

How To Find College Scholarships



STRATEGY 1

Have your parents check with their employer

There are many employers that will award scholarships to the children of their employees. Have your parents check in with the HR department at work. If you're currently employed it's also a good idea to check in with your employer to see if scholarships are offered.

STRATEGY 2

Try Your Financial Aid Office

Your financial aid office will be able to give you information on different types of scholarships from federal agencies, state agencies, work study, and other campus scholarships.



TIP 1

Your school's financial aid office is typically first-come, first-serve. It's important that you apply early, and fill out the FAFSA. If you don't fill out the FAFSA, you won't be eligible for any scholarships from your school.



TIP 2

If you're declined early on, you might check back in the summer after people have made their decisions to enroll. Some people who were offered scholarships may decline enrollment, opening up access to more funds.



STRATEGY 3

Check with Community & Religious Organizations

Many community and religious organizations offer scholarships locally. This includes sport teams, churches, and even local restaurants. While the sums of these scholarships might be low they still help and are worth applying to.

STRATEGY 4

Use the U.S. Dept of Labor's Scholarship Search Tool

When it comes to finding scholarships online scams are plentiful. One way to prevent getting scammed is to use the US Department of Labor's Free Scholarship Search Tool. You can use this website to search for scholarships based on state, study level, and affiliation.

STRATEGY 5

Check with Professional Organizations

If you are going to college with a specific career in mind, it might be worth it to join the professional organization in your niche. Almost every field has a professional organization—most are free or inexpensive to join. And best of all, a lot of professional organizations award scholarships!

STRATEGY 6

Search on Scholarship Sites

Bold.org is a free website where you can find scholarships, internships and more. When you create an account you'll be able to search for scholarships based on your interest, degree, location, and skills. Since you can customize your searches you'll be far more likely to find scholarships that you actually qualify for.



TIP 3

Some of the different types of state based grants available:

Needs Based Grants – Awarded based on financial need.

Merits Based Grants – Awarded to those who exhibit above average performance. This could be in the form of extra-curricular activities or academic performance. Some states also award a hybrid of needs/merit based grants.

High Need Fields of Study – Your state may award grants to students in high need STEM fields.

Student with Disabilities – You may also find special state grants, and even scholarships, if you have a disability.

STRATEGY 7

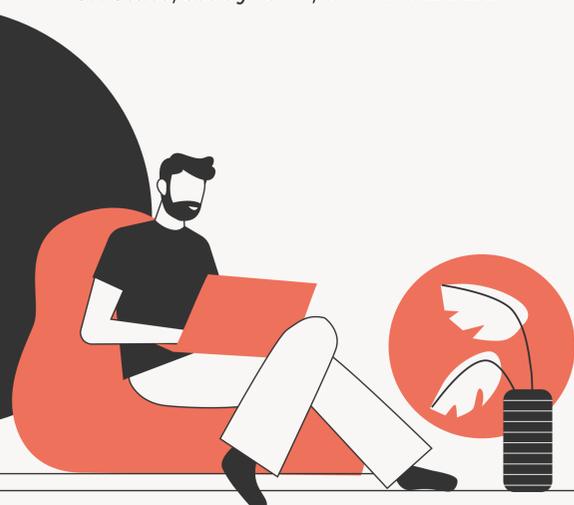
Try State Based Grants

State based grants come in the form of free financial aid. Some states will require that you complete the FAFSA to see if you qualify to receive a grant. Other states will require that you complete a different application. You should be able to get more information on the requirements at your college's financial aid office. Most state grants are awarded on a first come, first serve basis so make sure to send your application in on time.

STRATEGY 8

Make Sure You Fill Out a FAFSA

The FAFSA can help you get college grants and can be used as an application for certain state grants as well. With the FAFSA you may be able to qualify for Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education, or Iraq & Afghanistan Service Grants.



There are tons of legitimate scholarships and grants you can apply for. While you should take your time and apply for as many scholarships as possible you also want to be on the lookout for scams. As a general rule of thumb you should never pay an application fee and be wary of scholarships services that guarantee success. You also shouldn't pay for a list of scholarships. If you look in the right places you can find scholarships yourself.

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