religious organizations
- neighborhood banks and businesses
- professional and trade organizations

Next, use the free scholarship directories and search engines online (see back cover). Ask your teachers, counselors or coaches about scholarships for students with your talents. Check magazines or Web sites devoted to your interests or skills. Also, contact your parents' employers or labor unions, as well as the personnel offices of large companies in your area.

You can apply for scholarships throughout your college years. Be prepared: You may need to write letters and essays or be interviewed as part of the application process.

2 NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation awards more than 10,500 scholarships each year. Scholarships range from $500 to $10,000. Taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in the fall of your junior year in high school will enter you in the competition. The PSAT is a chance to practice for the SAT. See your high school counselor or go to **www.nationalmerit.org** to learn more.

3 COMMUNITY SERVICE

AmeriCorps

By becoming an AmeriCorps volunteer, you'll earn up to $4,725 each year for up to two years to pay for college or repay your federal student loans. You may also be able to postpone your student loan payments while you're a volunteer. To learn more about AmeriCorps, go to **www.americorps.gov**, call 800.942.2677 or e-mail questions@americorps.org.

Teach for America

Teach for America, an AmeriCorps program, pays recent college graduates to teach for two years at disadvantaged schools. You'll participate under an alternative teaching certification program. Visit **www.teachforamerica.org**.

Peace Corps

At some colleges, you can incorporate your Peace Corps service into a master's degree program and you may receive financial assistance. In addition, up to 70 percent of your federal Perkins loan debt may be forgiven if you serve as a Peace Corps volunteer. Contact your college or go to **www.peacecorps.gov** to learn more.

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Shop around for new and used textbooks online. Compare ISBNs (every book has its own International Standard Book Number, located on the copyright page) to make sure you get the right edition. Also, ask if your college has a book rental or buyback program.

4 THE MILITARY

The U.S. Armed Forces offer education benefits, including up to $65,000 for college tuition. All branches provide tuition assistance for college courses and some will even help you repay your federal student loans. In some cases, you may receive an education first in exchange for a service commitment later.

Scholarships are available from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force through the Reserve Officers Training Corps programs at hundreds of colleges in return for serving at least four years of active duty after graduation. In the Reserves or National Guard, you can earn money for college or to repay your student loans in exchange for a service commitment.

You may also want to consider one of the four U.S. service academies. Your college costs will be paid in return for a five-year service commitment. Also, look into military colleges. For more information, visit **www.todaysmilitary.com**.

5 EARN CREDIT IN HIGH SCHOOL

Look into taking Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses in high school and then take the exams to earn college credit. AP and IB exams are offered in a number of subjects, but some colleges limit the number of units you can earn this way. For details, see your high school counselor, or go to **www.apcentral.collegeboard.com** or **www.ibo.org**.

You may be able to take community college courses while in high school through a dual enrollment program. If your school doesn't offer one, try enrolling directly on your own.

6 COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

Work-learn programs incorporate paid work experience with classroom studies. You can alternate full-time work with full-time school, or work part time while attending classes. Cooperative education programs don't provide financial aid, but you'll often be able to earn enough to help pay for college. Contact your high school counselor or your college's cooperative education or career office for more information. Also check out work colleges that allow you to work to pay your expenses as part of the curriculum: **www.workcolleges.org**.

Free scholarship or a scam?

A scholarship or grant is *free* money—you should never have to pay to find, apply for or receive one. **Watch out for companies that make promises**, charge you money to apply for or receive a scholarship, or try to get you to send money by claiming you're a finalist in a scholarship contest. Be wary of free seminars that turn into high-pressure sales pitches for financial aid information that's readily available for free, online or at schools or libraries.

- Do your own research before spending your money. If you choose to pay a scholarship search service, be sure you understand what you're paying for.
- Don't fall for claims that "guarantee" a scholarship. Reputable companies neither guarantee scholarships nor use aggressive tactics.
- Never give your credit card information, bank account information, Social Security number or student identification number over the phone or Internet unless you initiated contact and know who you're dealing with. And never provide any personal or financial information to hold a scholarship or grant.

To learn more:

- Visit **www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams** and **www.fraud.org**
- Visit the *Looking for Student Aid* Web site at **http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/lsa/index.html**

If you believe you've been a victim of scholarship fraud, contact your state Attorney General's office.

7 START AT A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Save thousands of dollars in tuition and have your general education requirements behind you by starting at a California Community College. You can use financial aid to pay for fees, books and living expenses. Check with your community college to make sure your credits will transfer, if that's your goal. Learn more at **www.icanaffordcollege.com**.

8 CREDIT FOR EXPERIENCE

If you're a nontraditional student—maybe you didn't go to college right after high school, don't depend on your family for financial support or you're returning to college for career training—you may receive academic credit for your job, volunteer or travel experience through the College-Level Examination Program. For more information, visit **www.collegeboard.com/clep**. Your college may offer other ways to earn credit for your experience.

