

**[Instructions]**

## For students attending college in 2010-2011.

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is used by colleges to determine your Expected Family Contribution (or EFC). This guide's step-by-step instructions demystify the FAFSA, making it easy to understand and complete with confidence. Our expert guidance can help you get the best financial aid results.

### Guidelines:

- This FAFSA template should be used as a guide for completing the official FAFSA, which can be accessed at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. Be sure to get a PIN number for both the student and one parent so you can electronically sign the FAFSA.
- Before you begin, take a moment to gather the following financial records:
  - tax returns for the previous year
  - W-2 forms for the previous year
  - most recent bank statements
  - records of your investments

### How does the FAFSA work?

The FAFSA is required by every college. It is the gateway to need-based financial aid and is also used to establish your eligibility for supplementary loans offered by the federal government.

The FAFSA determines your Expected Family Contribution (EFC), the amount you will be expected to pay for one year of college. Colleges listed on your FAFSA will compare your EFC with their annual cost of attendance. If the EFC is less than the cost of attendance, that difference is your eligibility for need-based financial aid. If the EFC is more than the cost of the college, you will still be eligible to participate in federal and other loan programs to cover college costs.

### Why should I complete the FAFSA?

1. To see if you qualify for need-based financial aid and if so, how much.
2. To qualify for the largest amount of need-based aid the regulations permit.
3. To get in line early. When it comes to college, the best aid often goes to the people in the front of the line. Try to complete the FAFSA in early January each year.
4. To open your line of credit with the federal government so that you can borrow the money you might need to pay the EFC.
5. To create a "safety net" in the event that an unexpected occurrence such as loss of job, illness, death, divorce, or natural disaster, causes a change in your income or asset profile. A completed FAFSA allows the college's financial aid administrator to recalculate your EFC based on projected (instead of past) income and assets under these new conditions.

### Other Advice:

Even though the FAFSA people suggest that you call any prospective college in the event of unusual financial circumstances, we recommend that you wait until the student is admitted. The unwritten rule is, "Get into college first. Then share any financial difficulties with that college as an **admitted** student." **Be sure to check for any state-mandated filing deadlines.**

## STEP ONE - STUDENT INFORMATION

Remember, the questions in this section refer to the **student** only.

FAFSA QUESTION	EXPLANATION
<b>Your last name (1)</b>	Student's last name
<b>First name (2)</b>	Student's first name
<b>Middle initial (3)</b>	Insert middle initial – If none, leave blank
<b>Student's mailing address – Number and street including apartment number (4)</b>	Leave a space between the number and the name of the street.
<b>City and country if not the United States (5)</b>	Only list the country if it is not the United States.
<b>State (6)</b>	List the state of residence.
<b>Zip Code (7)</b>	List only the first 5 digits.
<b>Student's social security number (8)</b>	Get it right and check it twice. A "typo" can result in a paperwork nightmare!
<b>Date of birth (9)</b>	List the month, day and year.
<b>Your permanent telephone number (10)</b>	Use the main number to your house or apartment. Do not use cell phone numbers unless you have no "land line".
<b>Your Driver's License Number (11)</b>	This helps confirm the student's residence when dealing with public colleges.
<b>Driver's license state (12)</b>	See 11 above.
<b>Your (the student's email address (13)</b>	Putting it in will help with rapid communications between the processing center and the student or the colleges and the student. Hopefully, the email address is in reasonably good taste so that the colleges don't think you are deranged or perverse.
<b>Are you a U.S. Citizen? (14)</b>	<p>Eligible noncitizen includes anyone with an alien registration number or who has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· a Permanent Resident Card (I-551)</li> <li>· a conditional permanent resident (I-551C)</li> <li>· an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94) from the Department of Homeland Security showing any of the following designations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Refugee</li> <li>- Asylum Granted</li> <li>- Parolee (I-94) confirms paroled for a minimum of one year and status has not expired)</li> <li>- Victim of human trafficking</li> <li>- Cuban-Haitian Entrant.</li> <li>- T-Visa holder (T-1, T-2, T-3, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>If you are in the U.S. on an F1 or F2 student visa, a J1 or J2 exchange visitor visa, or a G series visa (pertaining to international organizations), you must check "Neither citizen nor eligible noncitizen."</p>

