

Everything you need to know about repaying your federal student loans

Most graduates don't have to start repaying federal student loans until six months after leaving school.



You have more than one repayment option.



Standard repayment:

You make fixed monthly payments and finish in about 10 years.



Income-driven repayment:

Your payment adjusts each year based on what you earn, which can make it more manageable if your income is lower.



Graduated repayment:

Payments start smaller and increase every two years, designed for people whose income is expected to grow over time.

Struggling to make payments?

You've got options.



Deferment and forbearance can temporarily pause or reduce your payments while you get back on your feet.



Interest may still build, but it's far better than falling behind or missing payments.



Reach out to your loan servicer early. They often have more flexibility than people expect, especially if you contact them before things escalate.

Small moves that make a big difference.



Turn on autopay to snag a small interest rate reduction. It's a simple "set it and forget it" win.



Update your repayment plan if your financial situation changes. You're not locked into the same plan forever.

Think you might qualify for forgiveness?



Public service workers, teachers, and nonprofit employees may have their remaining balance forgiven after 10 years of qualifying payments.



Check out Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF). It's real, it works for many people, and it's absolutely worth exploring.