9 SCHOLAR-SHARE COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN

If you have future students at home, you may want to look into California's ScholarShare program that helps families save for college. With ScholarShare, a 529 college savings plan, your money grows federal and state tax free as long as it's used later for qualified college expenses. You can open an account with as little as $15 when setting up automatic investments. With ScholarShare, you can choose from a number of low-cost investment options. You can use your money at any accredited college nationwide as well as many international schools. Learn more by visiting **www.scholarshare.com** or calling toll-free 800.544.5248.

10 PART-TIME WORK

A part-time, summer or holiday job can help. Check with your college's employment office first. If you find you're working too many hours and it's affecting your school work, or if you're concerned that a summer job might negatively impact your financial aid awards, see your financial aid office.

11 COMPANY-PAID EDUCATION

Many employers will pay or reimburse you for some or all of your education and training. Some companies and labor unions also provide scholarships for children, and even grandchildren, of employees, so be sure to have your family ask about scholarships available through work.

12 TAX BENEFITS

Plan ahead—you may be able to take advantage of federal tax benefits for education. Most tax benefits have income limits; to learn more about each program, see IRS publication 970, *Tax Benefits for Education*, available at **www.irs.gov/publications/p970/index.html** or by calling 800.829.3676. Also, be sure to consult a professional tax advisor.

- **Hope** and **Lifetime Learning Tax Credits** allow you or your parents to subtract a portion of your college costs from the taxes you owe each year when you file your tax return.
- **Tuition and Fees Tax Deduction** and **Student Loan Interest Deduction** allow you to subtract a portion of your tuition and fees from your taxable income and to deduct up to $2,500 of the interest you pay on your student loan each year (or on any student loans you take out for your spouse's or child's education).

In addition, funds from your IRA, 529 college savings plan or Coverdell Education Savings Account may be withdrawn without a tax penalty to pay for qualified education expenses. There's also a tax break if you use certain U.S. savings bonds to pay for college.

13 JOBS THAT HELP YOU REPAY YOUR LOANS

Some jobs actually give you both a paycheck and help you pay down your student loans. Unless otherwise noted, you can learn more about the programs below at your college or at **www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**:

Health Care Professionals

- Your federal Perkins loan debt may be canceled if you work full time as a nurse or medical technician.
- The federal government may assume your student loan debt if you work as a health professional in an underserved area. Learn more at **www.bhpr.hrsa.gov** and **www.hhs.gov**.

SNAPLE NF

- **Eligibility is based on:** If you are a nursing student or practicing nurse, you've completed at least a bachelor's degree in nursing, and you agree to teach nursing at an eligible California college for up to three years.
- **Award amount:** Up to $25,000
- **How to apply:** State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education for Nursing Faculty (SNAPLE NF) application
- **Other Requirements:** Must have eligible education loans. Apply by June 30.

SNAPLE NSF

- **Eligibility is based on:** If you are a nursing student and you agree to practice nursing at an eligible state facility for up to four years.
- **Award amount:** Up to $20,000
- **How to apply:** State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education for Nurses in a State Facility (SNAPLE NSF) application
- **Other Requirements:** Must have eligible education loans. Schools submit nominations by June 30.

For more information on SNAPLE programs, visit **www.csac.ca.gov**.

Child Care Providers

- If you work in a designated child care site or for a Head Start program, your federal Perkins loan debt may be canceled.

National Service Volunteers

- AmeriCorps awards may be used to pay off your federal student loan. Visit **www.americorps.gov** to learn more. If you serve as a VISTA or Peace Corps volunteer, a portion of your federal Perkins loan debt may be canceled.

Military Personnel/Law Enforcement Officers

- Certain branches of the U.S. Armed Forces offer loan assumption benefits. For more information, visit **www.todaysmilitary.com**. If you serve in the U.S. Armed Forces in an area of hostility or imminent danger, up to half of your federal Perkins loan debt may be canceled. Contact your college for details.
- If you're a law enforcement officer, you may be eligible to have a portion of your federal Perkins loan debt canceled.

Lawyers

- Some law schools offer loan repayment benefits for graduates who work in public service. Contact your college or visit **www.equaljusticeworks.org** to learn more.

Federal Employees

- Some U.S. government departments offer loan assumption benefits for employees.

Public Service Employees

- After 10 years of employment in certain public service fields, you may be eligible for forgiveness of any federal student loan debt you have remaining at that time.

Teachers

- See the chart on page 19 for information about APLE and other state and federal loan forgiveness and grant programs for teachers.

Federal Loans: The Smart Way To Borrow

If you don't receive enough free money to pay for college and you aren't able to cover your costs with savings or other resources, there are federal student loans. Your interest rate will be low and you'll usually have up to 10 years to repay, along with other benefits. You can get a federal loan even if you don't have financial need, and there's no credit check. There are also federal loans for parents.

Many lenders offer private loans if you've reached the federal loan borrowing limits, but keep in mind private loans usually have higher interest rates and fewer benefits. If you need to borrow, you should always take out federal loans first.