## STEP ONE (Continued) - STUDENT INFORMATION

	If you are neither a citizen nor an eligible non-citizen, you are not eligible for federal student aid. However, you may be eligible for state or college-based aid.
<b>Your Alien Registration Number. (15)</b>	Leave blank if it doesn't apply.
<b>What is your marital status as of today? (16)</b>	Student's marital status. There are some significant financial aid advantages for married students but there are some people who might suggest that here the cure may be worse than the disease!
<b>Month and year you were married, separated, divorced, or widowed. (17)</b>	Leave blank if single. If applicable, use month and year: e.g. 05/1998.
<b>Your state of legal residence. (18)</b>	Where does the student live?
<b>Did you become a resident of this state before January 1, 2005? (19)</b>	Indicate "Yes" or "No".
<b>If the answer to question 19 is "No", enter the month and year you became a legal resident. (20)</b>	Refers to your arrival in the state of residence. This date is used to qualify the student for in-state fees at public colleges.
<b>Are you male or female? (21)</b>	Hopefully, the answer is not unclear.
<b>Most male students must register with Selective Service to get federal aid. If you are a male, age of 18-25 and NOT registered, select "Register Me". (22)</b>	Female students leave this blank. This must be completed by male students who are 18 or will turn 18 during their freshman year at college. If you are 18 and not registered for Selective Service, or if you will turn 18 soon and fail to register or fail to allow the government to register you by not checking "Register Me", you will be ineligible for any federal financial aid. Even if you harbor strong anti-war feelings, this is not the place to declare it. First, get your degree and then make your case. More people will listen to you as a college graduate!
<b>Have you ever been convicted of possessing or selling illegal drugs for an offense that occurred while you were receiving federal student aid (grants, loans, and/or work-study)? (23)</b>	If you check "yes", you will be ineligible for federal and some state aid. Did someone say "double jeopardy"? For a more detailed account of how to answer in the event the student has been convicted of a drug offense, see the actual FAFSA. There are specific instructions following the question. Do not count convictions that have been removed from your record or occurred before you were 18 unless you were tried as an adult.
<b>Highest school your father completed (24)</b>	The operative word here is "completed". If a parent did not complete a 4-year college degree, check high school or less. If neither parent has a college degree, then the student is what is known as a "first-generation college student" which makes him/her eligible for certain additional aid programs.  If there is only one custodial parent, leave the other parent off the form in this question.
<b>Highest school your mother completed (25)</b>	Again, the operative word here is "completed". If a parent did not complete a 4-year college degree, check high school or less. If neither parent has a college degree, then the student is what is known as a "first-generation college student" which makes him/her eligible for certain special aid programs. See above, about non-custodial parents.
<b>When you begin college in the 2010-2011 school year, what will be your high school completion status? (26)</b>	Check the one that applies.
<b>Will you have your first bachelor's degree before July 1, 2010? (27)</b>	Answer "yes" or "no". If "yes", the student may qualify as an independent student and may not have to include parent information on the remainder of the form.
<b>When you begin the 2010-2011 school year, what will be your grade level? (28)</b>	If you have taken some random courses at a local community college while in high school and received high school credit for them, check "never attended college and first year undergraduate". If you indicate any college at all, the college you will be attending will want to check with the other college to see if you ever received financial aid of any kind. That may slow things down a bit.

## STEP ONE (Continued) – STUDENT INFORMATION

<b>When you begin college in the 2010-2011 school year, what degree or certificate will you be working on? (29)</b>	For new applicants, the correct answer is usually a 1st Bachelor's Degree. If you are applying to an occupational program or to a general education program as preparation for transfer to a four-year college, enter Associate Degree. Others should list as appropriate.
<b>When you begin the 2010-2011 school year, what do you expect your enrollment status to be? (30)</b>	Select "full-time" since it will help to qualify you for more aid. If you should change your mind, from a financial aid standpoint, it is always easier to reduce your class load later on than to increase it.
<b>In addition to grants, are you interested in being considered for work-study or student loans? (31)</b>	Check "Both Work-study and student loans". These are what is called "self-help" aid. The college is more willing to help a student with grants if the student indicates he or she is willing to help themselves. It is a character issue.
<b>Are you planning to complete course work necessary to become an elementary or secondary school teacher, either now or in the future? (32)</b>	If the answer is "yes", you may be eligible for a federal TEACH grant. More importantly, it may qualify you for one of the most important and (if you are really good at it) satisfying careers imaginable. Great teachers change lives every day and that change lasts forever.

## STEP TWO – (STUDENT)

Questions 33-58 are about you, the student. If you are single, separated, divorced or widowed, answer only about yourself. If you are married, include information about your husband or wife.

<b>For 2009. Have you (the student) completed your IRS income tax return or another tax return listed in question 34? (33)</b>	You have probably not completed your return or you won't file because you didn't make enough money. Check the appropriate box. REMEMBER, you don't have to complete a tax form to complete and file a FAFSA. The idea is to get the FAFSA in as early as possible to establish your place in the college's financial aid line. You can make corrections later on without losing your place in line.
<b>What income tax return did you file or will you file in 2009? (34)</b>	For student tax filers only. Unless you have outside income or a business, you probably filed a 1040A or 1040EZ.
<b>If you filed or will file a 1040, were you eligible to file a 1040A or 1040EZ? (35)</b>	If you check "don't know" on the FAFSA online application, it will answer the question for you. If you need further clarification, see the detailed explanation on the actual FAFSA form.
	<b>For questions 36-45, if the answer is zero or does not apply to you, enter 0. Report whole dollars and no cents.</b>
<b>What was your (and your spouse's) adjusted gross income in 2009? (36)</b>	This is for tax filers only. Enter either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· line 37 of the 1040</li> <li>· or line 21 of form 1040A</li> <li>· or line 4 of form 1040EZ</li> </ul> If you haven't filed an income tax, use last year's return and/or use a recent pay stub to make an estimate.
<b>Enter your (and spouse's) income tax for 2009. (37)</b>	Tax filers only. If you have filed, use line 56 on form 1040; line 35 on form 1040A or line 11 on form 1040EZ. If you haven't completed a tax form make an estimate from a tax schedule or use last year's (2008) tax return as a guide.
<b>Enter your (and spouse's) exemptions for 2009. (38)</b>	If you are a dependent, don't take the exemption. Your parents will probably benefit more if they list you as their exemption. If you make more than your parents or if you are an independent student, then you probably should list the exemption as "1". If you are married, list "2" and for each child add 1 more exemption. The number can be found on IRS Form 1040 & 1040A on line 6d and the worksheet on the 1040EZ tax form.
<b>The next two questions ask about earnings and wages for 2009. Answer the questions whether you filed a tax return or not.</b>	You can get this information from W-2 forms or IRS Forms 1040. Lines 7, 12 & 18 and Box 14 of Schedule K-1 (Form 1065); 1040A, line 7 or 1040EZ, line 1.

