



Applying made simpler with Common App

Meredith Lombardi, *Education and Training*

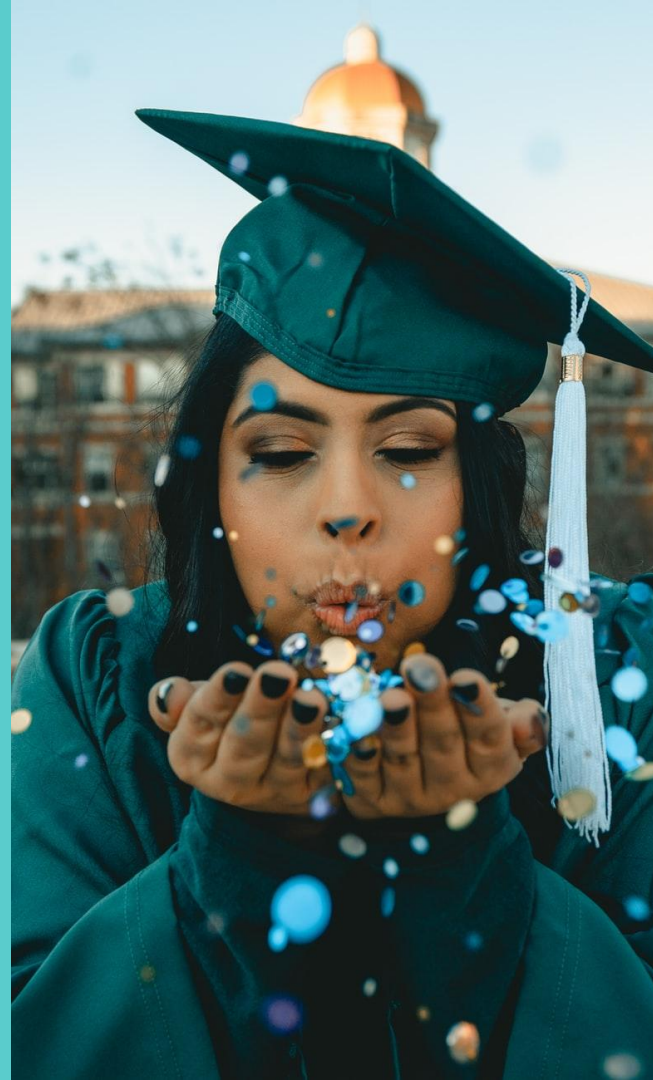
November 9, 2022

What we'll cover

- Common App community
- Approaching the application
- Tools you can use
- Your questions

Common App community

**Each year, more than
one million students
apply to college
through Common App.**



Common App membership

2022–2023

1,035 Member
institutions

285 Public
members

534 Charge no
application
fee

50 U.S. states, DC,
and Puerto Rico

59 International
members

18 Countries
outside the U.S.



Your future starts here

More than one million students each year trust Common App to explore and apply to over 1,000 member colleges and universities worldwide.



INTERNATIONAL



- AUSTRALIA**
 - Monash University
- BELGIUM**
 - Université Catholique de Louvain
- CANADA**
 - University of Toronto
 - Queen's University
 - University of Waterloo
 - University of British Columbia
 - University of Alberta
- CHINA**
 - Tsinghua University
 - University of Science and Technology of China
 - University of Beijing
- CZECH REPUBLIC**
 - Charles University
- FRANCE**
 - University of Paris
- GERMANY**
 - University of Bonn
 - University of Cologne
- HONG KONG**
 - University of Hong Kong
- IRELAND**
 - University of Dublin
- ITALY**
 - University of Rome
- JAPAN**
 - University of Tokyo
- KOREA**
 - Seoul National University
- LIBANON**
 - American University of Beirut
- QATAR**
 - Education City
- SINGAPORE**
 - National University of Singapore
- SPAIN**
 - University of Madrid
- UNITED KINGDOM**
 - University of Cambridge
 - University of Oxford
 - University of London

