

[What do I Need to Prepare for College?](#) | [Applying to College](#) | What happens if I submit my college application late?

What happens if I submit my college application late?

UPDATED MAY 31, 2022

In most cases, college application deadlines are there for a reason, and there's no way around a late submission. So, what happens if you submit your college application late?

First — talk to the admissions office

Before you submit a late application, you should contact the admissions office or an officer you've spoken with directly.

Colleges set deadlines for admission for a reason and your reason for missing that deadline is critical. In some cases, colleges will make an exception if you miss a deadline for a family emergency, medical illness, or natural disaster.



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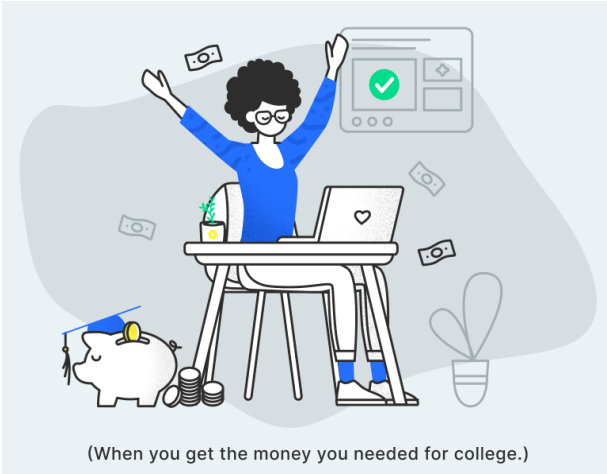


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But it's essential to keep in mind that simply forgetting to turn in your application will likely not grant you an extension.



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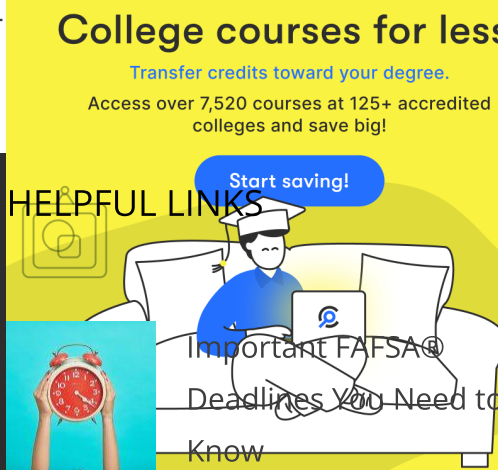
Once you've spoken to the admissions office, it's time to get your application in.

Be prepared to explain your situation

There are many reasons why a student might miss a deadline for college admissions that is excusable. To be granted an opportunity to turn your application in late, you'll need to be ready to tell the admissions office what happened.

If you happen to have documentation to back up your reasoning, that will be helpful when it comes to getting approval. Stay calm, explain your situation, and submit any backup documents you have when they ask for them.

Turn in your application immediately



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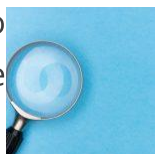
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Once the admissions office gives you the okay to turn in a late application, you'll want to get it in as soon as possible. Submitting it in person (if possible) can help them give your application a face and allow you another opportunity to apologize for being late.

However, if the admission office has requested a specific submission avenue, you should follow their instructions closely.

Follow-up with your school

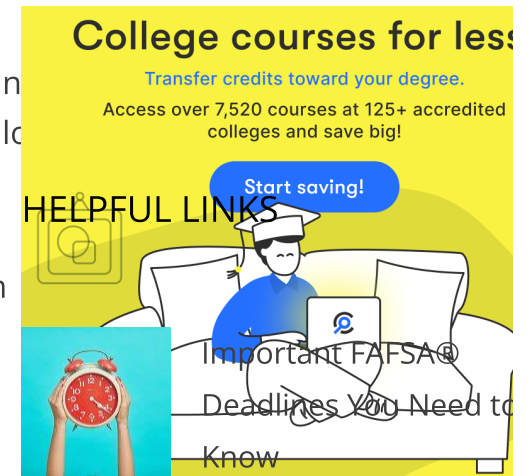
Once you've turned in your application, you'll want to follow up with your school to understand if you're being considered for acceptance. It's likely that your application will be brought [in front of a committee](#) to determine whether or not to consider you for admissions.

Should they need any additional information, you'll want to ensure you get it to them quickly.

Additional disadvantages to a late application

Other than potentially missing the opportunity to attend the school, there are a few other disadvantages to late applications.

A late application may significantly reduce your financial aid package by as much as 50%. Many schools grant financial aid on a first-come, first-served basis, and a late application means you're last in line.



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Additionally, many colleges offer early admissions and regular admissions. Missing both deadlines may put your odds of admission at risk, as many other students have already been accepted ahead of you.

What are your options if you can't submit a late application?

Unfortunately, if the school does not grant you permission for a late application, little can be done in terms of acceptance to that specific school.

However, that doesn't mean you don't have a chance to attend college. Here are some options for students that can't submit a late application:

- Apply to additional schools that offer rolling submissions — they will generally stay open until their classes are full.
- Plan to attend a community college or another university and transfer the following year/semester
- Take a gap year until you can apply for the following year — use that time to save money, gain a new skill, or get some work experience
- Accept attendance at another school where your application was accepted.

Turning in a late application doesn't mean it's the end of your college career. Luckily, there are many other avenues you can pursue to help you succeed. However, if you speak to the right people and have a

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The advertisement features a yellow background with a blue button that says "Start saving!". Below the button is a cartoon illustration of a student wearing a graduation cap and glasses, sitting at a desk with a laptop. To the left of the student is a red alarm clock. The text "HELPFUL LINKS" is written in a stylized font, and "Important FAFSA® Deadlines You Need to Know" is written in a simple font.

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A close-up photograph of a yellow pencil with a green eraser and a silver ferrule.

The complicated 2020- FAFSA® changes that affect your financial aid

A photograph showing a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. A small potted plant is visible in the background.

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A photograph of a magnifying glass with a wooden handle, resting on a light blue surface.

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A photograph of a large, white, classical-style building with a dome, likely a university or government building, under a blue sky with clouds.

legitimate reason for missing a deadline, you may be able to submit your application for consideration.

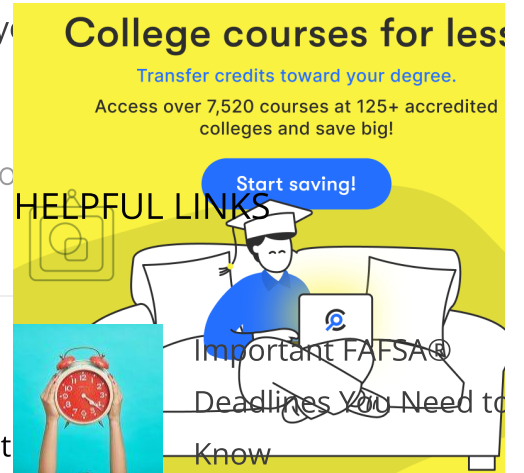
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