## STEP TWO (Continued) – (STUDENT)

<p><b>How much did you (the student) earn from working in 2009? (39)</b></p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p><b>How much did your spouse earn from working in 2009? (40)</b></p>	<p>If not married, enter a "0". See above if the spouse worked in 2009.</p>
<p><b>As of today, what is your (and your spouse's) total current balance of cash, savings and checking accounts? (41)</b></p>	<p>Enter a reasonable estimate of you current amounts. Remember, the amount you list here and below may decrease your eligibility for need-based financial aid by up to 20% of the value you report as a dependent and considerably more if an independent student. Report a typical amount that remains after you have taken care of any normal monthly payments.</p> <p>If you intend to spend a large part of this money on something other than college, you should do it before submitting this form. You must tell the truth on the form.</p> <p>Never include any money from student financial aid in this question.</p>
<p><b>As of today, what is the net worth of your (and your spouse's) investments, including real estate (not your home)? Net worth means current value minus debt. (42)</b></p>	<p>For most dependent students, this number is low or zero. Students who own stocks or bonds outright must list their total net value. Net value means that if you have to liquidate the assets to use it, you can lower its value by any tax or early withdrawal penalty, capital gains taxes and/or brokers fees. If the asset is in a custodial account for the student who may not access the asset without custodial permission, the asset may be listed as a parent asset rather than a student asset.</p> <p>UTMAs and UGMAs in the name of the student must be listed here only if the student is an independent student. For dependent students, the UTMA or UGMA is considered a parent investment even if the student is the beneficiary or even the owner according to the U.S. Department of Education. UTMAs and UGMAs, therefore, should be included as a parent investment in Step Four (Parent Information) (90).</p> <p>Do not list 529 plans here even if the student is the beneficiary unless the student is independent and actually holds title to the 529 plan. Then it must be listed as a student asset.</p> <p>If the student is named in a trust but can only use the income, you don't have to list the value of the trust here.</p> <p>If the student owns all or part of any property (not including the home the student lives in), list his/her share of the net value here. This is very important information that can have a profound impact on the cost of college. It is best to have a good student intellectually and a very poor one financially.</p>
<p><b>As of today, what is the net worth of your (and your spouse's) business and/or investment farms? (43)</b></p>	<p>If the student actually owns a business that employs 100 full-time workers or the equivalent, it should be listed here. If your family actually lives on the farm that you, the student, owns, you can omit its value here.</p>

## STUDENT'S 2009 ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION (44)

Enter the combined amounts for you (the student) and your spouse if married. Entries in this question will be used to offset the impact of the adjusted gross income and will likely increase eligibility for need-based financial aid.

**a. Education credits (Hope and Lifetime Learning tax credits) from IRS Form 1040—line 50 or 1040A—line 31**

Independent students may be able to get money back by qualifying for these tax credits, which are linked to out-of-pocket costs for the first few thousand dollars paid to a college. The first two years of undergraduate work fall under the Hope Scholarship Tax Credit. Thereafter, credits are linked to a percentage of out-of-pocket costs in a program called the Lifetime Learning Tax Credit. The tax savings could be significant over the course of one's career in higher education. IRS Form 8863 and the accompanying instructions is a good, up-to-date source of specific information. For dependent students, this credit is usually claimed by the parent or guardian.

## STUDENT'S 2009 ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION (44) (Continued)

<p><b>b. Child support (you) paid because of divorce or separation or as a result of a legal requirement. Don't include support for children in your household as reported in question 94.</b></p>	<p>While you can't include support for children in your household here, you could make a case to your financial aid officer that child support payments impact your ability to afford college. If you are legally required to defer some of your income to a third party like a child living with a former spouse, a college financial aid administrator might consider increasing your financial aid.</p>
<p><b>c. Taxable earnings from need-based employment programs, such as Federal Work-Study and need-based employment portions of fellowships and assistantships.</b></p>	<p>It is important to list those amounts here. Listing the student's total income from work-study or fellowships automatically reduces the reported student adjusted gross income by that amount. This will ensure that you qualify for the maximum financial aid possible during the next academic year since it removes need-based aid earnings from the reported income of the student.</p>
<p><b>d. Student grant and scholarship aid reported to the IRS in your (or your parents') adjusted gross income. Includes AmeriCorps benefits (awards, living allowances, and interest accrual payments), as well as grant or scholarship portions of fellowships and assistantships.</b></p>	<p>You do not have to report any scholarships or grants on your income tax UNLESS they exceed the total cost of college. Then, you should report that <b>excess</b> here. Remember, to enter only the amount in excess of the total student budget which includes living expenses and fees.</p>
<p><b>e. Combat Pay or special combat pay</b></p>	<p>Only enter the amount that was taxable and included in your adjusted gross income. Combat pay is reported on the W-2 in Box 12, Code Q.</p>
<p><b>f. Earnings from work under a cooperative education program offered by the college.</b></p>	<p>These programs are for ongoing college students who will know what this means and the amounts to enter.</p>