2022-2023 MEMBERS

Find up-to-date information about each member institution at commonapp.org



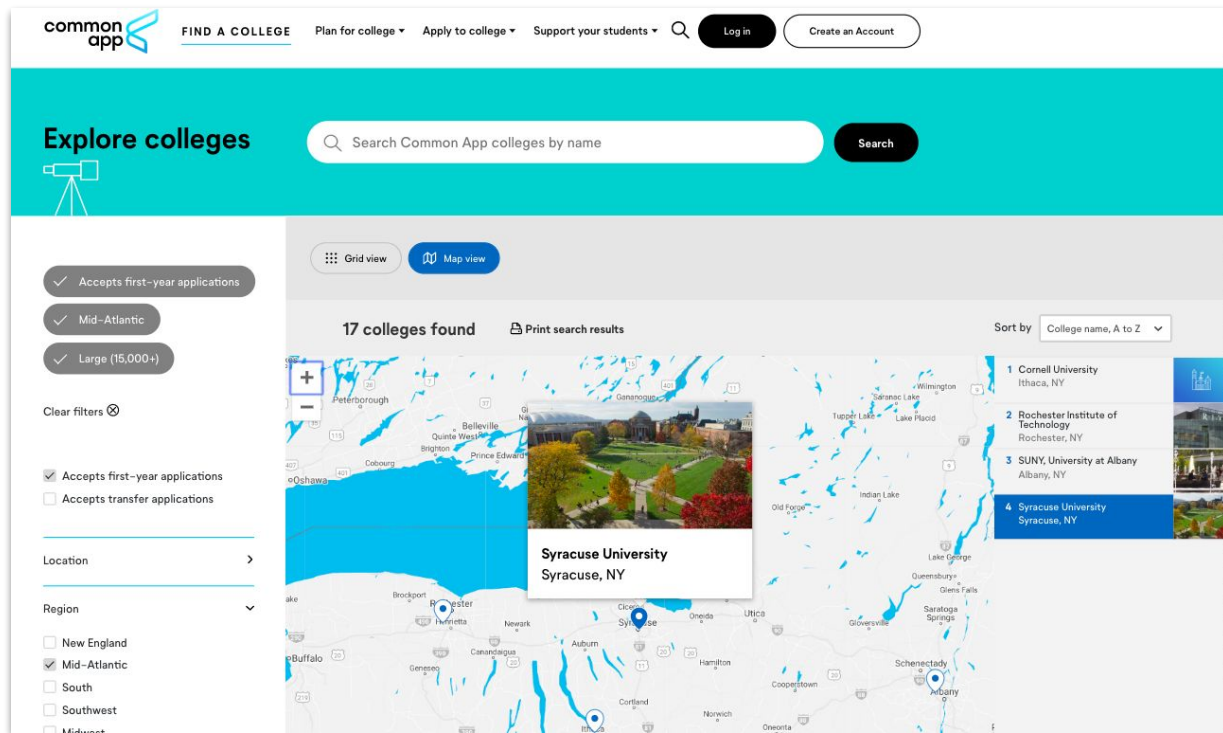
INDEX

Find up-to-date information about each member institution at commonapp.org



Explore colleges

- Expanded filter options
 - Public / private
 - Enrollment size
 - Campus setting
 - Merit / need-based aid
 - Specialized mission
 - Test-optional
 - Accepts self-reported test scores
- Map views of colleges
- PDF export of college lists
- College profiles
- Virtual tours and image galleries



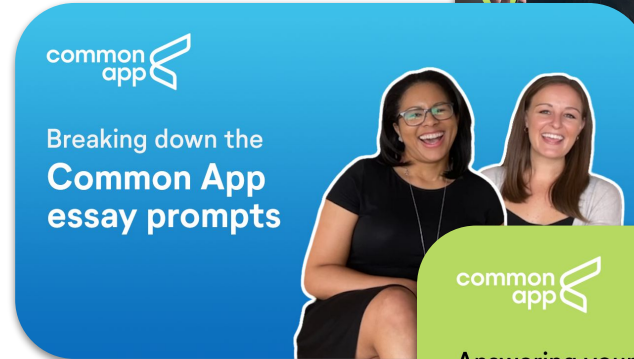
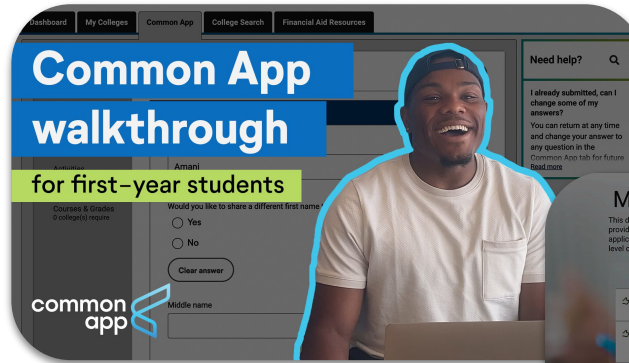
Approaching the application

Video tutorials

Check out our new videos!

- First-year application walkthrough
- Transfer application walkthrough
- Breaking down the essay prompts
- Answers to frequently asked questions

www.youtube.com/commonappmedia/videos



[EXPLORE](#)[PLAN](#)[APPLY](#)[Counselors and recommenders ▾](#)[Members ▾](#)[Log in](#)[Create an Account](#)

Your future starts here

Whether you're applying to college for the first time or looking to complete your degree, Common App will help you reach new heights.