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Whether you receive your federal loan from a lender under the Federal Family Education Loan Program or directly from the federal government under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program will depend on which program your school participates in. The information here applies to loans under both programs.

Federal Stafford Loans

Federal Stafford loans are the most common student loans and are for students with or without financial need at all types of colleges. To receive federal Stafford loan funds, you must be enrolled at least half time (as determined by your college). There are two kinds of Stafford loans:

Subsidized Stafford Loans

Subsidized Stafford loans are based solely on financial need. The federal government pays the interest while you're in college and during the six-month grace period after you graduate, leave school or enroll less than half time—you'll make no loan payments until your grace period ends. To qualify, you must meet all the requirements for federal aid (see page 5).

Unsubsidized Stafford Loans

Unsubsidized Stafford loans are for all eligible students, regardless of income or assets. You must meet the requirements for federal aid (see page 5), except for demonstrating financial need. You're responsible for paying all the interest on your loan, but you can defer interest payments while in school at least half time. If you do, when repayment begins the interest will be added to the amount you borrowed and future interest costs will be based on the higher loan amount. It's to your advantage to pay the interest while you're in college because you'll pay less interest in the long run.

If you're an independent student, you may be eligible to receive additional unsubsidized Stafford loans to help cover unmet financial need or replace some of your EFC.

A Closer Look at Stafford Loans	
How to apply	First submit the FAFSA; your college's financial aid office will contact you later to sign a master promissory note and complete loan counseling
Interest rate	Fixed at 6.8 percent for the life of the loan (*Starting July 1, 2008, the interest rate for new **subsidized** loans taken out for undergraduate study will gradually drop until 2012 when the rate returns to 6.8 percent)*
Fees	Origination or federal default fees of up to 2 percent may be deducted from each loan disbursement
Repayment begins	Six months after you graduate, leave school or enroll less than half time *(if you're going to graduate school, you can request to defer payments until you finish your studies)*
Enrollment requirement	At least half time
How you'll receive loan funds	Funds are sent directly to your college to pay for tuition, fees, room and board (if applicable); the remainder will be issued to you by your college

WHAT'S ACCRUED INTEREST?

Let's say you borrow $10,000 via an unsubsidized Stafford loan and the interest costs on the loan are about $57 a month (that's at a fixed interest rate of 6.8 percent). You choose to defer paying the interest while you're in school for four years. The interest that accumulates is known as accrued interest. After four years, about $2,720 in interest will have accrued. When you begin repayment, you'll owe $12,720—the original $10,000 plus the $2,720 in accrued interest. The interest you'll pay during repayment will be based on this new higher amount. The process of adding interest to the amount borrowed rather than repaying it as it accrues is called "capitalization."

			Federal Stafford Loan Limits
Year	**Dependent Undergraduates***	**Independent Undergraduates**	**Graduate & Professional Students**
First year	$5,500	$9,500	$20,500—no more than $8,500 may be in subsidized loans
	No more than $3,500 may be in subsidized loans		
Second year	$6,500	$10,500	
	No more than $4,500 may be in subsidized loans		
Third and beyond (each year)	$7,500	$12,500	
	No more than $5,500 may be in subsidized loans		
Teacher certification	$5,500	$12,500—no more than $5,500 may be in subsidized loans	
Total amount you can borrow	$31,000	$57,500	
	No more than $23,000 may be in subsidized loans		$138,500†—no more than $65,500 may be in subsidized loans (includes any Stafford loans you received for undergraduate study)

**If you're a dependent student whose parents are unable to obtain a federal PLUS loan, you may be eligible to borrow the same amount in unsubsidized loans as an independent student.*

† Graduate and professional students enrolled in certain approved health professions programs may borrow up to $224,000.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU BORROW?

It depends on:

- your college's COA
- your EFC
- your year in school
- whether you attend full time or half time
- whether you're a dependent or an independent student, and
- how much other financial aid you receive.

Your loan and any other financial aid you receive, including private aid, cannot be more than your college expenses. Visit **www.edfund.org/EdWise** to help calculate how much you can afford to borrow and repay.

Federal Perkins Loans

Federal Perkins loans are low-interest loans for students with exceptional financial need. These loans are made by colleges, have 0 percent interest during school and there are no fees. You'll have up to nine months after leaving school before you must start repaying your loan at 5 percent interest.

Depending on when you apply, your financial need and available funds, you can borrow up to $5,500 for each year of undergraduate study and up to $8,000 a year if you're a graduate or professional student—and you can be enrolled less than half time. Funding is limited, however, and not all colleges offer Perkins loans.

Federal PLUS Loans

Federal Parent PLUS loans enable your parents or stepparents (whose information is reported on your FAFSA) to borrow up to the total cost of your undergraduate study, minus any other aid you may receive (legal guardians cannot borrow PLUS loans for your study).

Graduate or professional students can apply for a federal Graduate PLUS loan and borrow up to the total cost of their education, minus any other aid they may receive, including any federal Stafford loans.