## STUDENT'S UNTAXED INCOME. (45)

(Enter combined income for both the student and spouse)

<p><b>a. Payments to tax-deferred pension and savings plans (paid directly or withheld from earnings), including, but not limited to, amounts reported on the W-2 Form in Boxes 12a through 12d, codes D, E, F, G, H, and S.</b></p>	<p>Refer to your last W-2. Total the amounts in the listed boxes and codes.</p>
<p><b>b. IRA deductions and payments to self-employed SEP, SIMPLE, and Keogh and other qualified plans from IRS Form 1040—line 28 + line 32 or 1040A—line 17</b></p>	<p>If your taxes are not done yet, use last year's tax return to make an estimate. These tax-free contributions to your personal retirement plan will raise the cost of college slightly. Nonetheless, we STRONGLY urge that you continue to contribute the maximum amount every year. Remember the mantra, "You can always borrow for college, but you can never borrow for retirement!"</p>
<p><b>c. Child support you received for all children. Don't include foster care or adoption payments.</b></p>	<p>Be sure to list this amount as a <b>parent's</b> untaxed benefit, not the student's unless the student is also a parent and receiving support for his/her child.</p>
<p><b>d. Tax exempt interest income from IRS Form 1040—line 8b or 1040A—line 8b</b></p>	<p>Refer to last year's tax return for an estimate. This kind of income often comes from municipal bonds, a long-term, tax-free investment.</p>
<p><b>e. Untaxed portions of IRA distributions from IRS Form 1040—lines (15a minus 15b) or 1040A—lines (11a minus 11b).</b></p>	<p>Exclude rollovers. If negative, enter a zero.</p>
<p><b>f. Untaxed portions of pensions from IRS Form 1040—lines (16a minus 16b) or 1040A—lines (12a minus 12b).</b></p>	<p>Exclude rollovers. If negative, enter a zero here.</p>

## STUDENT'S UNTAXED INCOME. (45) (Continued)

<p><b>g. Housing, food, and other living allowances paid to members of the military, clergy, and others (including cash payments and cash value of benefits).</b></p>	<p>Subsidized housing and living allowances can substantially reduce financial aid. The government will assume that since housing and basic living costs are covered, the family can devote more of their remaining income to pay for college.</p> <p><b>Do Not include</b> the value of on-base military housing or the value of basic military allowance for housing.</p>
<p><b>h. Veterans' noneducation benefits such as Disability, Death Pension, or Dependency &amp; Indemnity Compensation (DIC), and/or VA Educational Work-Study allowances.</b></p>	<p>These may be used to reduce the eligibility for need-based financial aid.</p>
<p><b>i. Other untaxed income not reported, such as workers' compensation, disability, etc.</b></p>	<p>As the instructions suggest, these amounts are the untaxed part of any taxable benefits in the list.</p> <p>Don't include student aid, earned income credit, additional tax child credit, welfare payments, untaxed Social Security benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Workforce Investment Act educational benefits, combat pay, benefits from flexible spending arrangements (e.g. cafeteria plans), foreign income exclusion or credit for special tax on special fuels.</p>
<p><b>j. Money received, or paid on your behalf (e.g., bills), not reported elsewhere on this form</b></p>	<p>Students only. Report only money that was paid on your behalf. If the amount is significant, you may consider structuring it as a loan. That way you don't have to report it here or anywhere else.</p>

## STEP THREE (STUDENT)

Answer all questions in this step to determine if you will need to provide parental information. If you have any "yes" answers, the financial aid system will consider you to be an independent student and you will not need to provide any further information about your parents contained in Step Four.

<p><b>Were you born before January 1, 1987? (46)</b></p>	<p>"Yes" or "No".</p>
<p><b>As of today, are you married? (47)</b></p>	<p>If you are separated, answer "Yes".</p>
<p><b>At the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year, will you be working on a master's or doctorate program (such as an MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, EdD, graduate certificate, etc.)? (48)</b></p>	<p>Say "Yes" if any apply.</p>
<p><b>Are you currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training? (49)</b></p>	<p>Answer "Yes" if you are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces or are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee who is on active duty for other than state or training purposes.</p> <p>Answer "No" if you are a National Guard or Reserves enlistee who is on active duty for state or training purposes.</p>
<p><b>Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces? (50)</b></p>	<p>Answer "Yes" if you have engaged in active duty for other than training purposes or were a cadet at one of the service academies AND were released under a condition other than dishonorable. Also answer "Yes" if you are not a veteran but will be one by June 30, 2011.</p>
<p><b>Do you have children who will receive more than half of their support from you between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011? (51)</b></p>	<p>This fact is typically confirmed by your claiming a child as an exemption on your tax form.</p>

