

Adult Student To-Do Checklist

Summary

Are you an adult considering going back to school? Do you need help paying for your education expenses? Find out what steps to take to prepare for a new career and which publications or websites will be useful for you.

To Do:

- Get your GED if you don't have a high school diploma.** Look into getting a General Educational Development (GED) certificate if you don't have a high school diploma. Try searching online for "GED certificate" and your state's name. Other options include:
 - HiSET (High School Equivalency Test)
 - Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC)
- Research careers.** Find out about careers and the need for various jobs with the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* search tool at www.bls.gov/oco.
- Find the right school.** Use College Navigator at nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator to find the right school for your career goals.
- Ask about employer assistance.** Ask your employer if assistance is available to help you pay for school.
- Research scholarships.** Use the scholarship search tool at StudentAid.gov/scholarships to find scholarships.
- Apply for financial aid.** Apply for federal student aid by following the guidelines at fafsa.gov.
- Financial aid for adult students.** Read over *Federal Student Aid for Adult Students* at StudentAid.gov/resources#adult-students for a crash course on what aid looks like for adults.
- Contact the financial aid office.** Contact a school's financial aid office if you have questions about the aid that school has offered you. They can tell you about deadlines, paperwork you might need to submit, and other aid for which you might wish to apply.

To Explore:

- Use the College Scorecard at collegescorecard.ed.gov to compare schools' annual costs, graduation rates, and median salaries of individuals who attended.
- Try the career search at StudentAid.gov/careersearch if you're not sure what career you want.
- Ensure that you get your money's worth out of your career or technical education by following the tips in *Choose a Career School Carefully* at StudentAid.gov/resources#consumer-protection.
 - Learn about the different kinds of federal funding available for your education at StudentAid.gov/types.

SouthHills

School of Business & Technology

- ❑ Discover why federal student loans are frequently a better option than private loans by reading [StudentAid.gov/federal-vs-private](https://studentaid.gov/federal-vs-private).
- ❑ Use [StudentAid.gov/fafsa/next-steps/accept-aid](https://studentaid.gov/fafsa/next-steps/accept-aid) to help you determine which loans to accept and how much to borrow.
- ❑ Go to www.irs.gov and read *IRS Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education* to see how you might benefit from federal income tax credits for education expenses. Search for “Publication 970” from the IRS home page to find the most recent version of the document.