



1. Start Your Scholarship Search Early

Students who give themselves plenty of time to find, plan and complete their scholarships early, are more likely to get them. Also, if you happen to submit your application early and the scholarship committee conducts interviews, you could be one of the first candidates to score some coveted face time with the committee.

2. Organize Your Scholarship Applications

Once you've found all of the scholarships you want to apply for, you should create a detailed list with the deadlines and items you need for each application. There are many lists of scholarships online but having one list that is customized for you is a great way to stay organized.

3. List Your Accomplishments

Before you begin filling out scholarship applications, you need to create a list of accomplishments. Not only is this extremely helpful for scholarship season, it's a good exercise for college applications. Scholarship committees want to hear about the awards and accolades you've won when making their decisions about candidates.

If you've never won an award, that's okay. Extracurricular activities, having a high school job, volunteering, and good grades look great on the list of accomplishments, too. Showing the variety of your skills and talents will also give them a better perspective of your personality and work ethic.

4. Look for Scholarships Everywhere

Scour the web and ask for advice from adults you admire in your local community. The more scholarship options you know about, the more chance you have of finding scholarships that fit your needs and eligibility criteria.

Scholarship Do's and Don'ts

5. Be Selective With Letters of Recommendation

Find a few people who know you well, have good things to say, and ask them to write you a letter of recommendation. Great letters of recommendation can make all the difference and having them ready for your application is a smart way to be prepared for scholarships and college applications.

Think about the activities you do and then consider which people can speak to your achievements, personality and skills in those activities. Try to avoid using friends or relatives. And be sure to send a thank you note if someone writes a letter of recommendation for you!

6. Proofread Your Entire Application

Always go through and manually proofread all your essays and applications. The computer can miss a lot of typos and isn't always the best grammar checker. After you proofread your essays, read the essays out loud. If something doesn't sound right, try rewriting or rephrasing problem areas. Don't lose a scholarship because of poor proofreading or because something is "good enough."

7. Apply to Many Scholarships

Scholarship hunting is a numbers game. The more scholarships you apply to, the more money you can earn for college. And, don't disregard a scholarship with a lower amount. Fewer students apply for these, which improves your chances to win them. Remember, every dollar adds up!

8. Remember: Quality Comes First

Applying to every scholarship you can find is a great strategy but remember that you still need to showcase your best work. Be sure to make an impression and give the scholarship committees a clear perspective of who you are and what you seek to achieve.

9. Don't Forget to Take a Break

The scholarship search is a long process. It's important to work hard, but don't let yourself burn out. Make sure to have fun and spend time with friends and family. If you've been working on an essay for hours, take a quick break and recharge.

You never know when a new experience will inspire your next great essay!





Scholarship Resource Sites

Career One Stop is a US Dept of Labor site that helps you locate scholarships, grants and other financial aid award opportunities.

<https://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-scholarships.aspx>

Raise Me site offers “micro-scholarships” from a diverse set of over 250 colleges and universities.

<https://www.raise.me/>

The **College Board Opportunity Scholarships** provide steps and incentives thru a monthly drawing on applying to college. <https://opportunity.collegeboard.org/> Also, check out the scholarship search at <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>

How to Write the Best College Admissions Resume

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/college-admissions-resume>

How to Write a Scholarship Essay

<https://myscholly.com/how-to-write-a-scholarship-essay/>

Students with learning disabilities can find a listing of scholarships at <https://www.usnews.com/education/scholarship-search-insider/articles/2017-02-23/students-with-learning-disabilities-can-secure-scholarships-for-college>

Scholarship Search Sites

Cappex

<https://www.cappex.com/>

Fastweb

<https://www.fastweb.com/>

Scholly

<https://myscholly.com/>

College navigator

<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator.org>

Scholarship Do's and Don'ts

Pitfalls to Avoid with Scholarships

1. All genuine scholarship offers should have contact information readily available for potential applicants. This includes both an address and phone number, at which you should be able to speak to a person or leave a message for a return call if you have a question. It's always a sign of legitimacy when a scholarship you're interested in, is listed with all of the major scholarship databases. Two reputable places you may check are College Navigator or the College Board.
2. Don't Pay Fees-You should never, ever have to pay any money in order to apply for a scholarship. Some con artists collect scholarship application fees, distribute one very small award by means of a lottery system and then keep the remainder of the cash sent to them by unsuspecting students. It is possible, however, that you may have to become a member of an organization in order for your student to be able to apply. For example, you may have to become a member of the installation's spouses club, so your student can apply.
3. Request too much personal information- Identity theft is a concern for everyone, and students have to be especially careful of scholarship scams that request too much personal information. Some scams may even solicit your bank account number on behalf of the scholarship, claiming they need it to deposit your winnings.
4. If you find that a scholarship is backed by a company that claims to have been rated by the Better Business Bureau, look up that rating. That advice also applies to any claims that they are associated with a federal agency, state government or other organization sponsoring or supporting a scholarship.
5. If there is serious pressure to submit your application by an extremely close deadline, don't apply. High pressure sales techniques just aren't necessary for legitimate scholarship organizations. Also, be on the lookout for year-round awards. Most legitimate scholarship companies give out awards on a specific date during the year.