[Apply now](#)

Mobile app

Common App for mobile provides the same secure, streamlined application experience as the Common App online, all from the convenience of a mobile device.

The mobile app seamlessly integrates with the desktop experience – allowing students to apply to college, research financial aid, and get advice from counselors – virtually anytime, anywhere.



Account rollover

The Common App launches on August 1 each year, but students don't have to wait until then.



Username & password

Remain the same



What rolls over?

A student's college list and answers to questions on the Common App tab

- Profile
- Family
- Education
- Testing
- Activities
- Writing
- Courses & Grades



What does not roll over?

Anything on the My Colleges tab, including:

- Answers to college-specific questions
- FERPA release authorization
- Recommender invitations

Navigating the application

Search filters and a Requirements Grid help students easily find schools along with deadlines, fees, and application requirements

The screenshot shows the Common App website's navigation bar with the 'College Search' tab highlighted. The main content area is titled 'College Search' and includes a search input field, a 'More filters' button, and a list of search results. A sidebar on the right contains a 'Need help?' section with two FAQ items. The top right corner features a user welcome message and a 'Sign Out' button.

Navigation Bar:

- Dashboard
- My Colleges
- Common App
- College Search**
- Financial Aid Resources

User Profile (Top Right):

- Welcome, Ima!
- Practice Applicant [Practice account FAQs](#)
- CAID 12345678
- student@myschool.edu
- [Sign Out](#)

College Search Section:

- College Search** (Title)
- [Application Requirements](#) (Link)
- College or City Name (Input field)
- Separate multiple search terms with a comma, e.g.: Washington, Boston (Text)
- [More filters](#) (Button)
- 1012 results (Text)
- Sort by: College Name (Dropdown)

Search Results Table:

+	Aberystwyth University Aberystwyth, Ceredigion - GBR	...
+	Abilene Christian University Abilene, TX - USA	...
+	Adelphi University Garden City, NY - USA	...
+	Agnes Scott College Decatur, GA - USA	...

Need help? (Sidebar):

- [How do I find colleges that are a good fit for me?](#)
Planning for college doesn't have to be stressful. There are many free tools that can help you explore majors. [Read more](#)
- [How do I search for a college?](#)
The **College Search** tab allows you to find the Common App member colleges that interest you. [Read more](#)

Navigating the first-year application

The Common App tab is where you complete the main sections of the application.

FAQs and links to Common App support provide assistance throughout the application.

The screenshot displays the Common App web interface. At the top, a navigation bar includes tabs for 'Dashboard', 'My Colleges', 'Common App' (highlighted with a green border), 'College Search', and 'Financial Aid Resources'. On the left, a sidebar lists application sections: 'Common App', 'Profile', 'Family', 'Education' (highlighted with a blue bar and arrow), 'Testing', 'Activities', 'Writing', and 'Courses & Grades' (with a sub-note '4 college(s) require'). The main content area is titled 'Education' and contains a list of sections, each with a green checkmark and an expand/collapse arrow: 'Current or Most Recent Secondary/High School', 'Other Secondary/High Schools', 'Colleges & Universities', 'Grades', 'Current or Most Recent Year Courses', 'Honors', and 'Community-Based Organizations'. A 'Future Plans' section is at the bottom, highlighted in blue with a collapse arrow. A 'Preview' button is located in the top right of the main content area. On the far right, a 'Need help?' sidebar contains a search icon and two FAQ entries: 'What are the hours for student chat?' and 'I already submitted, can I change some of my answers?', both with 'Read more' links.

Navigation	Common App	College Search	Financial Aid Resources
Common App	Profile	Education	Testing
Family	Activities	Writing	Courses & Grades 4 college(s) require

Education	Preview
✓ Current or Most Recent Secondary/High School	^
✓ Other Secondary/High Schools	^
✓ Colleges & Universities	^
Grades	^
Current or Most Recent Year Courses	^
✓ Honors	^
Community-Based Organizations	^
Future Plans	v

Need help?