A Closer Look at PLUS Loans

	Federal PLUS Loans for Parents	Federal PLUS Loans for Graduate Students (Grad PLUS)
How to apply	▪ Your parents complete a PLUS loan master promissory note (available at your college financial aid office) ▪ You may need to complete the FAFSA	▪ FAFSA ▪ PLUS loan master promissory note (available at your college financial aid office)
Total amount you can borrow	▪ Up to the total cost of your undergraduate study, minus any other aid received	▪ Up to the total cost of your education, minus any other aid received
Interest rate	▪ Fixed at 7.9 percent or 8.5 percent, depending on the loan program and college ▪ Interest accrues from date of disbursement until paid in full	
Fees	▪ Origination or federal default fees of up to 4 percent may be deducted from each loan disbursement	
Repayment begins	▪ Within 60 days of loan's last disbursement, or parents can defer payments until student ceases to be enrolled at least half time. Interest accrues during deferment.	▪ Within 60 days of loan's last disbursement (grad students may request an in-school deferment)
Enrollment requirement	▪ At least half time in a program leading to a degree or certificate	
Other requirements	▪ Basic requirements for federal financial aid (see page 5)	▪ Basic requirements for federal financial aid (see page 5) ▪ Your eligibility for federal Stafford loans must first be determined
Credit eligibility requirements* (PLUS loans are not based on your family's income or assets)	▪ No debts delinquent 90 days or more ▪ No defaulted loans, outstanding tax liens, unpaid judgments, bankruptcy, foreclosure or wage garnishment within the past 5 years	

**If you or your parents cannot meet the credit check, you may still receive a PLUS loan if you know someone who can and is willing to co-sign your loan.*

Save Your Credit Card for Emergencies

Thinking about using your credit card to pay for college? Think again. Let's say you use your credit card to pay tuition one semester, giving you a balance of $1,400. If you make only the minimum payment of $56 each month (and continue to pay 4 percent of your outstanding balance as now required) at an interest rate of 18 percent, you'll end up paying $756 in interest—that's more than half the original amount you charged! The same $1,400 in a federal student loan would cost you at most about $129 in interest, paying $50 a month at 6.8 percent. That's a savings of $627!

Private Loans

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If you withdraw from school, you may have to pay back some or all of the federal aid you received for the term, depending on how much of the aid you earned based on a federal formula. Contact your college's financial aid office and your academic advisor to understand the possible consequences before you decide to leave school.

If you still need money for college after reaching the borrowing limits for federal loans, look into other options, starting with those listed on page 25. If your parents own a home, they may want to consider a home equity loan or line of credit. Your parents may be able to deduct the interest they pay on their tax return—and the interest rate may be lower than what they or you would pay for a private loan.

Private loans often carry higher interest rates and fees than federal loans or home equity loans, and may have less attractive repayment terms. Typically, the interest rates on private loans are variable and can change from month to month. Private loans are usually based on your credit rating and income-to-debt ratio—not financial need—and may require a co-signer. The information in your credit report will determine the interest rates you qualify for.

A number of lenders offer private loans. Ask questions and compare lenders to make the best choice for you.

LOOKING FOR A PRIVATE LOAN?

Questions to Ask

- What's the interest rate? Fixed or variable? If variable, how often will it be adjusted? When does interest capitalize and how often?
- Is there a maximum amount you can borrow? Can you borrow more than the cost of your education?
- Is a co-signer required? Will having a co-signer lower the interest rate?
- Is there an application fee? Are there any disbursement fees? Any repayment fees?
- Is the loan check payable to you or your college? How long does it take to receive funds?
- Are there reduced interest rates for on-time payments?
- What will your minimum payment be? When does repayment begin? How long do you have to repay? Is there a prepayment penalty?
- Will you get one bill for all your private loans? Can your private loan bills be combined with your federal loan bills?
- Will your payments be deferred while you're in school? If so, will interest continue to accrue?
- What happens if you can't make your payments due to a job loss or other economic hardship? Do you have any deferment or forbearance options?

Loan Cancellation

In rare cases, your loan, or a portion of it, can be canceled—in other words, you won't have to pay it back. Your lender can cancel your loan if your college closes and you're unable to complete your studies; if your college falsely certified your eligibility for a loan; if your identity was stolen and used illegally to take out student loans; if your college failed to make a refund to your lender when one was due (you don't need to repay the amount kept by the college); or if you become totally and permanently disabled or die. To learn more, contact your lender.

What Does It Mean to Accept a Loan?