Need to Know

1. Check if scholarship or grant is restricted (fenced) or unrestricted (unfenced).
2. To get statistics on a college's aid information, type in Common Data Set plus the name of the college.
3. Schools have their own rules regarding scholarships and grants.
4. Ask school if you want to use a grant or scholarship in addition to using Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.
5. Need-based aid might be reduced if you bring in outside scholarships or grants.
6. Don't forget to not deadlines.
7. Scholarships and grants are usually tax free as long as you're using the money for qualified expenses. Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education https://www.irs.gov/publications/p970#en_US_2017_publink1000177984 <https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/education-benefits-no-double-benefits-allowed>



Scholarship Do's and Don'ts

Determining Aid and Figuring Out Costs

The College Board administers the **CSS Profile**

<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org>

The **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** is the starting point for numerous grants and scholarships. Some schools require you to fill out the FAFSA to be eligible for merit scholarships.

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>

College Affordability and Transparency Center

<https://collegecost.ed.gov/>

National Center for College Statistics

<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

[https://www.nasfaa.org/State Financial Aid Programs](https://www.nasfaa.org/State_Financial_Aid_Programs)

Federal Grants

- Federal Pell Grants
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/pell#how-much-money>
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/fseog>
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grants.
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/teach>
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant.
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/iraq-afghanistan-service>

Federal Student Aid

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/finding-scholarships>

State Grants

Individual states give out grants to eligible individuals.

- <https://www2.ed.gov/about/contacts/state/index.html>
- [https://www.nasfaa.org/State Financial Aid Programs](https://www.nasfaa.org/State_Financial_Aid_Programs)
- <http://www.collegescholarships.org/scholarships/states.htm>

For More Information: Parents@MilitaryChild.org



Scholarship Do's and Don'ts

Merit Aid

The National Merit Scholarship Program recognizes the highest achieving high school students. The scores from the PreSAT, also called the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, are used to determine eligibility for the National Scholarship Program. Visit the College Board for more information on the **PSAT/NMSQT**,

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10>

There are two major sources of merit scholarships: **private organizations and colleges/universities** themselves. The way you'd go about finding (and applying) for these scholarships depends on their source.

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/finding-scholarships>

When you research colleges, you can use the **Common Data Set**. The Common Data Set allows you to determine a variety of details about each school at a glance, including if and how much the school awards in grants and scholarships. To view a school's common data set, put in your browser the words "Common Data Set" followed by the school's name.

Merit Scholarships from Private Organizations are numerous. Here is a selection:

The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation offers an achievement-based scholarship awarded to graduating high school seniors. Students are recognized for their capacity to lead and serve, as well as their commitment to making a significant impact on their schools and communities.

<https://www.coca-colascholarsfoundation.org/apply/>

Burger King Scholars Program offers scholarships created in memory of BURGER KING® Co-founder James "Jim" W. McLamore. Applicants to this scholarship are judged on their GPA, work experience, extracurricular activities, and community service. Award amounts range from those as small as **\$1,000** to those as large as **\$50,000**.

<https://www.burgerkingscholarship.com>

Military-Connected Scholarships

Military with Kids provides a list with diverse military-connected grants and scholarships on the website.

<https://militarywithkids.com/100-military-kids-scholarships/>

Folds of Honor provides scholarship opportunities for spouses and dependents of Service Members. Awards are up to \$5,000 per academic year.

<https://www.foldsofhonor.org/scholarships/>



Scholarship Do's and Don'ts

Military– Connected Scholarships

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA) College Scholarship Program recognizes the service to the United States and sacrifices by Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard Reserve component members, retirees and their families. Four \$2,500 scholarships for any regular or associate NERA member, spouse, son, daughter or grandchild of a regular NERA member.

https://www.nera.org/Public/Scholarships/Public/NERA_USAA_Scholarship.aspx?hkey=b74044e4-65fd-4180-b656-807e8d68a257

Navy League Foundation awards scholarships to high school seniors who will attend college in the fall. Navy League Foundation scholarships are available to children and grandchildren of veterans or active duty Sea Service men and women, as well as members of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps.