What are the hours for student chat?
You are able to chat with us Monday-Friday, 12pm-8pm Eastern Time* (excluding holidays) from October - [Read more](#)

I already submitted, can I change some of my answers?
You can return at any time and change your answer to any question in the Common App tab for future [Read more](#)

Standardized tests

Students can self-report their test scores to colleges

- ACT/SAT
- AP/IB/Cambridge
- SAT Subject Tests (if previously taken)
- International students: English language proficiency tests (IELTS, PTE, TOEFL, Duolingo)

Choose which colleges you want to share your test scores with

Students still need to send official score reports from the testing agencies to the colleges they are applying to, if required by the college

Testing

Preview

Tests Taken

In addition to sending official score reports as required by colleges, do you wish to self-report scores or future test dates for any of the following standardized tests: ACT, SAT/SAT Subject, AP, IB, Cambridge, TOEFL, PTE Academic, IELTS, and Duolingo English Test?*

☒ Yes

☐ No

Clear answer

Indicate all tests you wish to report. Be sure to include tests you expect to take in addition to tests you have already taken.*

IB Subject Tests X

ACT Tests X

SAT Tests X

AP Subject Tests X

X

▼

Did you know?

950+ Common App member colleges do not require ACT or SAT test scores

Activities section

Reporting activities and experiences helps colleges better understand your life outside of the classroom.

- Report up to 10 activities
- Estimate the amount of time spent in each activity

Activities

Reporting activities can help colleges better understand your life outside of the classroom. Examples of activities might include:

- Arts or music
- Clubs
- Community engagement
- Family responsibilities
- Hobbies
- Sports
- Work or volunteering
- Other experiences that have been meaningful to you

Do you have any activities that you wish to report?*

☒ Yes

☐ No

Clear Answer

Please list your activities in the order of their importance to you.

Activity 1

Activity type*

Athletics: JV/Varsity

Sport/team*

Volleyball

Position/Leadership description
(Max characters: 50)*

Organization Name
(Max characters: 100)

Please describe this activity, including what you accomplished and any recognition you received, etc.
(Max characters: 150)*

Participation grade levels*

☐ 9

☒ 10

☒ 11

☒ 12

☐ Post-graduate

Timing of participation*

☒ During school year

☐ During school break

☐ All year

Hours spent per week*

15

Weeks spent per year*

18

I intend to participate in a similar activity in college.*


☒ Yes

☐ No

Clear answer

Writing section

The personal essay helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice.

- Choose from 7 different essay prompts
- 650 word limit
- Use content from Google Drive in your application 

www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts

Essay prompt topics

- Personal Growth
- Facing Adversity
- Background, Identity, Interest, or Talent
- Intellectual Curiosity
- Challenging an Idea
- Gratitude
- Topic of Your Choice

Community disruptions

Located in the Writing section

Community disruptions such as COVID-19 and natural disasters can have deep and long-lasting impacts. If you need it, this space is yours to describe those impacts. Colleges care about the effects on your health and well-being, safety, family circumstances, future plans, and education, including access to reliable technology and quiet study spaces. For more information, check out our [COVID-19 FAQ](#).

- **Optional**
- **250 word limit**
- **Separate from the existing Additional Information question, which remains (650 word limit)**
- **Counselors are also asked to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the school community in their forms**

commonapp.org/blog



Access to UStrive mentors

[UStrive](#) — formerly Strive for College — was started in 2015 as a way to virtually connect students to trained volunteer mentors in a safe and secure environment.

Since 2016, students who qualify for a Common App fee waiver have been invited to connect with a UStrive mentor in the first-year application.

Beginning in 2022, all first-year and transfer students have the option to connect with a UStrive mentor, regardless of fee waiver eligibility.

UStrive mentors help students:

- Apply to college
- Navigate the financial aid process
- Transition into college
- Get their degree
- Find a job after graduation

Navigating the application

My Colleges includes detailed information and requirements for each college on a student's list.

- Complete the FERPA Release Authorization
- Answer college-specific questions
- Invite and assign recommenders
- Submit application
- Submit writing supplements, if applicable

The screenshot shows the 'My Colleges' section of the Common App interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'Dashboard', 'My Colleges' (highlighted with a green border), 'Common App', 'College Search', and 'Financial Aid Resources'. Below the tabs, a sidebar on the left lists colleges: 'DePaul University', 'Indiana University Bloomington' (selected and highlighted in blue), 'College Information', 'Application' (with sub-items: Questions, Recommenders and FERPA, Review and Submit - Common App), 'Writing Supplement' (with sub-items: Writing Supplement, Review and Submit - Writing Supplement), 'Jack Kent Cooke Foundation', and 'University of Maryland Eastern Shore'. The main content area displays information for 'Indiana University Bloomington'. It includes a 'Contact Info' section with phone, email, and address, followed by social media links and icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. Below this is an 'Application Deadlines' section with three boxes: 'Fall 2023' (Early Action - 11/01/2022, Regular Decision - 02/01/2023), 'Summer 2023' (Rolling Admission - 06/15/2023), and 'Spring 2023' (Rolling Admission - 12/12/2022).