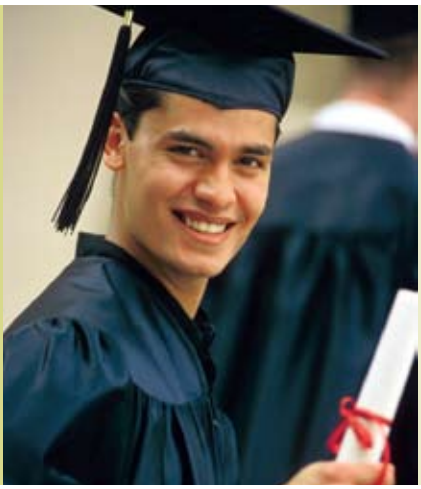
Accepting the responsibility for repaying the money you borrow. It's worth noting that federal laws make it nearly impossible to discharge a student loan through bankruptcy, except in rare instances. Before you borrow, ask:

- **Is the college or program a good investment?** You have the right to be fully informed about the college's tuition and refund policies, academic and training programs, financial aid programs, faculty and facilities, and its graduates' success rate in finding jobs. You also have the right to ask how many students complete their degrees at the college and how many of them transfer out.
- **Does your loan make good financial sense?** Are there jobs in your chosen field and how well do they pay? Some jobs and careers are more stable or higher paying than others. Learn more about hundreds of jobs, including required training, prospects and earnings, in the federal *Occupational Outlook Handbook* available at **www.bls.gov/oco**.
- **Are there other options?** Cut costs or check out other ways to pay for college, starting with those listed on page 25.
- **What are the true costs of your loan?** It usually costs money to borrow money. Make sure you know the true costs of your loan by keeping track of how much you borrow and how much you owe, including interest costs and fees. If you don't make your payments on time, you may have to pay late fees and collection costs.
- **Can you repay it?** Before applying for a loan, determine how much you'll be able to afford to repay. Estimate how much money you'll need, what your monthly payments and other expenses will be, and what you can expect to earn after graduation. Borrow only what you need and can pay back. Also, keep in mind that the longer you take to pay off your loan, the more interest you'll pay over the life of your loan. Find loan repayment calculators and more at **www.edfund.org/EdWise**.

Remember,

even if you don't graduate, can't find a job or aren't happy with your education, you still must repay your loan.

- **What are your rights and responsibilities?** When you accept a loan, you accept legal and financial responsibilities that last until the loan is repaid. You'll sign a promissory note, a legal contract between you and your lender in which you promise to repay the amount you borrow and agree to the loan's terms and conditions. Before signing, be sure you understand all of your responsibilities and rights.



Repaying Your Loan

When it comes time to pay back your federal student loans, there are four repayment options, including payments that stay the same each month (standard), payments that rise gradually (graduated), payments that are linked to your income and payments that stretch over a longer period of time (extended).

You'll usually have up to 10 years to repay your loan, but you could have as long as 25 years, depending on your loan amount and repayment plan. To learn more, click on **www.edfund.org/EdWise**, **www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov** or **www.edfund.org**, or talk to your lender.

Repaying Your Loan

Borrow conservatively, budget wisely and plan ahead. Knowing the monthly payments for the amount you borrow is a great start.

Interest Rate		6.80%		8.50%	
Total Amount Borrowed	No. of Payments	Payment	Total Interest	Payment	Total Interest
$5,500	120	$63	$2,095	$68	$2,683
$12,000	120	$138	$4,572	$149	$5,854
$19,500	120	$224	$7,429	$242	$9,513
$27,500	120	$316	$10,477	$341	$13,415
$31,000	120	$357	$11,810	$384	$15,123
$35,000	120	$403	$13,334	$434	$17,074
$45,000	120	$518	$17,143	$558	$21,953
$57,500	120	$662	$21,905	$713	$28,050
$60,000	120	$690	$22,858	$744	$29,269
$138,500	120	$1,594	$52,764	$1,717	$67,564

Simplify by staying with one lender. Many lenders offer loans and their lending policies may differ. Remaining with the same lender for all your loans usually means less paperwork—plus, when it comes time to repay, your loans will be combined so you'll have only one bill and one payment.

Pay as you go. Deferring interest payments on your loan may be attractive in the short run, but you'll pay a lot more in the long run. By paying as little as $20 each month during school, you can save hundreds of dollars over the life of your loans.

Sign up to have your loan payments taken directly from your bank account. Many lenders will lower your interest rate if you make automatic payments and always pay on time.

What's Ahead? Making Repayment Easier

See if loan consolidation makes sense. If you have several federal loans, you may want to ask your lender about consolidating them into a single new loan with a new interest rate and an extended repayment term of up to 30 years. Loan consolidation isn't right for everyone.

Let your lender know if you can't make your payments. If you fall behind, your delinquency will likely be reported to a national credit reporting agency, which could damage your credit rating, making it harder and more expensive if you want to get a loan for a car, home or more education later. Ask your lender about changing your repayment plan, consolidating or combining your loans, or look into a deferment or a forbearance to temporarily postpone, reduce or extend your payments.