### STEP THREE (STUDENT) (Continued)

<p><b>Do you have dependents (other than your children or spouse) who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you now and through June 30, 2011? (52)</b></p>	<p>Sometimes these dependents appear on your tax return. If they do not, be prepared to offer documentary proof later on. In the absence of any other "Yes" answers in this section, the colleges are likely to require some evidence of their dependency upon you.</p>
<p><b>At any time since you turned age 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care or were you a dependent or ward of the court? (53)</b></p>	<p>The financial aid officer at the college is likely to require some proof if you answer this question with a "Yes".</p>
<p><b>Are you or were you an emancipated minor as determined by a court in your state of legal residence? (54)</b></p>	<p>If you answer "Yes", you should be prepared to furnish a copy of the court's decision to the financial aid officer at the college.</p>
<p><b>Are you or were you in legal guardianship as determined by a court in your state of legal residence? (55)</b></p>	<p>A "Yes" will require proof.</p>
<p><b>At any time on or after July 1, 2009, did your high school or school district homeless liaison determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless? (56)</b></p>	<p>"Homeless" means lacking fixed, regular and adequate housing which includes living in shelters, motels, cars or temporary living with other people because you had nowhere to go. This is the saddest and most troubling question on the FAFSA.</p> <p>"Unaccompanied" means you are not living in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.</p> <p>"Youth" means that you are 21 years of age or younger and you are still enrolled in high school at the time of this application.</p>
<p><b>At any time on or after July 1, 2009, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless? (57)</b></p>	<p>See definitions for (56) above.</p>
<p><b>At any time on or after July 1, 2009, did the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determine that you were an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or were self-supporting and at risk of being homeless? (58)</b></p>	<p>See definitions above and be prepared to show proof of your claim if asked for it by a college.</p>
	<p><b>If you, the student, answered "No" to every question in Step Three, go to Step Four. If you answered "Yes" to any question in Step Three, <u>skip Step Four and go to Step Five.</u></b></p>

### STEP FOUR (PARENT INFORMATION)

**SPECIAL NOTE TO PARENTS:** Do not let your student complete this step without your supervision. Better yet, don't let your student near this in your absence. You should complete this and probably everything else on the FAFSA!

Complete this step if you, the student, answered "No" to all questions in Step Three. Answer all the questions in Step Four about your parents even if you do not live with them. Grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, aunts and uncles are not considered parents on this form unless they have legally adopted you. If your parent is single, widowed, divorced, separated or remarried, only include the one parent who is responsible for your support. The typical litmus test for that reality is the parent claiming you, the student, as an exemption on the parent's income tax. If the custodial parent has remarried, the stepparent's information is also required in this Step.

## STEP FOUR (PARENT INFORMATION) (Continued)

<p><b>What is your parents' marital status as of today? (59)</b></p>	<p>There are some clear advantages to being separated or divorced under the rules governing financial aid so if you are thinking about dissolving a marriage, you might want to consider doing it now, before completing this form. It is a good deal more pleasant than trying to create a preemptive status of widowed. If you are separated or divorced, you may want to consider having the less affluent of the former spouses complete this part of the FAFSA. That may also involve a shifting of exemptions to the parent claiming to be the custodial parent. This is pretty tricky stuff, so you should proceed with caution.</p>
<p><b>Month and year, the parents were married, separated, divorced or widowed. (60)</b></p>	<p>Indicate the month and year in the spaces.</p>

## What are the Social Security Numbers, names and dates of birth of the parents reporting information on this form?

LIST CUSTODIAL PARENTS ONLY! Only one parent should be listed for single, separated, divorced and widowed parents. If the parent is remarried, the stepparent must be listed here.

<p><b>Father/Stepfather's social security number. (61)</b></p>	<p>If there is no father or stepfather, leave this question blank. If there is no social security number, enter 000-00-0000.</p>
<p><b>Father/Stepfather's last name. (62)</b></p>	<p>If it doesn't apply, leave it blank.</p>
<p><b>Father/Stepfather's middle initial. (63)</b></p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p><b>Father/Stepfather's date of birth. (64)</b></p>	<p>Use two digits for month, day and the last two digits of the year. (e.g., for may 31, 1960, enter 05 31 60). If it doesn't apply, leave blank.</p>
<p><b>Mother/Stepmother social security number. (65)</b></p>	<p>If there is no mother or stepmother, leave this question blank. If there is no social security number, enter 000-00-0000.</p>
<p><b>Mother/Stepmother last name. (66)</b></p>	<p>If it doesn't apply, leave blank.</p>
<p><b>Mother/Stepmother middle initial. (67)</b></p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p><b>Mother/Stepmother date of birth. (68)</b></p>	<p>Use two digits for month, day and the last two digits of the year. (e.g., for May 31, 1960, enter 05 31 60). If it doesn't apply, leave blank.</p>
<p><b>Your Parents' e-mail address. (69)</b></p>	<p>You should provide this since it will improve communications between the financial aid system and the parents. When parents are fully in the information loop, things tend to go much more smoothly and rapidly.</p>
<p><b>What is your parents' state of legal residence? (70)</b></p>	<p>Indicate the state. It is helpful when the state of legal residence for the student and parent match (see question 18).</p>
<p><b>Did your parents become legal residents of this state before January 1, 2005? (71)</b></p>	<p>This helps to establish residency requirements for a number of state-sponsored programs. This too should agree with the student's claim of residency in question 19.</p>
<p><b>If the answer to question is "No", give the month and year legal residency began for the parent who has lived in the state the longest. (72)</b></p>	<p>Fill in the appropriate month and year.</p>