Dashboard My Colleges Common App College Search Financial Aid Resources

My Colleges

DePaul University

Indiana University Bloomington

College Information

Application

Questions

Recommenders and FERPA

Review and Submit - Common App

Writing Supplement

Writing Supplement

Review and Submit - Writing Supplement

Jack Kent Cooke Foundation

University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Indiana University Bloomington





Contact Info

Phone: [\(812\) 855-0661](tel:(812)855-0661)

Email: admissions@indiana.edu

Address: 940 E. Seventh Street
Bloomington, IN 47405
USA

Links: [College Website](#) · [Virtual Tour](#) · [College Navigator](#)

Application Deadlines

Fall 2023

First Year

Early Action - 11/01/2022

Regular Decision - 02/01/2023

Summer 2023

First Year

Rolling Admission - 06/15/2023

Spring 2023

First Year

Rolling Admission - 12/12/2022

Recommender types

Counselor

- Completes school forms and sends transcript
- Writes letter of recommendation
(35% require)

Teacher

- No school requires more than 2
- Completes teacher evaluation and writes letter of recommendation
(30% require)

Other recommender

- **Optional**
- Examples include
 - Arts teacher outside of school
 - Clergy
 - Coach
 - College access counselor
 - Employer
 - Family member
 - Peer
 - Other

Advisor

- **Optional**
- Students can invite up to 3 advisors
- Advisors do not submit any forms
- Can view student's completion progress and a PDF copy of their application (with permission)

School forms and recommendations

Common App uses single-submission (“one-and-done”) to streamline the process for counselors, teachers, and other recommenders.

Each college determines which school forms they require.

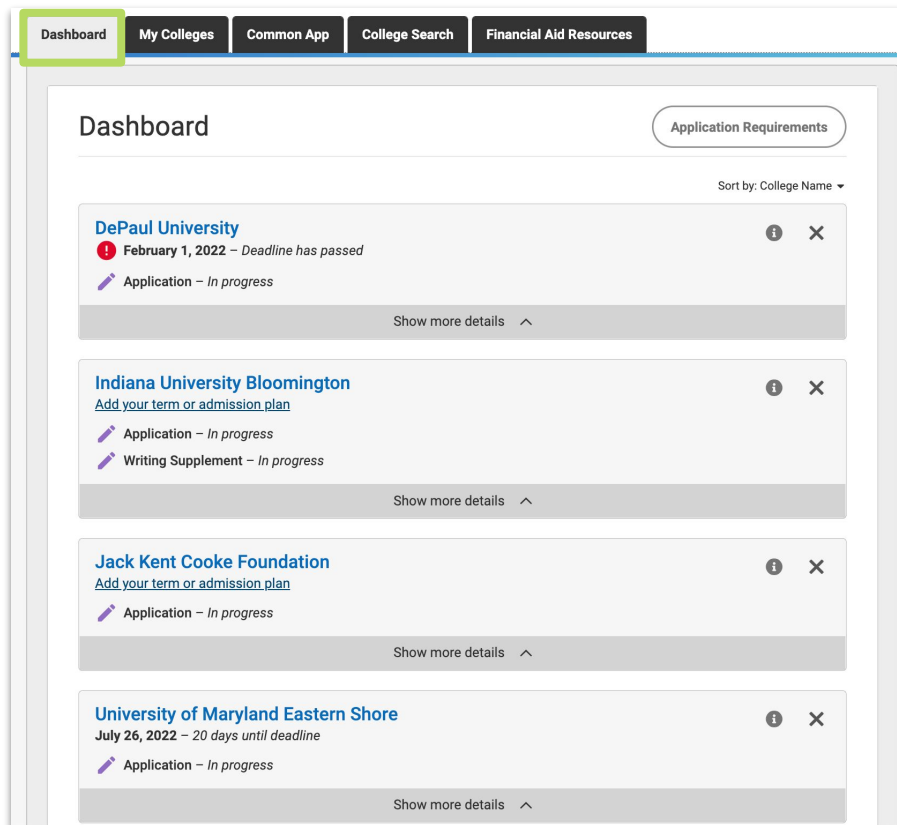
- School profile
- School report
- Early decision agreement
- Fee waiver
- Counselor recommendation
- Optional report 1 and 2
- Mid-year report
- Final report
- Teacher evaluation
- Other evaluation

Transcripts, recommendations, and school forms are only sent to colleges when students submit their Common App.

