Playing The Student Loan Game
Your Path Through College Financial Aid

Debt.org

Search for scholarships on free websites like CollegeBoard and Fastweb. Each scholarship has its own requirements and deadlines.

START
Apply to the colleges and universities of your choosing.

File a FAFSA
Fill out the FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The deadline typically falls in June, but check with the FAFSA website and your schools.

Student Aid Report
A Student Aid Report (SAR) is sent to you and your schools via email or mail. The SAR includes your Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

College Scholarship Service
Some schools may require you to complete the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE (CSS Profile). You can do so via CollegeBoard.

Acceptance Letter
When a school sends you an acceptance letter, a financial aid package will be included. It may offer grants, loans and/or scholarships.

Evaluate Your Options
Evaluate financial aid options. You may want to consider starting at a community college.

FINANCIAL AID

Choose your school
and follow the instructions that came with your acceptance letter.

If your financial aid offers are too low, look into student loans from private lenders. You can apply for private loans at any time.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

STATE COLLEGE

PRIVATE COLLEGE

wait 4 turns

wait 4 turns

wait 4 turns

Account Setup
Your school will set up an account for you to track your aid and payments. It will credit most loans, grants and scholarships. Disbursements are made after classes begin.

Submit a FAFSA
for each year you plan to attend school. During your freshman year, send a FAFSA for your sophomore year, and so forth. Each year, you'll also receive a new financial aid package from your school.

HAPPY GRADUATION

Payment Calendar
With most loans, you do not have to begin repaying them until a few months after you leave school. You should receive a payment schedule in the mail.

FINISH