

High School Student & Parent To-Do List for the Summer BEFORE 12th Grade

Summary

Need information about going to school? Here is a checklist and areas to explore for both students and parents to help prepare academically and financially for an education after high school. Find out what you should be doing each year in high school and which publications or websites will be useful for you.

Students

To Do:

- Create FSA ID.** Create a username and password called an FSA ID. You'll use this to confirm your identity when accessing your government financial aid information. You'll also use it when electronically signing your federal student aid documents. You and your parent will *each* need your own unique FSA ID. Learn about the FSA ID, and create yours, at [StudentAid.gov/fsaid](https://studentaid.gov/fsaid).
 - **Note:** You must create your own FSA ID; if your parent creates it for you, it will cause confusion later and will slow down the financial aid application process.
- Narrow your list of colleges.** Narrow the list of colleges you are considering attending. If you can, visit the schools that interest you.
- Contact colleges.** Contact colleges to request information and applications for admission. Ask about financial aid, admission requirements, and deadlines.
- Decide on early action program.** Decide whether you are going to apply under the college's early decision or early action program. Be sure to learn about the program's deadlines and requirements.
- Apply for scholarships.** Your goal is to minimize the amount of loan funds you borrow so you have less to pay back later.

To Explore:

- Find out what government financial aid you can apply for, and how, in *Federal Student Aid at a Glance* at [StudentAid.gov/glance](https://studentaid.gov/glance).
- Watch the "Overview of the Financial Aid Process" video at www.YouTube.com/FederalStudentAid to learn about getting student aid from the government.
- Be careful when searching for scholarships. Read *Don't Get Scammed on Your Way to College!* at [StudentAid.gov/resources#consumer-protection](https://studentaid.gov/resources#consumer-protection) to learn how to avoid getting cheated out of money.

Parents

To Do:

- Create FSA ID.** Create your own FSA ID if you don't have one yet. Create a username and password called an FSA ID. You'll use it to confirm your identity when accessing your government financial aid information. You will also use it when electronically signing your federal student aid documents. You and your child will *each* need your own unique FSA ID. Learn about the FSA ID, and create yours, at [StudentAid.gov/fsaid](https://studentaid.gov/fsaid).
- Review your financial situation.** Review your finances and make sure your child is looking into or already has applied for scholarships.
- Ask about employer scholarships.** Ask your employer whether scholarships are available for employees' children.
- Ask about school choices.** Find out whether your child has added any schools to his or her college wish list since the last time you visited colleges. Visit additional campuses if possible.

To Explore:

- Take a closer look at [StudentAid.gov/types](https://studentaid.gov/types) and [StudentAid.gov/fafsa](https://studentaid.gov/fafsa) to ensure you understand the federal aid programs and upcoming application process.