

## **Tips for Finding Scholarships**

*Searching for scholarships takes time but if you get one, it's free money! You might get a few hundred dollars or four-year full ride. Schools award their own scholarships but there are many other sources, too.*

### **Timing**

Start searching in your junior year or earlier. That's before you get caught up in testing, applying to particular schools, etc. If you start early, you can structure your courses and extracurricular activities to match requirements for a prospective scholarship.

Keep track of the deadlines for scholarship applications. Apply as early as they will accept your application.

### **Consider Your Abilities and Interests**

Narrow your search by considering your future major, interests, extracurricular activities, athletic abilities, and racial, ethnic, or religious background. You need to identify many characteristics of yourself to key in on the best possibilities.

Sports scholarships may be worth looking into. Division I and II schools are the only ones that offer athletic scholarships to incoming freshmen. They are large schools that spend a lot of money on athletics.

Information about NCAA Scholarships and Internships:  
<http://www.ncaa.org/about/scholarships.html>

### **Think Local**

Your best chance for a scholarship can be a local source such as your (or a parent's) employer or local businesses, such as your credit union. You or your parents may also belong to clubs or other organizations that sponsor scholarships. Guidance counselors at your high school also know about local sources of scholarships. You'll have less competition for local scholarships than national ones that may attract thousands of applicants.

### **Read the Requirements**

Carefully check the rules and requirements for the scholarships you apply for. Some require good grades while others consider where you live or your athletic abilities. You may need to submit an essay or demonstrate creativity.

### **Avoid Scams and Frauds**

Watch out for scams, such as web sites or agencies that want to charge you fees to search for scholarships. You can easily find scholarships on no-fee web sites.

## **Web Sites with Scholarship Databases**

Several reputable web sites offer access to huge databases of scholarships. You create a profile, search and get back a list of possible scholarships. However, check for a place to “opt out” of receiving offers, promotions, and other ads if you want to protect yourself from spam. Some sites are also primarily oriented to loans so they promote those, too.

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

A frequently recommended site for finding scholarships, colleges jobs, and internships. The site advertises billions of dollars available. You create a profile so that you save time searching. You can opt out of receiving unsolicited offers and promotions.

[www.srnexpress.com](http://www.srnexpress.com)

Another well-used site where you create a profile to search for scholarships. You can also opt out of receiving e-mails about unsolicited loans, etc.

[http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch\\_ss/welcome.jsp](http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp)

This site is sponsored by the College Board, the company that offers the SAT test. It also asks you to fill out a detailed profile to access the database of scholarships and other aid.