Don't default. If you don't repay your loan, you'll face serious consequences. First, you'll lose the privilege of making monthly payments; the entire amount of your loan will become due. You'll no longer be eligible to receive any more federal financial aid (grants or loans). A portion of your paycheck or tax refund may be taken to pay back your loan. You may be hit with collection costs. You may not be eligible for certain government jobs. And you'll damage your credit rating, making it harder and more expensive to borrow money in the future.

rights & responsibilities

you have the **right** to ask the college:

- What it costs to attend and what its refund policies are if you withdraw from school.
- How the college determines whether you're making satisfactory academic progress and what happens if you're not.
- To disclose the percentage of its students who complete the college's programs and the percentage who transfer out.
- About its accreditation and licensing.
- What financial help is available, including information on all federal, state and college financial aid programs, not just loans.
- About the deadlines for submitting applications for each financial aid program and how recipients are selected.
- How your financial need is determined, including how costs for tuition, fees, housing, food, transportation, books, supplies, personal and miscellaneous expenses are considered in your cost of attendance.
- What income, assets and other factors are considered in your EFC calculation, and how much of your financial need, as determined by the college, is met.
- To explain the various elements in your financial aid package, and how and when you'll receive your aid.
- To explain how your financial aid offer was determined.
- How much of your financial aid must be paid back, and what portion is grant or gift aid. If you're offered a loan, you have the right to know the interest rate, the total amount that must be repaid, payback procedures, when repayment begins and how long you have to repay.
- How to be considered for additional aid, if your financial circumstances change.
- About the effect outside scholarships may have on your financial aid award.
- How to reapply for financial aid for subsequent years.
- For its job placement rates—the percentage of students who are placed in jobs related to their course of study.

you have a **responsibility** to:

- Review and consider all information about the college's programs before enrolling.
- Research the colleges you're considering. Talk to your high school counselor, as well as current and former students and local employers, if appropriate.
- Complete the financial aid application accurately and submit it on time to the right place. Intentional misrepresentation on an application for federal financial aid is a violation of law and a crime that may result in penalties, including prison and fines.
- Respond promptly and provide all requested verification documentation, corrections to your financial aid application or additional information to the appropriate place.
- Read and keep copies of all forms and agreements you sign.
- Report in writing to your college financial aid office all additional financial aid you receive.
- Know and comply with the deadlines for applications or reapplications for aid, and understand the school's refund procedures.
- Ask your college's financial aid office about jobs if you were awarded work-study or student employment, including the hours you must work, your duties, the pay and how you'll be paid.
- Complete loan entrance counseling before you receive your first loan disbursement—and exit counseling before you leave school.
- Compare your anticipated monthly student loan payments and other expenses to your expected take-home pay after college.
- Understand your school's return-of-aid policy if you receive federal or state financial aid and withdraw from school. You or your school may have to return some of your financial aid money.
- Repay your student loans, even if you don't complete your education, can't get a job or aren't happy with your education.
- Notify your college and lender promptly of changes in your name, permanent mailing address, telephone number, enrollment or marital status, or financial resources.
- Request a deferment or forbearance, or a change in repayment plans, if you're having trouble making your monthly payments.

Smart Money Tips

❶

Get organized. Set up separate files for your bank statements, household bills, insurance payments, college applications, financial aid papers, loan documents and correspondence with your college and lender. Keep them in a safe place.

❷

Create a monthly spending plan and stick to it. First, you'll need to know your income and expenses. To figure out your expenses, write down all your purchases every day for at least two weeks to understand where your money is going. Also, look at your bank or credit card statements at the end of the month. You'll get a good idea of the number of coffees you bought, how many times you ate out, any clothes, shoes, books or other items you bought, and your regular household expenses, such as rent, utilities and food.

❸

Avoid using credit cards. It's easy to get a credit card and even easier to get into trouble. Shop around and be wary of low introductory rates that quickly jump higher. Look out for hidden fees. Consider a debit card instead, but you'll still need to read the fine print. If you have a credit card, pay your balance in full each month. If you can't, try to pay more than just the minimum payment.

❹

Start saving. No matter how little, set aside something every month. Even $20 a month will get you in the habit of saving and help build a cushion for a financial emergency.

Know how much you need

Your expenses during college amount to more than just tuition and fees. Find out the current costs of nearly every college in the country by exploring the College Navigator Web site at www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool and the College Board's Web site at www.collegeboard.com.

QUIZ: CHECK YOUR MONEY IQ

You know the price of a DVD and a cup of coffee, but how about the cost of items you'll need to buy as a college student or to set up an apartment?

1. What's the average cost of a college textbook?

a. $40 b. $70 c. $100

2. How much will you spend each month on gas and electricity for your apartment?

a. $50 b. $80 c. $115

3. How much does the average young adult spend on food per month?

a. $200 b. $400 c. $600

4. How much does it cost to wash and dry a load of laundry using coin-operated machines?

a. $4 b. $6 c. $8

5. Between gas, oil, insurance and maintenance, owning a car will take a chunk out of your yearly budget. How much?

a. $1,640 b. $2,585 c. $4,615

6. How much does the average young adult spend on cleaning supplies in a year?

a. $160 b. $230 c. $325

answers:

1. **c.** The average cost of a college textbook is about $100 and you can expect to spend about $400-$600 or more each semester on books, depending on your school. By the time you graduate, your total book bill could be as high as $3,500.
2. **c.** You can expect to pay about $115 per month for utilities (gas and electricity).
3. **b.** You'll probably spend up to $400 a month on food, including snacks and eating out at fast food places.
4. **a.** The average washer takes about $2 in quarters for a single load and drying can cost another $2. Even if you only do one load a week, that's more than $200 a year, without counting laundry detergent.
5. **b.** You could spend as much as $2,585 on gas, oil, insurance and other costs if you own a car (not including car payments). And with gas prices increasing, this amount could be even higher.
6. **b.** Don't be surprised if you end up spending $230 a year on household cleaning supplies. Even the most frugal person still needs to buy soap, dishwashing detergent, paper towels and other essentials.

spending plan worksheet

Use this worksheet to help you get a clear picture of your income and expenses. If your expenses are greater than your income, you'll need to look at options for reducing expenses and/or supplementing your income.

Income Source		Estimated Monthly Total	Estimated Yearly Total
Earnings			
Money from savings			
Money from parents			
Work-study/student employment			
Scholarships			
Grants			
Loans			
Spouse's wages			
Other			
Total income		**$**	**$**
Expenses		**Estimated Monthly Total**	**Estimated Yearly Total**
Tuition			
Fees			
Loan payments			
Books/supplies			
Rent/housing			
Gas/electricity			
Telephone			
Cell phone			
Internet service/cable TV			
Other			
Child care			
Transportation	Auto gas and maintenance		
	Auto insurance and registration		
	Auto payment		
	Public transportation		
	Parking		
Food	Groceries		
	Restaurants		
	Coffee, Snacks		
Clothing	Clothes		
	Laundry/dry cleaning		
Entertainment			
Credit card payments			
Health insurance			
Medical/dental			
Miscellaneous			
Total expenses		**$**	**$**
TOTAL INCOME minus TOTAL EXPENSES		**= $** (available funds)	**= $** (available funds)

evaluate your financial aid offers carefully

A quick way to compare offers and determine your net costs is to subtract all your grant, scholarship and other free aid from your cost of attendance. Keep in mind that colleges have different ways of awarding financial aid as well as different costs of attendance.*

COLLEGE				
Cost of Attendance				
Tuition and fees				
Room and board**				
Books and supplies				
Computer allowance				
Transportation				
Other costs				
Total College Costs	**A**			
GRANT/SCHOLARSHIP AID				
Federal Pell Grant				
Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant				
National SMART Grant				
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant				
Cal Grant				
Other grants				
Scholarships				
Total Grant/Scholarship Aid	**B**			
Your Net Costs (A – B)				
LOANS				
Federal subsidized Stafford loan				
Federal unsubsidized Stafford loan				
Federal Perkins loan				
Federal Parent PLUS loan				
Federal Graduate PLUS loan				
College loan				
Private loan				
Total Loan Aid	**C**			
Total Financial Aid (B + C)	**D**			
Your Out-of-Pocket Costs (A – D)				
Work-Study or Student Employment	**E**			

* Not all colleges participate in all of the financial aid programs listed here.
** If room and board aren't part of your housing contract, check with the college's housing office or look in the local paper for rental costs.

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Financial aid checklist:
Countdown to College

FALL

- Talk to your high school counselor about your college plans and money needs. Ask about scholarships offered by local organizations and businesses.
- Check out all the ways to pay for college, starting at **www.csac.ca.gov**, **www.calgrants.org**, **www.going2college.org** and **www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**.
- Look into AmeriCorps at **www.americorps.gov** to learn how to earn money for college in return for volunteer service.
- Sign up to take the SAT or ACT, if you haven't done so already.
- Make sure you have a Social Security number.
- Check out colleges on the Web, starting with **www.californiacolleges.edu**, **www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool** and **www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov/choosing**. Also, meet with college representatives who visit your school.
- Keep a calendar of important deadlines for college admission and financial aid.
- Get started filling out forms and writing essays for college and scholarship applications.
- Ask your teachers, counselors, employers, friends and family for letters of recommendation.
- Make sure you have an e-mail address that's appropriate for corresponding with colleges, lenders and employers.
- Apply for a federal PIN at **www.pin.ed.gov** ahead of time so you can e-sign the FAFSA for faster processing.
- Visit your top college choices or take a virtual tour online.
- Keep up your grades.
- Complete the FAFSA on the Web Worksheet, which you'll find at **www.fafsa.ed.gov** or your school.
- Check to see if your school will submit your verified Cal Grant GPA electronically or if you need to submit it using the paper Cal Grant GPA Verification form, located at **www.calgrants.org**.
- Request any additional financial aid applications your college or financial aid program may require.
- Start applying for private scholarships. Some may have very early deadlines.
- Apply for a Cal Grant by September 2 if you're going to a community college and missed the March 2 deadline.

