GolbenoMinds | FAFSA & Financial Aid Prep Checklist

A general checklist to help students prepare before applying for financial aid

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✅ Before You Start

☐ Understand what financial aid is (grants, scholarships, loans, work-study)
☐ Know which colleges you're applying to
☐ Check each college's financial aid deadlines
☐ Create a folder (digital or physical) for aid documents

📑 Documents to Gather

☐ Social Security Number (if applicable)
☐ Parent(s) Social Security Number (if applicable)
☐ Driver's license number (if you have one)
☐ Alien Registration Number (for eligible non-citizens)

☐ Federal tax returns (student + parents)
☐ W-2 forms and income records
☐ Bank statements
☐ Records of investments (if any)

🔐 FSA ID Setup

☐ Create an **FSA ID** (student)
☐ Create an **FSA ID** (parent/guardian)
☐ Save login details securely

🖥️ FAFSA Application

☐ Complete the FAFSA form
☐ Enter personal and family information carefully
☐ List all colleges you're applying to

☐ Review answers before submitting
☐ Submit FAFSA before priority deadlines

✉️ After Submitting FAFSA

☐ Confirm FAFSA submission
☐ Check email for confirmation or follow-up requests
☐ Review Student Aid Report (SAR)
☐ Correct any errors if needed

🏫 College-Specific Aid Steps

☐ Check if your colleges require the **CSS Profile**
☐ Submit any additional financial aid forms
☐ Upload requested documents to college portals

💰 Understanding Your Aid Offers

☐ Review financial aid award letters
☐ Compare grants vs loans
☐ Understand total cost vs net cost
☐ Ask questions if anything is unclear

📌 Important Reminders

☐ FAFSA must be completed **every year**
☐ Deadlines vary by college and state
☐ Financial aid is not automatic—you must apply