<p><b>How many people are there in your parents' household? (73)</b></p>	<p>Count you, the student, your parents, other children and other people for whom your parents will provide over 50% of their support between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. The more, the merrier. Big households can raise the eligibility limits for certain financial aid programs.</p>
<p><b>How many people in your parents' household in the question above will be college students between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011? (74)</b></p>	<p>List the total attending college at least half time including the student completing this form. The more the better since the number you enter here will divide the EFC by that number. For instance, if your EFC is \$20,000, if you have two in college and enter "2" here, the EFC for this student will be about \$10,000. Under the current rules, parents can not be listed if they are attending college. However, if a parent must attend college for retraining or to satisfy a term of their employment, it would be possible to negotiate to allow for another family member in college with the college your student will attend. If a parent is a half or full time student, he or she should also consider completing a FAFSA as an independent student with dependents in college. There is a possible large financial upside in doing this.</p>

**In 2008 or 2009, did you, the student, your parents or anyone in your parents' household (from question (73)) receive benefits from any of the federal benefits programs listed?**

Mark the programs that apply. Answering these questions will not reduce your eligibility for student aid or for the listed benefits.

<p><b>Check only those programs that apply in questions (75-79)</b></p>	<p>If the program does not apply, leave blank.</p>
<p><b>For 2009, have your parents completed their IRS income tax return or another tax return listed in question 81? (80)</b></p>	<p>List as appropriate. For most of you, the proper answer will be "My parents will file..." DO NOT WAIT UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR INCOME TAX BEFORE COMPLETING THE FAFSA. Make estimates so you can establish your place in the financial aid line. Families at the front of the line typically get better awards than those at the end. You can always make corrections later on without losing your place in line. So if you have to choose between timely filing or accurate filing, always opt for earlier, timely filing. If you choose "My parents are not going to file", skip to question 87.</p>
<p><b>What income tax return did your parents file or will they file for 2009? (81)</b></p>	<p>Simply look at last year's tax return. You will most likely be completing the same form this year.</p>
<p><b>If your parents have filed or will file a 1040, were they eligible to file a 1040A or 1040EZ? (82)</b></p>	<p>You are eligible to file a 1040A or EZ if you make less than \$100,000, do not itemize deductions, do not receive income from your own business or farm and do not receive alimony. If you filed a 1040 only to receive a Hope or Lifetime Learning tax credit, you should answer "yes" to this question assuming you meet the rest of the conditions.</p>
<p><b>As of today is either of your parents a dislocated worker? (83)</b></p>	<p>To be clear, we have inserted the exact language contained in the FAFSA instructions:</p> <p>"In general, a person may be considered a dislocated worker if he or she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· is receiving unemployment benefits due to being laid off or losing a job and is unlikely to return to a previous occupation;</li> <li>· has been laid off or received a lay-off notice from a job;</li> <li>· was self-employed but is now unemployed due to economic conditions or natural disaster; or</li> <li>· is a displaced homemaker. A displaced homemaker is generally a person who previously provided unpaid services to the family (e.g., a stay-at-home mom or dad), is no longer supported by the husband or wife, is unemployed or underemployed, and is having trouble finding or upgrading employment.</li> </ul> <p>If a person quits work, generally he or she is not considered a dislocated worker even if, for example, the person is receiving unemployment benefits.</p>

	If you are still uncertain, you can answer "Don't know" and contact the financial aid office at your student's college for assistance.
	<b>For questions 84-93, if the answer is zero or the question does not apply, enter 0. Report whole dollar amounts with no cents.</b>
<b>What was your parents' adjusted gross income in 2009? (84)</b>	This is for tax filers only. Enter either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· line 37 of the 1040</li> <li>· or line 21 of form 1040A</li> <li>· or line 4 of form 1040EZ</li> </ul> If you haven't filed an income tax, use last year's return and/or use a recent pay stub to make an estimate.
<b>Enter your parents' income tax for 2009? (85)</b>	Tax filers only. If you have filed, use line 56 on form 1040; line 35 on form 1040A or line 11 on form 1040EZ. If you haven't completed a tax form make an estimate from a tax schedule or use last year's (2008) tax return as a guide.
<b>Enter your parents' exemptions for 2009. (86)</b>	Unless there was a very unexpected event over the last 12 months, your exemptions will be the same as they were in 2008.

**The next two questions ask about parents' earnings and wages for 2009. Answer the questions whether you filed a tax return or not.**

You can get this information from W-2 forms or IRS Forms 1040. Lines 7, 12 & 18 and Box 14 of Schedule K-1 (Form 1065); 1040A, line 7 or 1040EZ, line 1. **Remember, only include the custodial parent or parents.**

