

The Cost Of College

Consider All The Expenses

For many students, paying for higher learning can be overwhelming, especially if you're unable to get support from family due to limited income or other circumstances. When you're thinking about the actual cost (not just tuition), it adds up. Consider all the expenses, aside from tuition, fees, and room and board. You also have:

- BOOKS AND SUPPLIES
- TRAVEL EXPENSES
- PHONE
- SNACKS
- GOING OUT WITH FRIENDS
- ETC.

Cost Of College Itself

YEAR	4-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS
2013-2014	\$25,509	\$10,215
2014-2015	\$26,051	\$10,409
2015-2016	\$26,613	\$10,599
2016-2017	\$26,593	\$10,598

*Source: National Center for Education Statistics
<https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=76>

Other Expenses

You'll notice the cost of college is increasing each year, and that means you'll need to take that into account as you move through your four-year degree program. However, there are some things you can do to help with the cost of college today.

Consider a two-year community college

You may be anxious to head off to college and leave your parents' home for a while, but if you attend a junior, two-year, or local community college, you can get all of your "core requirement" classes taken care of at a fraction of the cost of a four-year college. You also may be able to live at home in the meantime, which will likely save you a lot of money on living expenses.

Apply For Federal Student Aid

You can fill out a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>. You'll need to have the following information:

- Student Social Security Number
- Parent Social Security Number
- Student's driver's license number (if applicable)
- Federal tax returns/information
- Information on savings, cash, checking account balances, etc.
- If you're not a U.S. citizen, an Alien Registration Number is required

Apply For Scholarships

There are thousands upon thousands of scholarships available across the country. Most are small and localized (meaning you would have to attend a specific school or live in a specific area to qualify), and the majority are relatively small awards, but they can quickly add up. Go online and research scholarships in your field of interest, neighborhood, or college you plan to attend. Never pay for a list of scholarships or to apply to them; all legitimate scholarship applications are free.

Work

It may be a four-letter word, but it's not a bad one. Most of us have to work to pay bills and if you need to take a part-time job (or a couple) to help pay for school, extra expenses, or supplement your lifestyle while attending college, there are plenty of options out there.