WINTER

- Attend your school's financial aid workshop.
- Complete the FAFSA at **www.fafsa.ed.gov** as soon as possible, starting January 1. Use estimates if you or your parents haven't completed your federal tax return. Provide the required e-signatures and an e-mail address for faster processing.
- Apply for a Cal Grant (**www.calgrants.org**) by submitting the FAFSA and your verified Cal Grant GPA no later than March 2.
- Attend a California Cash for College workshop in January or February for free help completing the FAFSA and other forms—and to apply for a $1,000 scholarship. Visit **www.californiacashforcollege.org** for dates and locations.
- Be sure to meet all financial aid deadlines. Some may be earlier than the March 2 Cal Grant deadline.
- Keep a copy of everything you submit.

SPRING & SUMMER

- After you apply for a Cal Grant, track your application online using WebGrants for Students at **www.calgrants.org**.
- Review your Student Aid Report and make corrections, if necessary.
- Be sure you or your parents complete your tax returns so you can update your Student Aid Report, if necessary.
- If you receive a California Aid Report or a corrections letter regarding your eligibility for a Cal Grant, review it carefully and respond, if necessary.
- Watch for college acceptance letters and financial aid offers.
- Evaluate all financial aid offers carefully. Ask questions!
- Consider grants, work-study and other aid you don't have to repay before accepting a student loan.
- Decide on a college and send in all forms or deposits by the deadline (May 1 for most colleges).
- Let your college know the financial aid awards you're accepting and the ones you're declining.
- Look for a summer job, or consider summer school or an internship.
- Arrange for housing plans.

Web Sites That Click

These free Web sites provide information on planning and paying for college. Be sure to read each site's privacy policy to be aware of current practices regarding privacy and information sharing. (This listing is not an endorsement of any of these sites.)

ACT
www.actstudent.org

African American Scholarships
www.uncf.org

AmeriCorps
www.americorps.gov
www.californiavolunteers.org

Asian American Scholarships
www.apiasf.org

Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities
www.aiccu.edu

Athletic Scholarships
www.ncaa.org

Borrow Smart
For information on low-interest federal loans and strategies for smart borrowing.
***www.edfund.org**
www.edfund.org/EdWise
www.studentdebthelp.org

Cal Grants
***www.calgrants.org**
www.csac.ca.gov

California Career Colleges
www.cappsonline.org

Cash for College Workshops
***www.californiacashforcollege.org**

California Colleges
www.californiacolleges.edu

California Community Colleges
***www.icanaffordcollege.com**

California State University
www.calstate.edu
www.csumentor.edu

California State Aid
www.csac.ca.gov

Citizenship Information
***www.uscis.gov**

College Board and SAT
***www.collegeboard.com**

College Costs and More
***www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool**

College Planning and Exploration
www.going2college.org
www.mappingyourfuture.org
www.college.gov
www.collegeispossible.org

College Savings Plans
www.scholarshare.com
www.collegesavings.org
www.independent529plan.org

EdWise®
Calculate how much you can afford to borrow and repay.
www.edfund.org/EdWise

FAFSA on the Web
***www.fafsa.ed.gov**

Federal Financial Aid
To learn more about federal grants, loans and more. Or call toll free at 800.4FED. AID (800.433.3243) or TTY 800.730.8913, or e-mail studentaid@ed.gov.
***www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov**

Foster Youth Grants
www.chafee.csac.ca.gov
www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov
www.calyouthconn.org
www.orphan.org

Gates Millennium Scholarships
www.gmsp.org

Health Careers
***www.HealthJobsStartHere.com**
www.bhpr.hrsa.gov
www.hhs.gov

Help for Students in Debt
www.studentdebthelp.org

Information for Students and Their Families
www.students.gov

Job Search/Careers
www.collegegrad.com
www.studentjobs.gov
www.coolworks.com
***www.careervoyages.gov**

Job Trends
www.bls.gov/emp
www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov

Latino Scholarships
***www.latinocollegedollars.org**
***www.hsf.net**
www.hispanicfund.org
***www.maldef.org**
***www.scholarshipsforhispanics.org**

Military Scholarships
www.todaysmilitary.com

National Student Loan Data System
www.nslds.ed.gov

Native American Scholarships
www.oiep.bia.edu
www.collegefund.org
www.aises.org/Programs/Scholarships and Internships

Salaries
www.bls.gov/oco

Scholarship Directories
www.fastweb.com
www.collegenet.com/mach25
www.scholarshiphelp.org
***www.collegeboard.com/pay**

Scholarship Scams
***www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams**
***www.studentaid.ed.gov/lsa**

Social Security Number
***www.ssa.gov**

Students With Disabilities
www.heath.gwu.edu
www.rspfunding.com
www.dor.ca.gov

Tax Benefits for Education
www.irs.gov/publications/p970/index.html

Teach for America
***www.teachforamerica.org**

University of California
***www.universityofcalifornia.edu**

Veteran Education Benefits
***www.gibill.va.gov**

Yes I Can
www.yesican.gov
***www.yosipuedo.gov**

**Provides information in Spanish.*

CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION

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