<b>How much did your father/stepfather earn from working in 2009? (87)</b>	See above. Custodial parent only. Use a "0" if it doesn't apply.
<b>How much did your mother/step-mother earn from working in 2009? (88)</b>	See above. Custodial parent only. Use a "0" if it doesn't apply.
<b>As of today, what is your parents' total current balance of cash, savings and checking accounts? (89)</b>	Colleges are not interested in taking food off the family's table or removing the roof from over your head. The best way to answer this is to report the typical balance remaining in these accounts AFTER ALL OF THE NORMAL MONTHLY BILLS HAVE BEEN PAID. (No, you can't report a negative value!) It is that amount that is actually available to colleges. Enter a reasonable estimate. Remember, the amount you list here and below may decrease your eligibility for need-based financial aid by about 5.6% of the value you report.  If you intend to spend a large part of this money on something other than college, you should do it before submitting this form. You must tell the truth on the FAFSA.  Never include any money from student financial aid in this question.
<b>As of today, what is the net worth of your parents' investments, including real estate (not your home)? Net worth means current value minus debt. (90)</b>  <b>DO NOT LIST ANY RETIREMENT ASSETS HERE!</b>	Net value means that if you have to liquidate the assets to use it, you can lower its value by any tax or early withdrawal penalty, capital gains taxes and/or brokers fees. If the asset is in a custodial account for the student who may not access the asset without custodial permission, the asset may and should be listed as a parent asset rather than a student asset.  For dependent students, the UTMA or UGMA is considered a parent investment even if the student is the beneficiary or even the owner according to the U.S. Department of Education. UTMAs and UGMAs, therefore, should be included here as a parent investment.  Do not list 529 plans here even if the student is the beneficiary unless the student is

	<p>independent and actually holds title to the 529 plan. Then it must be listed as a student asset.</p> <p>If you have real estate other than your home, you should use the commercial property calculator on TuitionCoach to get a value of that property based upon a national average. If the calculated value is lower than the local market value, use the calculated value. Then reduce that amount by any mortgages or other obligations against the property. That final tally should be the reported value of the commercial or rented property. If you own only a part of the property, list your share of the total value and debt.</p>
<p><b>As of today, what is the net worth of your parents' business and/or investment farms? (91)</b></p>	<p>If the parent(s) own a business that employs 100 full-time workers or the equivalent, it should be listed here. List the value of the land, machinery, equipment and inventory and reduce that amount by any debt against those assets. Don't brag! If your family actually lives on a farm that your parents own, you can omit its value here.</p>

## Parents' 2009 Additional Financial Information (92)

Enter the amounts for your parents. Custodial parents only.

<p><b>a. Education credits (Hope and Lifetime Learning tax credits) from IRS Form 1040—line 50 or 1040A—line 31</b></p>	<p>Parents may be able to get money back by qualifying for these tax credits, which are linked to out-of-pocket costs for the first few thousand dollars paid to a college. The first two years of undergraduate work fall under the Hope Scholarship Tax Credit. Thereafter, credits are linked to a percentage of out-of-pocket costs in a program called the Lifetime Learning Tax Credit. The tax savings could be significant over the course of one's career in higher education. IRS Form 8863 and the accompanying instructions is a good, up-to-date source of specific information.</p>
<p><b>b. Child support (you) paid because of divorce or separation or as a result of a legal requirement. Don't include support for children in your household as reported in question 73.</b></p>	<p>While you can't include support for children in your household here, you could make a case to your financial aid officer that child support payments impact your ability to afford college. If you are legally required to defer some of your income to a third party like a child living with a former spouse, a college financial aid administrator might consider increasing your financial aid.</p>
<p><b>c. Your parents' taxable earnings from need-based employment programs, such as Federal Work-Study and need-based employment portions of fellowships and assistantships.</b></p>	<p>This is probably an entry for the student and not the parent and as such it should have been listed on 44c. Listing the student's total income from work-study or fellowships entered on 44c automatically reduces the reported student adjusted gross income by that amount. This will ensure that you qualify for the maximum financial aid possible during the next academic year since it removes need-based aid earnings from the reported income of the student.</p>
<p><b>d. Student grant and scholarship aid reported to the IRS in your parents' adjusted gross income. Includes AmeriCorps benefits (awards, living allowances, and interest accrual payments), as well as grant or scholarship portions of fellowships and assistantships.</b></p>	<p>This is a student question and not a parent question unless the parent is in college as well. You do not have to report any scholarships or grants on your income tax UNLESS they exceed the total cost of college. Then, if you were the grant recipient, you should report that <b>excess</b> here as well.</p>
<p><b>e. Combat Pay or special combat pay.</b></p>	<p>Only enter the amount that was taxable and included in your adjusted gross income. Combat pay is reported on the W-2 in Box 12, Code Q.</p>
<p><b>f. Earnings from work under a cooperative education program offered by the college.</b></p>	<p>Probably not relevant for the parent.</p>

## Parents 2009 Untaxed Income. (93)

Enter the amounts for your parents. Custodial parents only.