The image shows a preview of a Common App 'School Report' form. At the top, it says 'Preview school report' with a close button. The Common App logo is on the left, and the name 'Jacobson, Jenny' is on the right. The form is titled 'School Report' and 'Personal Details'. It contains fields for Name (Meredith Lombardi, Me), Email, Phone (counselor@gmail.com +1.866-555-1212 (phone)), School Details (Name: KIPP DC: College Preparatory, Washington, DC, USA, Charter, CEEB: 090184; Website: https://www.kippdc.org/schools/high-school/kipp-dc-college-preparatory/), and School Profile (Graduating Class Size: 330, College Bound: 60% 4-year, 40% 2-year, Ethnicity: % Hispanic or Latino/a/x, % American Indian or Alaskan Native, % Asian, % Black or African American, % Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, % White, First Generation: %, International: % US Citizens, % Non-US Citizens, Federal Lunch Aid: %, Financial Aid: %, Setting: Suburban, Curriculum: %). At the bottom right, there are 'Cancel' and 'Print' buttons.

common app		Jacobson, Jenny
School Report		
Personal Details		
Name	Meredith Lombardi, Me	
Email, Phone	counselor@gmail.com +1.866-555-1212 (phone)	
School Details		
Name	KIPP DC: College Preparatory, Washington, DC, USA, Charter, CEEB: 090184	
Website	https://www.kippdc.org/schools/high-school/kipp-dc-college-preparatory/	
School Profile		
Graduating Class Size	330	
College Bound	60% 4-year, 40% 2-year	
Ethnicity	% Hispanic or Latino/a/x, % American Indian or Alaskan Native, % Asian, % Black or African American, % Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, % White	
First Generation	%	
International	% US Citizens, % Non-US Citizens	
Federal Lunch Aid	%	
Financial Aid	%	
Setting	Suburban	
Curriculum	%	
		Cancel Print

Navigating the application

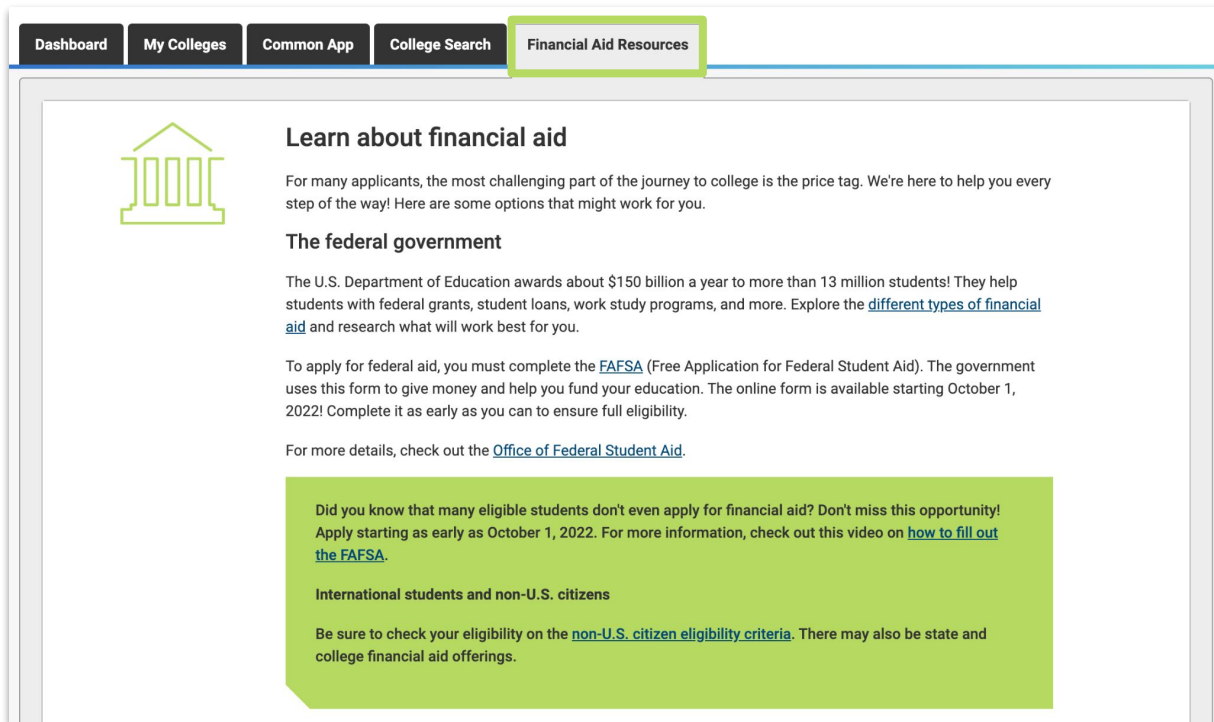


The Dashboard provides a snapshot of all colleges on a student's list.

Students can access the Requirements Grid to see a detailed list of deadlines, fees, and admission requirements for all colleges on their list.


Navigating the application

Students can access financial aid resources and scholarship opportunities while completing their Common App.



