



COLLEGE GUIDE

Financial aid information for students and parents

To Parents and High School Seniors,

Congratulations! If you're reading this guide, it means you're preparing for a big step in life — the journey toward higher education.

In today's global marketplace, higher education has never been more valued. Studies show that college graduates with at least a bachelor's degree will, on average, earn \$1 million more over the course of their lifetime than those holding a high school diploma alone.*

But the task of paying for higher education may seem daunting. Tuition costs continue to rise, and it can be easy to become discouraged. You may be unsure about how to start the process...where to look for financial aid...or even if you are eligible for federal aid.

At Fifth Third Bank, we've done the homework for you. For over 150 years we've been helping our customers protect their investments, understand their financial options, and plan for a better tomorrow. In the pages that follow, we'll walk you through the steps in applying for financial aid, help you understand the different programs and resources available to you, and provide you with access to more information to assess your personal financial needs.

College is an exciting time in a young person's life — an important and defining part of the continuing journey of adulthood. Fifth Third is here to ensure that you and your family get off on the right foot as you prepare for this exciting phase in your life. Best wishes on your college experience!

Fifth Third Education Lending

* Source: Bureau of the Census;
Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006



Remember the ABC's of Financial Aid

We recognize how important it is to find the right funds at the right time for your education. That's why Fifth Third has developed a simple formula to make finding funds for college as easy as A-B-C.

A **LWAYS** take advantage of free money first. Fill out the FAFSA to access need-based grants; research and apply for scholarships. Consider supplementing with current income, college savings, and interest-free monthly tuition payment plans.

B **E SURE** to explore federal student loans. Available to both students and parents, federal student loans offer low, fixed interest rates and flexible repayment options.

C **ONSIDER** private student loans **ONLY** after all other options have been exhausted.

How to Apply for Financial Aid

THE FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required to obtain federal and most state financial aid. The U.S. Department of Education uses the information you provide on the FAFSA to complete a “need analysis” to determine your eligibility for federal aid. On your FAFSA, you may request that up to 10 colleges receive your information.

Fill out the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. One of the first steps is to request a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for the student and a PIN for the parent. The PIN will allow you to save your FAFSA and return to complete any missing information later, revise information on your submitted FAFSA and sign the document electronically.

If you choose to file a paper FAFSA, you may obtain one from your high school guidance counselor, a college Financial Aid Office or your local library.

Submit your completed FAFSA as soon after January 1 of your senior year of high school as possible.

Promptly provide any information or verification of income and expense data that your college may require.

Your college may require you to complete other financial aid applications. Be sure to inquire about deadlines your school may have.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- 1 Both dependent student and parent(s) must sign the FAFSA application.
- 2 Always take the Adjusted Gross Income from the last 1040 federal tax return for reporting parents' income.
- 3 You must list the actual taxes paid as shown on the last 1040 federal tax return. Do NOT use the taxes withheld.
- 4 While the FAFSA is free, you may be asked to fill out additional school applications that may require a processing fee.
- 5 Report all required sources of untaxed income. Be sure to include Social Security, child support, earned income credit, etc.
- 6 Divorced parents need to list only their own income and that of their current spouse. Some schools request non-custodial parent information on a separate form.
- 7 You should check with your college's Financial Aid Office to verify how it processes student loans.
- 8 You should always round off numbers to the nearest dollar.
- 9 Remember to read the instructions on all forms carefully.
- 10 Once you choose a college, you should respond to the award letter immediately.



COST OF ATTENDANCE

Each college determines its own Cost of Attendance (COA), which is comprised of estimated direct and indirect costs. For example, tuition, fees, books and supplies are usually direct costs, while room and board, transportation and personal expenses are indirect costs. Both direct and indirect costs may be covered by financial aid.

EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION

When you submit your FAFSA, the U.S. Department of Education performs a need analysis, based on the income and assets you reported, to calculate how much you or your family should pay toward the Cost of Attendance. This amount is called your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is subtracted from the annual Cost of Attendance at the college you plan to attend, to determine your financial need — the amount of financial aid for which you may be eligible. Once your FAFSA is processed, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) that contains the official EFC figure. The same information is also sent to the schools you listed on the FAFSA.

STUDENT AID REPORT AND AWARD LETTER

After you submit your FAFSA, you will receive a copy of your Student Aid Report in 6-10 days if you submitted the FAFSA online or within 6 weeks if you submitted a paper FAFSA.

The Financial Aid Office of each college you listed on your FAFSA will use your SAR to construct your financial aid package. This package will be explained in the award letter you receive. Once you determine which college you want to attend, you should respond to the award letter immediately.

If your family experiences special circumstances after filling out the FAFSA, such as separation or divorce, disability or death, job loss or other events that greatly affect the analysis of your application, contact your Financial Aid Office to make sure that these special circumstances are taken into consideration.