<p><b>a. Payments to tax-deferred pension and savings plans (paid directly or withheld from earnings), including, but not limited to, amounts reported on the W-2 Form in Boxes 12a through 12d, codes D, E, F, G, H, and S.</b></p>	<p>Refer to your last W-2. Total the amounts in the listed boxes and codes.</p>
<p><b>b. IRA deductions and payments to self-employed SEP, SIMPLE, and Keogh and other qualified plans from IRS Form 1040—line 28 + line 32 or 1040A—line 17</b></p>	<p>If your taxes are not done yet, use last year's tax return to make an estimate. These tax-free contributions to your personal retirement plan will raise the cost of college slightly. Nonetheless we STRONGLY urge that you continue to contribute the maximum amount every year. Remember the mantra, "You can always borrow for college, but you can never borrow for retirement!"</p>
<p><b>c. Child support you received for all children. Don't include foster care or adoption payments.</b></p>	<p>Be sure to list this amount as a <b>parent's</b> untaxed benefit, not the student's unless the student is also a parent and receiving support for his/her child.</p>
<p><b>d. Tax exempt interest income from IRS Form 1040—line 8b or 1040A—line 8b</b></p>	<p>Refer to last year's tax return for an estimate. This kind of income often comes from municipal bonds, a long-term, tax-free investment.</p>
<p><b>e. Untaxed portions of IRA distributions from IRS Form 1040—lines (15a minus 15b) or 1040A—lines (11a minus 11b).</b></p>	<p>Exclude rollovers. If negative, enter a zero.</p>
<p><b>f. Untaxed portions of pensions from IRS Form 1040—lines (15a minus 15b) or 1040A—lines (12a minus 12b).</b></p>	<p>Exclude rollovers. If negative, enter a zero here.</p>
<p><b>g. Housing, food, and other living allowances paid to members of the military, clergy, and others (including cash payments and cash value of benefits)</b></p>	<p>Subsidized housing and living allowances can substantially reduce financial aid. The government will assume that since housing and basic living costs are covered, the family can devote more of their remaining income to pay for college. Don't include the value of on-base military housing or the value of a basic military allowance for housing.</p>
<p><b>h. Veterans' noneducation benefits such as Disability, Death Pension, or Dependency &amp; Indemnity Compensation (DIC), and/or VA Educational Work-Study allowances</b></p>	<p>These may be used to reduce the eligibility for need-based financial aid.</p>
<p><b>i. Other untaxed income not reported, such as workers' compensation, disability, etc.</b></p>	<p>As the instructions suggest, these amounts are the untaxed part of any taxable benefits in the list.</p> <p>Don't include student aid, workforce Investment Act educational benefits, or benefits from flexible spending arrangements (e.g. cafeteria plans).</p>
<p><b>j. Money received, or paid on your behalf (e.g., bills), not reported elsewhere on this form.</b></p>	<p>Report only money that was paid on your behalf. If the amount is significant, you may consider structuring it as a loan. That way you don't have to report it here or anywhere else.</p>

## STEP FIVE (STUDENT): INDEPENDENT STUDENTS ONLY!

Complete this step only if you, the student, answered "Yes" to any questions in Step Three. If you answered "No" to all the questions in Step Three, skip Step Five and go directly to Step Six.

<b>How many people are in your household? (94)</b>	Count you, the student, plus a spouse and children and anyone else in the household for whom you, the <b>student</b> , provides 50% or more financial support from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010.
<b>How many people in the question above will be college students between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011? (95)</b>	List the total attending college at least half time including you.
<b>In 2008 or 2009, did you (or your spouse) or anyone in your household (from 94) receive benefits from any of the federal benefit programs listed? (96-100)</b>	Mark all that apply. TANF may have a different name in your state. You can call 1-800-4-FED-AID to find out the name of your state's program.
<b>As of today, are you (or your spouse) a dislocated worker? (101)</b>	See the definition above for question 83. Generally it refers to a laid-off worker or unemployed even as a self-employed worker who has no income because of economic conditions or a natural disaster or a housewife who is no longer supported by her spouse.

## STEP SIX (STUDENT)

Indicate which colleges you want to receive your FAFSA information. It would be a good idea to list them in order of preference. In this step, you can only list the top four but you can list many more if you complete the FAFSA online. There is a protocol for adding colleges both for paper FAFSA completion and online. Those instructions are listed on the FAFSA website. [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

<b>Federal School Code or Name and State of the college. (102a,c,e,g)</b>	Enter the six-digit school code of each college you are applying to or college you will be attending. You can find school codes at <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a> or you can call 1-800-4-FED-AID. Your high school or college also has a list of school codes. You can also just list the name and state of the colleges or you can do both.
<b>Housing Plans (102b, d, f, h)</b>	Indicate where the student will live during the college year. We think it is a good idea to live on campus for at least one year. Living on campus makes education a 24/7 experience with learning and social activities going on all the time. For very low income families who think they may save money by having their students live at home, you may want to think again. When students live at home, the parent picks up the tab; when they live at the college, often the financial aid system picks up the tab plus the education experience is usually a more comprehensive, rewarding experience.
<b>Date this form was completed. (103)</b>	Indicate the date you actually completed the form. Everything else being equal the sooner the better!
<b>Student sign below. (104.1)</b>	Student must sign the FAFSA. If you complete the FAFSA online, you must get a PIN number in order to sign the form and to access the data throughout the FAFSA process. Simply go to <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a> to get a PIN number.
<b>Parent sign below. (104.2)</b>	If the student is a dependent, one parent must sign the form. Go to <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a> to get a PIN number if you complete the FAFSA online.
<b>Preparer's Social Security Number (for 106) (105)</b>	If you have paid a person to complete the paper FAFSA for you, you must provide the data for 105-107. Enter his/her social security number.
<b>Employer ID (for 105) (106)</b>	If none, leave blank.
<b>Preparer's signature and date. (107)</b>	Have the person sign and date as appropriate. I think it is safe to suggest that colleges generally don't like outside "experts" preparing FAFSA forms.

## STEP SIX (STUDENT) (Continued)

After submitting the FAFSA, you will be receiving a Student Aid Report that will review what you have submitted and will provide you with:

Your EFC or Expected Family Contribution, the amount you will be expected to pay for one year of college;

An opportunity to review the FAFSA and make any corrections in the data which will trigger a new EFC and a new SAR;

A chance to add or delete colleges on your list of FAFSA recipient schools.