



Learning About Scholarships

Common misconceptions

Don't assume you shouldn't apply because:

- your grades aren't good enough
- your family makes too much money
- you haven't chosen a major yet

Keys to success

Communication

A scholarship **applicant** should ask ...

- specific questions
- whether documents have been received
- whether the documents are complete

A scholarship **provider** will ...

- explain its process to students
- answer students' questions
- not remind you if documents are missing

Eligibility

Each scholarship has different eligibility requirements.

Competition

For scholarships, you must ...

- meet eligibility requirements
- apply and complete before the deadline
- compete with other applicants

Where to look

Local Scholarships

- high school, town offices, employers
- community groups (Elks, Lions, Rotary, places of worship, etc.)
- word of mouth and parents
- VSAC's scholarships booklet
- your community library or the VSAC Resource Center

Your college or university

National scholarships

- www.fastweb.com
- <https://pages.collegeboard.org/big-future-scholarships>
- <https://www.raise.me/>
- www.cappex.com/scholarships
- www.unigo.com/scholarships/our-scholarships
- <https://www.bold.org>

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Things to think about

How do scholarships affect other financial aid?

Ask each school about the impact that outside scholarships will have on other aid you may receive.

Carefully consider whether an outside scholarship will...

- reduce loans
- reduce work-study
- reduce grants
- reduce scholarships from the school

What about scams?

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

- “This scholarship is guaranteed or your money back.”
- “You can’t get this information anywhere else!”
- “I just need your Social Security number/bank account number/FSA ID to release the funds.”

How are recipients selected?

- Some scholarships ask that you demonstrate financial need and/or academic achievement. Don’t let this discourage you from applying; the scholarship committee will compare your financial need and/or academic achievement with the other applicants, and you may very well demonstrate the highest financial need and/or the highest academic achievement among all of the students who applied.
- Within the VSAC scholarships booklet, selection criteria for each scholarship is typically listed in order of importance. Each list can serve as your guide to what the scholarships committee is looking for in its applicants.

Will I be notified?

It depends on the scholarship.

- If you were chosen as the recipient of one or more VSAC-assisted scholarships, VSAC will notify you before May 1.
- For other scholarships, you could be notified either way or only if you’re selected for the scholarship.

Successful scholarship applicants will ...

- identify all scholarships for which they are eligible to apply.
- read and follow instructions.
- submit all required documents before the deadline
 - Understand each scholarship deadline—the postmark date and/or the receipt date.
 - Find the deadline for VSAC-assisted scholarships at www.vsac.org/vsacscholarships.
- confirm receipt and completeness of documents.
- ask specific questions.

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