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Get Prepared: Tips for a Fast FAFSA

Ready to fill out the government's Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA? Here's what to expect.

Your FAFSA should be easy to fill out. Many families complete the FAFSA in less than an hour. The trick? Prepare! Read each question carefully. Call the folks at the FAFSA if needed.

Let's get acquainted with your FAFSA form!

Get started by gathering the following information and documents:

Personal Info

You'll need your full legal name, SSN (or ITIN), date of birth, mailing address, permanent email and cell phone number.

Tax Forms

Your family's tax data will likely be automatically uploaded to your FAFSA, but you'll want your tax returns available for reference.

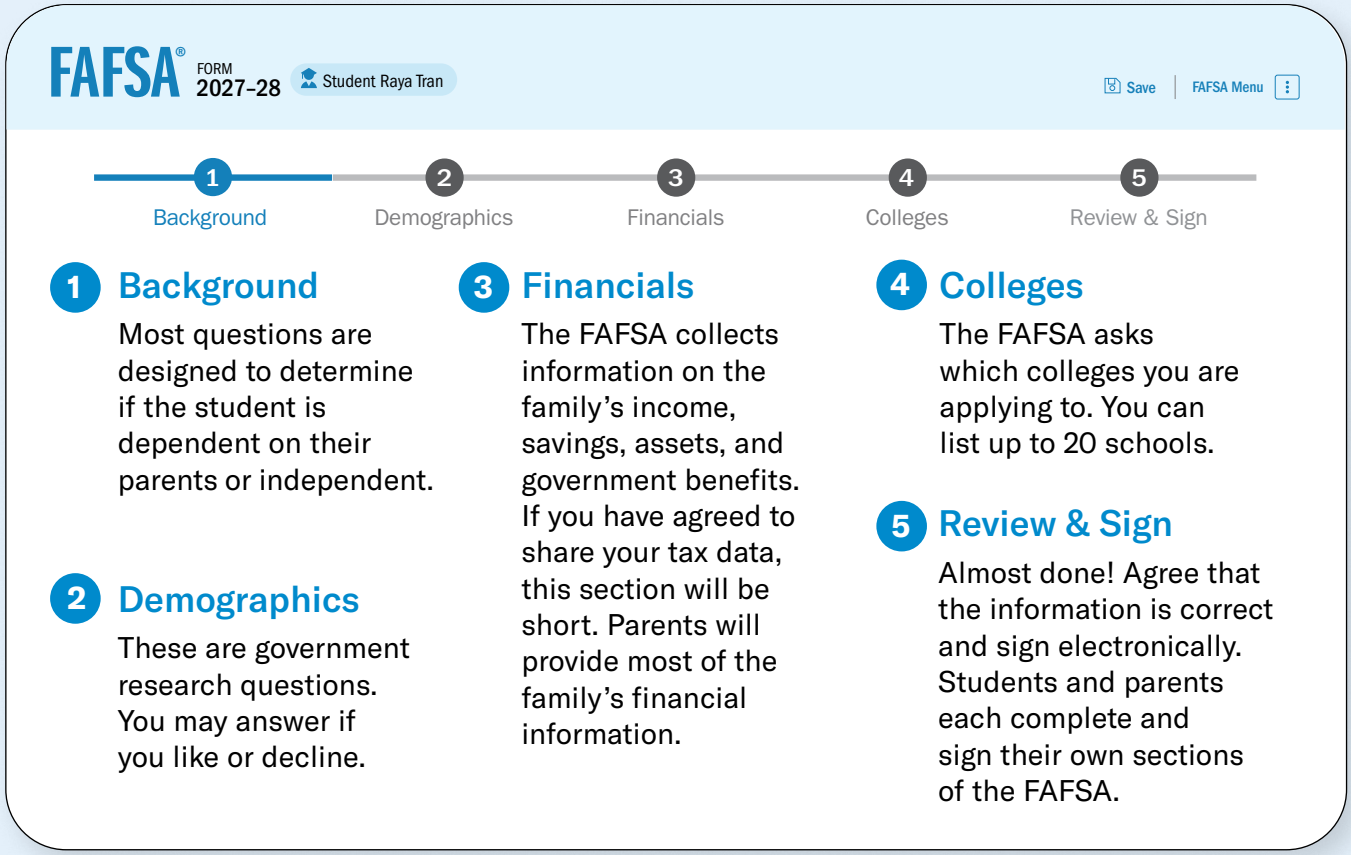
Savings, Assets and Government Benefits Info

When applicable, you'll provide information about:

- Current savings and investments
- Government benefits
- Value of family businesses or farms
- Child support
- Foreign taxes

Your First Step? → Create an FSA ID at StudentAid.gov

What to Expect: The FAFSA's Five Sections



1 Background

Most questions are designed to determine if the student is dependent on their parents or independent.

2 Demographics

These are government research questions. You may answer if you like or decline.

3 Financials

The FAFSA collects information on the family's income, savings, assets, and government benefits. If you have agreed to share your tax data, this section will be short. Parents will provide most of the family's financial information.

4 Colleges

The FAFSA asks which colleges you are applying to. You can list up to 20 schools.

5 Review & Sign

Almost done! Agree that the information is correct and sign electronically. Students and parents each complete and sign their own sections of the FAFSA.

Need more information?

We recommend UnderstandingFAFSA.org, a popular website for high school students and their families hosted by one of our nonprofit partners. Be sure to download Understanding FAFSA & Financial Aid: Your Guide to Paying for College.

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