

GUIDE TO THE  
**CSS PROFILE**



LAUNCH EDUCATION ADVISORS



# GUIDE TO THE **CSS PROFILE**

Congratulations on taking the next step in your educational journey with LAUNCH Education Advisors! The CSS Profile can be a daunting task for families, but we aim to make the process as simple as possible. The time has come for you to complete the CSS Profile through College Board, and we are here to guide you. The CSS Profile aims to provide institutions a more in-depth look of a family's financial situation. Institutions utilize the information to award institutional need-based aid.

LAUNCH created this document provides a brief overview of the process and includes the most popular questions families ask. However, there are more resources and detailed information regarding the CSS Profile on [cssprofile.collegeboard.org](https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org).

Remember, LAUNCH is here to guide and assist you throughout the process. Reach out to us via email or your LAUNCH portal with any questions and remember to dream, launch, and soar!



# CSS PROFILE **FAQS**

## **01** What is the CSS Profile?

The CSS Profile is an online application utilized by about 400 schools in America to assist college/universities in determining who should receive institutional (non-federal), need-based aid from the colleges' or universities' financial aid office. Some colleges/universities may require both the CSS Profile and the FAFSA.

## **02** What does the CSS Profile do?

The CSS Profile provides colleges and universities a more in-depth look at a student's and their family's finances to provide the best financial aid package and institutional aid possible. Completing the CSS may result in more institutional aid and contributes to a lower net price.

## **03** Do I need to complete the CSS Profile to get aid?

The financial aid policies vary per college/university in America. Some institutions require FAFSA or CSS Profile, while some require both. LAUNCH confirms what is needed for our Essential and Comprehensive package clients. Our Comprehensive clients also receive personalized guidance on how to complete the FAFSA and CSS Profile.

## **04** When can I complete the CSS Profile?

You can complete the CSS Profile as early as **October 1** of a student's senior year.

## **05** Do I have to complete the CSS Profile yearly?

Yes, the CSS Profile and FAFSA need to be completed every year as close to **October 1** as possible.



# CSS PROFILE **FAQS**

**06**

## **Do I have to pay to complete the CSS Profile?**

YES. The fee for the initial application is \$25 USD. Every application afterwards is \$16 USD. There is no limit to the number of colleges/universities to which you can submit the CSS Profile.

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## **Do I have to send the CSS Profile to all universities at the same time?**

No. You can submit the CSS Profile one college/university at a time through the website.

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## **What documents are required to complete the CSS Profile?**

To fill out the CSS Profile, a student and their family will need: your's and your family's most recently completed tax returns, W-2 forms and other records of current year income, records of untaxed income and benefits, assets and bank statements, mortgage information, records of savings, stocks, bonds, and trusts, and information on small businesses. For divorced families, the non-custodial parents *may* be expected to contribute their information through a private link meaning the student and rest of family *will not* see their information.

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## **Is my information stored safely?**

Yes. College Board will assign you a CBFinAid ID. This is the unique number you get when you create a CSS Profile account. It is used to identify you and keep your information safe.

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## **What happens if I make a mistake while filling out the CSS Profile?**

Since you can only submit the CSS Profile to each school once, you will have to submit any changes in writing to the college/university's Financial Aid Administrator or your Financial Aid Counselor. It is in you and your family's best interest to **DOUBLE CHECK** all information entered on the CSS Profile before submitting it.



# STEPS TO THE **CSS PROFILE**

Utilize the online help function to assist you in filling out the application. You do not need to complete the application in one sitting. Save your application and come back to it at another time!

The system will record your date and time of submission in EST. After submission, your report will be sent to the colleges/universities you chose. After submitting, your dashboard will include your receipt and any next steps.



Create an account at [cssprofile.collegeboard.com](https://cssprofile.collegeboard.com)

Since you can only submit the CSS Profile once, it is important to double check your information for errors. This will save you time in the long run.

Check your email frequently for information from your selected universities.



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## HELPFUL LINKS

[cssprofile.collegeboard.org](https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org) - CSS Profile

Levy and Kent

[Domestic Student Merit and Need Aid Overview](#)

Levy and Kent

[International Student Merit and Need Aid Overview](#)

[CSS Profile Guide for Divorced or Separated Families](#)

[Completing the CSS Profile as an International Student](#)

[finaid.org](https://finaid.org) - Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid

[CSS Profile Student Guide](#)

[CSS Profile Mistakes to Avoid](#)

## IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Your Social Security number (it's important that you enter it correctly on the FAFSA form!)
- Your parents' Social Security numbers if you are a dependent student
- Your driver's license number if you have one
- Your Alien Registration number if you are not a U.S. citizen
- Federal tax information or tax returns including IRS W-2 information, for you (and your spouse, if you are married), and for your parents if you are a dependent student: IRS 1040Foreign tax return, IRS 1040NR, or IRS 1040NR-EZTax return for Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or Palau
- Records of your untaxed income, such as child support received, interest income, and veterans non-education benefits, for you, and for your parents if you are a dependent student
- Information on cash; savings and checking account balances; investments, including stocks and bonds and real estate (but not including the home in which you live); and business and farm assets for you, and for your parents if you are a dependent student