WHAT INFORMATION IS REQUESTED FROM YOU AND YOUR PARENTS?

Sometimes students and parents are dismayed when they are asked to furnish personal financial information to obtain financial aid. In addition to a financial aid application, you may be required to provide copies of federal tax returns for the student and the parents. All of the data requested is essential to ensure that the financial aid programs are administered fairly for all students.

Understand you are not obligated to accept all financial aid that you are eligible to receive.

WHO IS AN INDEPENDENT STUDENT?

You're automatically considered independent if you are...

- Age 24 or older as of December 31 of the current year
- A graduate or professional student
- Married
- Supporting legal dependents other than a spouse
- An orphan in foster care or a ward of the court at any time since age 13
- A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces or currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training
- Determined at any time on or after July 1, 2008, to be an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or at risk of being homeless
- Were emancipated by a court while you were a minor

If you feel your dependency status has not been accurately represented, discuss your personal situation with the financial aid staff at your college.



Sources of Federal Financial Aid

FEDERAL PELL GRANT

A Federal Pell Grant is a need-based award for undergraduate students to help meet the cost of their higher education. It does not require repayment. Aid from additional sources such as loans and work-study jobs may also be obtained by students with significant need who receive a Pell Grant.

How much is the Pell Grant?

The maximum Pell Grant award for the 2010-2011 academic year, is \$5,550. The maximum grant can change each award year and depends on program funding.



ACADEMIC COMPETITIVENESS GRANT (ACG)

The Academic Competitiveness Grant may be awarded to Pell Grant-eligible first- and second-year undergraduates who have completed a rigorous high school curriculum.

How much is the ACG Grant?

Qualified first-year students may receive up to \$750. Second-year students may receive up to \$1,300.

NATIONAL SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS ACCESS TO RETAIN TALENT GRANT (SMART)

SMART Grants may be awarded to third- and fourth-year undergraduates majoring in physical, life or computer science, mathematics, technology, engineering, or a foreign language critical to national security. Recipients must be eligible for a Pell Grant and maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in their major.

How much is the SMART Grant?

The maximum award is \$4,000 per year.

FEDERAL SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANT (FSEOG)

The FSEOG provides additional assistance to undergraduate students with exceptional financial need. Funds generally are given to students with the lowest Estimated Family Contribution (EFC). Therefore, Pell Grant recipients are given priority in receiving these funds.

How much is the FSEOG Grant?

The maximum grant is \$4,000. The amount you may receive will be based on your financial need, how much FSEOG money your college obtains, and the aid you are awarded from other sources.

FEDERAL WORK-STUDY

This program provides jobs — usually at colleges — for undergraduate and graduate students who need financial aid.

What is the pay?

Your earnings will not be less than the federal minimum wage; what you are paid may vary with the nature of your job and the level of skill it requires. Your pay over the course of a year will be based on the weekly number of hours you work (usually 10–20 hours). The maximum number of hours you may work will be determined by your school according to your financial need and your class schedule.

Will my federal work-study job be located on campus?

It can be on or off campus, but a work-study job must always be for a public or private non-profit organization.

FEDERAL PERKINS LOAN

This is a low-interest (5%) loan to help undergraduate and graduate students pay for their education after high school.

How much can I borrow?

Your award is based on your financial need, the amount of Perkins Loan money available at your school, and how much aid is awarded to you from other sources. Loans for undergraduates range up to \$5,500 per year (aggregate maximum is \$27,500). Graduate student loans range up to \$8,000 per year (aggregate maximum is \$60,000, including undergraduate borrowing years).

When am I required to start repaying my Federal Perkins Loan?

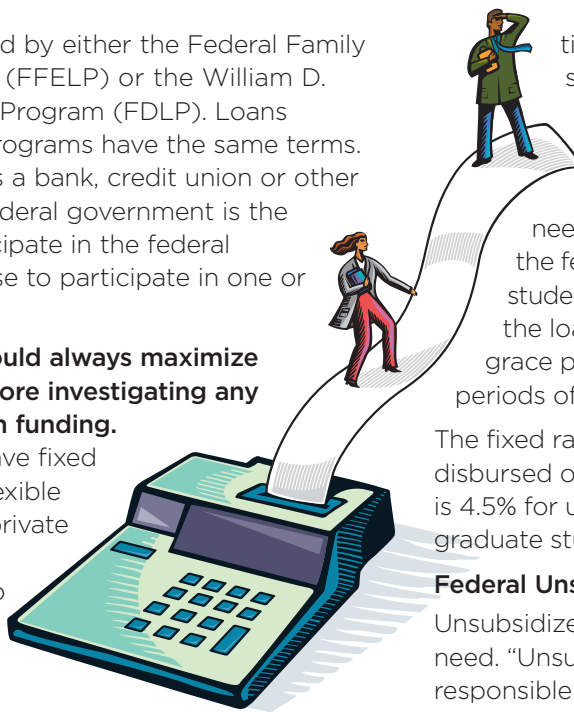
You begin repayment nine months after you graduate, leave school or drop below half-time status.