The screenshot shows the 'Financial Aid Resources' section of the Common App. At the top, a navigation bar includes links for 'Dashboard', 'My Colleges', 'Common App', 'College Search', and 'Financial Aid Resources', with the latter being highlighted. Below the navigation bar, on the left, is a green icon of a classical building. To the right of the icon is the heading 'Learn about financial aid' followed by a paragraph explaining that the most challenging part of college is the price tag and that the page offers options to help. Below this is a section titled 'The federal government' which describes the U.S. Department of Education's annual \$150 billion in aid and mentions the FAFSA. It states that the online form is available starting October 1, 2022. A link to the 'Office of Federal Student Aid' is provided. A green callout box contains a reminder to apply by October 1, 2022, and a link to a video on how to fill out the FAFSA. At the bottom of the callout box, there is a section for 'International students and non-U.S. citizens' with a link to 'non-U.S. citizen eligibility criteria'.

Dashboard My Colleges Common App College Search **Financial Aid Resources**



Learn about financial aid

For many applicants, the most challenging part of the journey to college is the price tag. We're here to help you every step of the way! Here are some options that might work for you.

The federal government

The U.S. Department of Education awards about \$150 billion a year to more than 13 million students! They help students with federal grants, student loans, work study programs, and more. Explore the [different types of financial aid](#) and research what will work best for you.

To apply for federal aid, you must complete the [FAFSA](#) (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The government uses this form to give money and help you fund your education. The online form is available starting October 1, 2022! Complete it as early as you can to ensure full eligibility.

For more details, check out the [Office of Federal Student Aid](#).

Did you know that many eligible students don't even apply for financial aid? Don't miss this opportunity! Apply starting as early as October 1, 2022. For more information, check out this video on [how to fill out the FAFSA](#).

International students and non-U.S. citizens

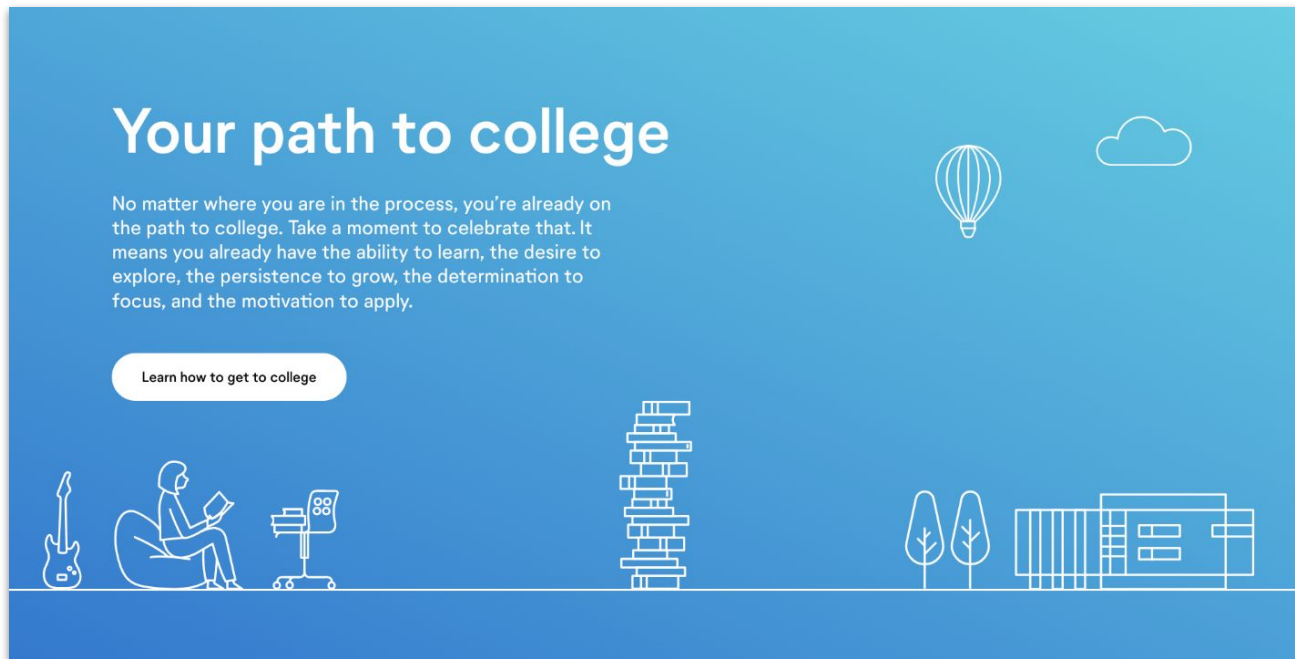
Be sure to check your eligibility on the [non-U.S. citizen eligibility criteria](#). There may also be state and college financial aid offerings.