<https://www.navyleague.org/programs/scholarships>

Navy Wives Clubs of America (NWCA) awards a variety of scholarships and grants to dependents of an Enlisted member of the Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard on active duty, or retired with pay or the son or daughter of a deceased member of these categories. Applicants must show basis of need for financial assistance, have a scholastic standing of at least a 2.5 grade point average (GPA), and be a graduate of an accredited high school or its equivalent or will qualify for graduation prior to beginning eligibility for assistance.

<http://www.navywivesclubsofamerica.org/scholarships/>

Our Military Kids is a nonprofit organization that supports children, ages five through 12th grade, whose parents or guardians are deployed National Guard and Reserve Service Members and children of Wounded Warriors from all service branches. Grants pay for participation in activities that help children cope with the stress and anxiety while their parents are recovering or absent. Eligible activities fall into five categories: sports, arts, camps/clubs, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and tutoring.

<https://ourmilitarykids.org/>

Scholarships for Military Children. This program is offered through the commissaries and the Fisher House Foundation. Each commissary awards a \$1,500 scholarship to a selected recipient. It's open to children of active duty, Reserve, Guard, retired, and fallen Service Members.

<https://www.militaryscholar.org/sfmc/index.html>

Thanks USA offers scholarships for military spouses and children.

<https://www.thanksusa.org/scholarship.html>

Veterans of Foreign Wars offers the Voice of Democracy audio-essay program where high school students express themselves in regards to a democratic and patriotic-themed recorded essay. Open to students grades 9-12.

<https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships>



Scholarship Do's and Don'ts

Military-Connected Scholarships

Wings Over America provide college scholarships to dependent children and spouses of all US Navy personnel - officer and enlisted - active duty, retired, honorably discharged or deceased who served with in Naval Air Forces. Recipients are selected on the basis of scholastic merit, community service, extra-curricular activities and character. <https://wingsoveramerica.us/scholarships>

The Army Emergency Relief maintains two scholarship programs – the Spouse Education Assistance Program and the MG James Ursano Scholarship Program for dependent children. Both scholarships provide financial assistance for students who are pursuing their first undergraduate degree. <https://www.aerhq.org/Apply-for-Scholarship>

Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Scholarships

These scholarships are awarded on the basis of merit rather than financial need. The **Navy ROTC** offers both four-year and partial scholarships. To learn more, call -800-NAV-ROTC (1-800-628-7682) or visit www.netc.navy.mil/Commands/Naval-Service-Training-Command/NROTC/Requirements/

The **Marine Officer Navy ROTC** program helps you pay your way through college at approved Navy ROTC schools. <https://www.marines.com/becoming-a-marine/overview.html>

The **Air Force ROTC** college scholarship program targets students pursuing technical degrees, although students entering a wide variety of majors may be accepted. Call 1-866-4-AFROTC (1-866-423-7682) or visit <https://www.afrotc.com/scholarships> for more information.

Army ROTC scholarships are offered at more than 1,000 colleges. For application packets, information about eligibility, and the telephone number of an ROTC advisor in your area, call 1-888-550-ARMY (1-888-550-2769) or visit <https://www.goarmy.com/rotc.html>.

The Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) offers numerous scholarships to children of Service Members in the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Recipients must be full-time students enrolled at an accredited college or university in the United States. Awards are provided up to \$5,000 to individuals pursuing college and graduate degrees, and the foundation provides about \$100,000 each year to recipients in need.

<https://www.fra.org>



For More Information: Parents@MilitaryChild.org



MCEC[®] Scholarship Do's and Don'ts

Parent Programs

Recording to Scholarship Do's and Don'ts:

<http://militarychild.adobeconnect.com/webrec1021/event/registration.html>

If you would like to watch a webinar recording related to today's topic, the recordings can be found on our website:

<https://www.militarychild.org/webinars>

Videos

“Searching for Scholarships “

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7zqiCrfiUE>

MCEC Parent Programs Resources

Find other MCEC Parent Programs Webinars related to this topic at:

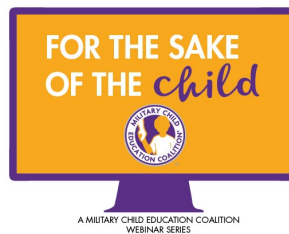
www.militarychild.org/webinars

Contact your local Parent to Parent team for workshops that are offered in your community.

<https://www.militarychild.org/programs/parent-to-parent>

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to:

Parents@MilitaryChild.org



For More Information: Parents@MilitaryChild.org