Fifth Third Bank's Federal Family Education Financing

Federal loans are governed by either the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) or the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program (FDLP). Loans available through these programs have the same terms. In the FFELP, the lender is a bank, credit union or other lender. In the FDLP, the federal government is the lender. Schools that participate in the federal financial aid system choose to participate in one or both of these programs.

Students and parents should always maximize federal loan offerings before investigating any other form of private loan funding.

Federal loans generally have fixed interest rates and more flexible repayment options than private loans. Fifth Third offers a variety of loan products to help you invest in your college education.



time. There are two types of Stafford Loans: subsidized and unsubsidized.

Federal Subsidized Stafford Loans

Subsidized Stafford Loans are available to students who can demonstrate financial need as determined by a formula established by the federal government. With a subsidized loan, the student is not responsible for paying the interest on the loan while in school and during the six-month grace period after leaving school, as well as during periods of authorized deferment.

The fixed rate for subsidized Stafford Loans first disbursed on or after July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011 is 4.5% for undergraduate students and 6.8% for graduate students.

Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans

Unsubsidized Stafford Loans are available regardless of need. "Unsubsidized" means that the student is responsible for all interest that accrues on the loan, including while he or she is in school. The student may elect to pay the interest while in school or have it capitalized (added to the principal loan amount) upon entering repayment. Allowing interest to capitalize will result in paying interest on a higher loan amount in repayment.

The fixed rate for unsubsidized Stafford Loans first disbursed on or after July 1, 2008 is 6.8% for both undergraduate and graduate students.

FEDERAL STAFFORD LOANS

Stafford Loans are fixed-rate loans made to undergraduate and graduate students who are attending colleges, universities, or technical or trade schools at least half time. The maximum Stafford Loan amount you may borrow will be higher if you are an independent student, or if your parents are not eligible for a Federal Parent PLUS Loan. Repayment begins six months after you graduate, leave school or stop attending at least half

ANNUAL STAFFORD LOAN LIMITS

Academic Level	Dependent Student (combined subsidized and unsubsidized)	Independent Student (combined subsidized and unsubsidized)
Freshman	\$5,500	\$9,500
Sophomore	\$6,500	\$10,500
Junior/Senior	\$7,500	\$12,500
Graduate/Professional Students	N/A	\$20,500

LIFETIME STAFFORD LOAN LIMITS

Dependent Undergraduates	\$31,000
Independent Undergraduates	\$57,500
Independent/Professional	\$138,500*

* Exceptions may apply to certain graduate/professional students. Actual loan amount is based on individual eligibility. Loan limits effective as of July 1, 2009.

FEDERAL PARENT PLUS LOANS (FOR PARENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS)

If parents need additional funds to cover their expected family contribution, they may apply for a Parent PLUS Loan.

Federal Parent PLUS Loans enable parents to borrow up to the entire cost of attendance, minus any other financial aid received, for each child who is enrolled at least half time and is a dependent student. This loan is not based on financial need, so it is made regardless of income level. However, a good credit history is required. The interest rate on FFELP Federal Parent PLUS Loans is fixed at 8.5%.

Remember, the total amount of student loans and parent loans can never exceed the cost of attendance less any financial aid you receive.

Federal PLUS Loan repayment begins immediately after the loan is fully disbursed, with a first payment due within 60 days. However, for Parent PLUS Loans first disbursed on or after July 1, 2008, parents may choose to defer payments as long as the student beneficiary remains enrolled at least half time and for an additional six months afterwards. During this deferment period, parents may elect to pay the interest as it accrues; any unpaid interest could be added to the loan principal (capitalized) as often as quarterly and at the end of the deferment period.

FEDERAL GRADUATE PLUS LOANS

Federal Graduate PLUS Loans enable graduate students to borrow up to the total cost of attendance, minus other financial aid received. This loan is not based on financial need, so it is made regardless of income level. The interest rate on FFELP Federal Graduate PLUS Loans is fixed at 8.5%.

Repayment on PLUS Loans begins within 60 days after the final disbursement of the loan; however, loans made to borrowers who are attending school at least half time, will be placed into an automatic deferment that lasts until six months after the student graduates, leaves school,

or drops to less-than-half-time status. Interest will accrue during the deferment period and could be added to the principal (capitalized) as often as quarterly, as well as at the end of the deferment period.

