

Compare your financial aid offers

After you've filed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), any colleges that you included on your information and have accepted you will use your FAFSA® to calculate your financial aid. They'll follow up with a financial aid offer that includes the financial aid that's being offered to you. This can help you get an idea of what each college may cost you—and start the discussion of how you'll pay any remaining costs.

Line up how much financial aid you're getting in grants, scholarships, work-study, and federal student loans from each school. Once you know the amount of financial aid you're eligible for from a school, you want to subtract that number from the cost of attendance. The remainder is sometimes called "the gap" or your out-of-pocket costs. It's the amount you may need to pay on your own—by using your income, savings, a 529 savings account, a tuition payment plan, finding more scholarships, or taking out private student loans.

Cost of attendance	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
Tuition and fees				
Room and board				
Books and supplies				
Personal expenses*				
Financial aid				
Grants				
Scholarships				
Other gift aid				
Federal Direct subsidized loans				
Federal Direct unsubsidized loans				
Other student loans				
Federal work-study				
Summary (cost of attendance minus the total financial aid to determine the remaining gap)				
Total cost of attendance (COA)				
Total financial aid				
Remaining gap				

Learn more at SallieMae.com/finaidoffers

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^{*}Personal expenses can be included in the COA for students who are enrolled at least half time.