

NEW YORK FINANCIAL AID CHECKLIST

Follow these steps in your senior year of high school to apply for financial aid. Deadlines vary so complete the steps when you can, even if it's passed the suggested timing.

PREPARE

SEPTEMBER

☐ **Make college list**

Work with your advisor/counselor to identify and apply to at least one [financially safer school](#) — a college that you're likely to be accepted to and able to afford.

☐ **Create FSA ID**

Username and password that all students and their parent(s) must create to start the FAFSA.

- Watch [How to Create a Username & Password \(FSA ID\)](#)
- Create an FSA ID at studentaid.gov

APPLY

OCTOBER – DECEMBER

☐ **Submit FAFSA
or NYS DREAM
Act Application**

Available by October 1st, 2025, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required by all colleges, universities, and technical programs for eligible students to apply for financial aid. The NYS DREAM Act Application allows undocumented and other eligible students to apply for NY state and institutional aid.

- Watch [FAFSA Overview](#)
- Collect information needed using the [FAFSA/TAP Checklist](#)
- Fill out and submit your FAFSA at fafsa.gov and NYS DREAM Act Application at hesc.ny.gov/dream

☐ **Submit CSS
Profile**

Required by some private colleges for students to apply for financial aid directly from the college.

- Visit cssprofile.collegeboard.org to see if your college(s) require the CSS Profile and to submit the application
- Collect information needed using the [CSS Profile Checklist](#)

☐ **Submit NYS
TAP Application**

The NYS TAP Application is required in order to receive any NYS TAP funds and other NYS scholarships.

- Visit tap.hesc.ny.gov/totw to apply, or link directly to the TAP application from your FAFSA submission page.

FOLLOW UP

JANUARY – FEBRUARY

☐ **Review FAFSA
Submission
Summary (FSS)**

The FSS becomes available shortly after you submit the FAFSA. It summarizes the information you reported on it, includes your Student Aid Index (SAI), and flags issues with your FAFSA that must be resolved.

☐ **Complete
verification**

If you're selected for verification, a process colleges use to ensure the information reported on your FAFSA is correct, you're required to provide the requested documents in order to receive financial aid.

- See our [Verification Handout](#)

DECIDE

MARCH – MAY

☐ **Review financial
aid offers**

Aid offers show you the amount of financial aid you will receive if you attend a specific college. Compare all offers before deciding where to attend college.

- Use the [College Cost Calculator](#) to compare your offers and estimate your indirect costs

☐ **Pay tuition
deposit**

A non-refundable down payment required by most 4-year colleges and universities to hold your spot at the college, due by May 1.

- See our [Tuition Deposit Handout](#) for more information



Scan or go to
uaspire.org/Checklist
to view checklist online