Tools you can use

Planning resources

- Why college matters
- Paying for college
- College roadmaps for middle school, high school, community college, and military students
- Family resources
- Application and recommender guides

commonapp.org/plan




Common App Ready

A toolkit of tips and best practices to help you with each step of the application process


- Getting started
- Preparing your application
- Telling your story
- Working with recommenders and advisors
- Paying for college

commonapp.org/ready




Telling your story

How to approach the essay



The Common App essay instructions ask you what you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores. You have 7 prompts but endless possibilities to tell your story. Here are some ideas to inspire your thinking.




Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, please share your story.

Think about

- Your community, environment, family, and culture
- What you're deeply curious about and how you spend your time
- What makes you proud
- People and experiences that have shaped your life

Ask yourself

- What's missing from the rest of my application?
- Is there context to help colleges understand who I am?



The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

Think about

- All obstacles: big, small, personal, and societal
- Hardships faced by family or friends that also impacted you
- Unresolved challenges you're still struggling with

Ask yourself

- How did I cope? How did I grow?
- Who helped me?

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Resources

WHAT IS COMMON APP READY

Download

HOW THE PROCESS WORKS

Download

APPLICATION PROCESS

Download

COMMON APP READY

Download

24/7

Help when you need it!

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Known issues
- Contact support
- Live member colleges
- Writing requirements resource

appsupport.commonapp.org

recsupport.commonapp.org

The screenshot shows the 'Student solutions center' page of the Common App. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Common App logo, the text 'Student solutions center', and a 'Create an account' button. Below this is a blue header section with the text 'How can we help?' and a search bar labeled 'Search FAQs' with a 'Search' button. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column has a 'Home' link and a 'Contact us' link. Below these links is a section titled 'Popular FAQs' which lists five questions with expandable arrows: 'Why can't I find a school or college in the lookup list?', 'How do I assign my recommenders?', 'Can I access my submitted application from last year?', 'How do I search for a college?', and 'Why isn't my Activities section marked as complete?'. The right column is titled 'Helpful resources' and lists four links: 'Live colleges', 'School discipline questions', 'Writing requirements', 'Recommender support', and 'Transfer student support'. At the bottom right of the page, there is a blue chat button labeled 'Chat with us'.

common app Student solutions center

Create an account

How can we help?

Search FAQs Search

Home Contact us

Popular FAQs

Why can't I find a school or college in the lookup list? ▾

How do I assign my recommenders? ▾

Can I access my submitted application from last year? ▾

How do I search for a college? ▾

Why isn't my Activities section marked as complete? ▾

Helpful resources

Live colleges

School discipline questions

Writing requirements

Recommender support

Transfer student support

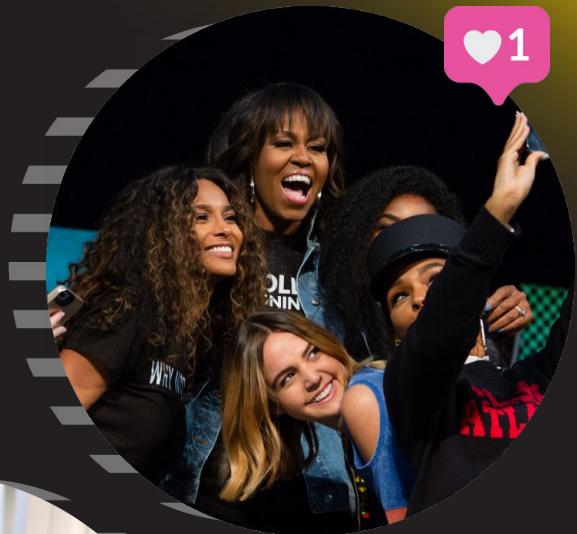
Chat with us



Saying things out loud makes them happen. What will you be?

Better Make Room is Common App's student-facing branch, so follow us on social media for resources and tips on your college application journey! 📱

#BetterMakeRoom



Connect with #commonapp, #reachhigher and #bettermakerroom



@CommonApp
@ReachHigher
@BetterMakeRoom



@CommonApp
@ReachHigher2020
@BetterMakeRoom



@CommonApp
@ReachHigher
@BetterMakeRoom



@BetterMakeRoom



CommonAppMedia
BetterMakeRoom

Your questions

Thank you

Contact 24/7/365 support when you need it

appsupport@commonapp.net *(first-year application questions)*

sfsupport@commonapp.net *(first-year recommender questions)*

We're committed to continuous improvement:

ideas.commonapp.org