

# College Application: Frequently Asked Questions

As you complete your college application, you may have a lot of questions. You may find the answers to frequently asked questions below! These questions and answers may appear in the order as they are in a college application. If you have questions, speak with your school counselor or a trusted adult.

## ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

### What is my term and year of admission?

▶ If you are going to start college in the fall after graduating from high school you must choose the “fall” option which includes the year you will graduate from high school. If you are going to take classes in the summer choose the summer option.

### What is my input status?

Choose the most suitable option for you.

▶ **Freshman:** Choose this option if this will be the first college you will attend after graduating from high school or earning your GED. (This is not the same as the number of credits completed. If you have earned college credits through these programs it is possible that the number of credits completed could suggest that you are a sophomore or higher but your starting status would still be a freshman.)

▶ **Transfer student:** Only choose this option if you have attended another college or earned college credit after graduating from high school or earning your GED.

▶ **Untitled student:** Only choose this option if you want to take college classes, but are not planning to earn a certificate or degree.

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## What is my desired specialty?

▶ What do you want to study at the university? If you have one or two main options select those. It's okay if you change your mind later while you're in college. If you have a lot of interests or are not sure what you want to study, no problem! Choose the "Undecided" option. However, you may want to talk to an advisor to discuss options as you decide your program of study.

## NAME AND IDENTIFICATION (ID) NUMBERS

### I never use my full name. Can I use my nickname?

▶ No. When you are completing a college application, you should always use your full legal name (first and last), including your middle name. This helps the admissions staff keep all your application documents together. If you've ever legally used another name (for example, if you've changed your last name for adoption reasons) include that as well. If you have a different name than the one you like to be called, put it in the "preferred name or nickname" section.

### Why do colleges require my social security number?

▶ This help colleges find the correct free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) and make sure they are offering you all the financial aid available to you. Now is the time to memorize your social security number or keep it in a safe place like the It's a Plan app. Check the [App Store](#) to download app.

### What if I don't have a social security number?

▶ If you are eligible for a social security number but don't have one, now is a good time to ask for one . If you are not eligible for a social security number, you can leave this part blank.

### Why do colleges want my SSID?

▶ This helps colleges connect your application to your transcripts.

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## HOME

### Can I use a PO Box?

▶ Yes! You can use a PO Box if that's where you get your mail. You should also have to provide a physical address as your permanent address. If they ask for the date your permanent address became permanent, provide the date you moved there (if you've lived there all your life, put your date of birth!)

### What if I don't have a place to live?

▶ If you don't live in a place where you can get mail, you can ask your counselor, teacher, or the homeless education liaison what recommendations they have for students at your school. Some options may include an address for a family member or friend who does not change addresses frequently, your school or your church, synagogue, or mosque.

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

### CITIZENSHIP INFORMATION

▶ Some applications require you to provide your citizenship information in order to continue. For some universities, it is their way of knowing if you are applying as a US citizen or permanent resident or if you are applying as an international student. It also helps them determine what type of financial aid or scholarships you might be eligible for, so you should answer the questions, even if they are not required.

▶ If you are not a US citizen, but you are a permanent resident and you have a green card, you will have to provide it as proof of your residential status. Some universities ask you for your card number. Other colleges may ask you for a copy of the card. Make sure you have a copy of this card when you are applying to colleges.

## What if I am undocumented?

- ▶ If you are an undocumented student, you can still apply to college! In fact, you may be eligible to pay in-state tuition at a public university in Maryland. [Learn more](#) about ways to pay for school such as the Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship for Public Colleges, and other Opportunity Scholarship.
- ▶ If you are applying to private universities, you should contact the financial aid office at the school and ask if you have to apply as an international or domestic student. Ask them if they have any special instructions for filling out your application as an undocumented student. When you speak to a financial aid specialist, also ask if there is someone in the office who is in charge of working with underrepresented students. If not, ask to speak to the person who will be in charge of reading your application; that person is responsible for reading all requests from your part of the state. You don't have to give them your name when you make the call, you can simply ask for information. **For more information to assist undocumented students, visit the [Maryland Higher Education Commission](#).**

## FAMILY INFORMATION

### What family information should I submit?

- ▶ Not all colleges and universities require the same information. However, if the college or university asks you for an answer to continue, you have to answer it. You may want to answer the optional questions if you understand why they are asking you that question:
- ▶ It is important in case of an emergency to provide updated family information. The information may be needed to contact your parents or guardians. Sometimes schools also want to inform parents of events on campus.
- ▶ Some applications may ask for information about your parents' education and work history. If you live with a guardian, answer these questions with information from your parents, if possible. Many colleges offer special programs for first-generation students or low-income students, these questions help them to know if you are eligible for these types of programs.
- ▶ Colleges ask if any family members - including parents, brothers and sisters - have attended that college because they want to know what connections you may have. They usually ask you for the alumnus' full name and year of graduation to ensure they are connecting you to the right person.

## What if I come from an adoptive family or I no longer live with my parents

▶ Schools want to make the best admission decision. The applications contain all the information you need to make the best decision. They also use that information for resources available on campus. So, as long as you feel comfortable, you should answer the questions completely and honestly. You can include your biological parents or your current guardians. If you have other details that you want to share that do not fit. You can also use the designated space for additional information.

## Do I have to share all my activities and interests for each college application?

▶ College and universities are more interested in quality than quantity. Share the activities that are most important to you, and those that you have done for a long time or in which you have won recognition or were a leader.

## Do I have to share all SAT and ACT scores?

▶ No. Some colleges and universities do not require you to share your SAT or ACT results. Community colleges do not require it. And many four-year universities do not ask for it, like these schools that are "[optional exam](#)".

▶ For schools that require test results, you can decide which ones you want to send. But, if you took the tests more than once, you should send all the results. Most colleges combine all of the highest scores from each exam to give you the best possible score.

## What if I haven't taken the SAT or ACT tests yet?

▶ If you are applying to a college or university that requires one of these tests, you have to take the [SAT](#) or [ACT](#) as soon as possible.

## What additional information do I need to include for each college application?

▶ Every university is different. You can find more information on the admissions page of each university. Common examples of additional information include, your high school transcript, a personal statement or essay, a short answer to questions about how, why you are interested in that particular college. Letters of recommendation from teachers or other adults who know you. Students applying to art schools may be required to submit a portfolio of their work, and student athletes may be asked for a video of their games or statistics.

## If I am not graduating from high school, but have earned (or will have) my GED, can I apply to a four-year college or university?

▶ Yes! Check the admissions page of the colleges you wish to apply to for additional requirements. Make sure you have a copy of all your GED test scores when you apply.

## What kinds of questions will they ask me about my past criminal history?

► Some applications ask you about your past criminal history. If you say "yes," it doesn't necessarily mean that you won't be admitted. But, if you lie in your application (about this or anything else) in the end you may not be admitted or you may be expelled. If you have questions about how the university uses this information, you can contact the admissions office. You do not have to identify yourself on the call, you can simply tell them that you are looking for more information.

## What if I can't afford the application fee?

► Most of the colleges that charge to apply also offer deferrals or waivers of fees for students who cannot afford the application fee. A postponement means that you do not have to pay when you apply, but if you are accepted and you enroll, the fee will be added to the cost of your enrollment. A fee waiver means that you never have to pay the cost to apply. You can use the [NACAC Fee Waiver Request Form](#). Your counselor usually has to sign this form. Check with your counselor if they are aware of other college application fee waivers.