

Stuff I Need for FAFSA Checklist

IMPORTANT: Any information about assets is referring to what you have available the day you submit your FAFSA. (So don't scratch your lottery tickets until after you complete the form!)

Meanwhile, the income/tax information being asked for is from two years ago.

Example: if you're filling out the FAFSA in October 2021 to go to college for the 2022-2023 school year, that FAFSA form needs 2020 tax information.

I know this likely seems confusing, but I promise it makes a weird sort of sense in the financial aid world. This change was to assist students and families to complete their financial aid sooner. If you're still unsure, the FAFSA form itself tells you which year's taxes it needs when you get to those questions.

Student Checklist:

- Your Social Security Number (or Alien Registration Number if you are not a U.S. citizen)
- Your federal income tax returns, W-2s, and other records of money earned.
 - If you didn't work at all, this doesn't apply to you.
 - If you worked but didn't file taxes, then just have a rough idea (to the nearest \$100) how much you made that year.
 - If you did file taxes, you still likely won't need these documents as long as you can use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, but it's good to have them handy just in case.
- Some numbers:
 - Your driver's license number (if you have one)
 - How much money you have in cash/savings/checking
 - How much you have in investments (stocks, bonds, investments, etc)
- Your FSA (Federal Student Aid) ID
- List of colleges you're applying to

Parent Checklist:

- Your (and your current spouse's) Social Security Number (or Alien Registration Number if you are not a U.S. citizen), if applicable
 - Note: Parents' legal status has nothing to do with a student's eligibility for federal aid. It does impact state aid/tuition determination, but not federal.
- Your federal income tax returns, W-2s, and other records of money earned.
 - You likely won't need your full tax return as long as you can use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, but it's good to have handy just in case, especially for the "untaxed income" section.

- In order to use the IRS DRT, you'll need to know the address you would have listed on the tax form for the year the FAFSA is asking about. It needs to be exact (i.e., it won't accept "Middle Creek Rd" if the tax return says "Middle Creek Road") so it's helpful to know in advance to avoid the stress of multiple attempts.
- If you are married and filed jointly, I would have your and your spouse's W-2s (or other income information) on hand as the FAFSA asks for a breakdown of income by parent.
- More numbers (You don't need the documentation, just the numbers):
 - Your month and year of marriage/divorce
 - How much money you have in cash/savings/checking
 - How much you have in investments (stocks, bonds, investments, real estate that is not your primary residence, etc)
 - If you own a business with more than 100 employees or an investment farm, you'll need to approximate the value.
 - Information about other types of income like child support (paid/received), veterans benefits, retirement distributions, etc.
- Your FSA ID