What are my other financing options?

PRIVATE STUDENT LOANS

Fifth Third also offers private student loans to undergraduate and graduate students.

The Smart Option Student Loan[®] funded by Fifth Third Bank can provide the money you need for college if you still have a gap after scholarships, grants, and federal aid. With this private student loan, students can borrow up to the full cost of their education, less other aid received.¹

Designed to help shorten the amount of time it takes to pay off the loan and avoid capitalized interest, the Smart Option Student Loan requires interest-only payments while you are in school. This means you can save significantly by selecting the smartest student loan.

The Residency and Relocation Loan[®] is a private student loan for medical and dental students in their final year of graduate school. Expenses associated with finding a residency, including travel, interviews, and relocation costs, are covered by the loan. Dental school students can also use the Residency and Relocation Loan to help cover their licensure board examination expenses.

The Bar Study Loan[®] helps finance bar exam costs such as bar review course fees, bar exam deposits and/or fees, as well as living expenses while studying for and taking the bar exam. You may apply for a Bar Study Loan if you are enrolled at least half time in your final year of study at an American Bar Association-accredited law school, or have graduated from one within the last 12 months. You must be sitting for the bar exam no later than 12 months after graduation.

Also, these loans require students to be creditworthy, or to have cosigners who are creditworthy. Applying with a cosigner may increase chances of being approved and may help you qualify for a lower interest rate. Fifth Third suggests private student loans as a last resort.

Students who need additional funds for college can get details about private student loans from their school Financial Aid Office or from lenders like Fifth Third.



The Student Loan Process

After your eligibility for other types of financial aid has been determined and you have researched grants and scholarships, you may decide to take out a Federal Stafford Loan to help pay for any remaining costs of your education. Contact your lender for details about repayment, interest rates, fees, grace periods, payment deferrals, penalties for defaulting on loans, etc.

You may obtain a Federal Stafford Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) from your lender, your college Financial Aid Office, or your guaranty agency. Please note that you may receive multiple loans based on the same MPN each year you borrow from the same lender for up to ten years, depending on your school.

- **The MPN is your promise to repay all the money you're borrowing — with interest.** After you have completed the promissory note — either online or hard copy, retain a copy for your records.
- **Your loan must be certified before it is disbursed.** Your college's Financial Aid Office will certify that you are an eligible borrower and will certify the amount you may borrow.
- **Your loan will be approved by a guaranty agency.** This agency is an independent organization or a department of a state government. It "guarantees" loans made by lenders approved by the guarantor and the U.S. Department of Education.
- **If a borrower defaults, the guarantor pays the lender and then collects the loan from the borrower.** The guarantor will pursue all legal remedies to obtain full payment on a defaulted loan. The "guarantee" helps ensure that lenders will continue to be able to make funds available for new students.
- **The Notice of Loan Guarantee and Disclosure Statement make up a single document; this is a legal statement that your loan has been approved by the guarantor and lender.** It includes important details about your loan's terms and conditions, along with the amounts and expected dates of disbursements to you and your school.
- **Electronic Funds Transfers (EFTs) or loan checks are sent by your lender directly to your school.** Your loan funds may be disbursed in two or more transactions, less any default and origination fees. Your college may require that you endorse EFT forms or the loan check(s). You may refuse the loan, without penalty, at any time before you sign the funds transfer form or the loan check.

- **You may use your loan money only to meet education costs at the school specified on your loan application.** If you change colleges while waiting for your loans to be granted, you should notify your lender of this change. Also, notify the Financial Aid Offices at your old and new schools that you have a loan in process with this lender.
- **If you have any questions about information on the Disclosure Statement, or if you want to cancel the loan, contact the lender or school before funds are applied to your account.** If you decide you do not need this loan, you may cancel it without penalty.
- **Your student loan might not stay with the original lender.** Some lenders sell student loans in order to have more funds available to lend to other students. Your loan could also be handled by a servicer that administers and collects education loan payments on behalf of the loan holder.



Borrowing Wisely

HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT TIPS FOR USING STUDENT LOANS WISELY.

- **Borrow as little as possible.** Look ahead to what you expect to earn in your first years on the job in your chosen field — and see if your repayment obligations will be manageable.
- **Understand loan terms.** For example, principal is the amount you borrow; interest is the charge for the money you borrow. Interest that is not paid regularly may be capitalized at certain intervals, meaning the unpaid interest is added to your principal — so that you ultimately pay interest on that interest as well as on the original principal balance of the loan.
- **Follow your repayment schedule.** Paying your student loans on time helps you build or keep an excellent credit record and can save you money. Keep in touch with your lender or servicer and notify them immediately if you are having difficulty making payments. With job loss or sickness, for example, most lenders will help you make arrangements to handle your monthly payments.

When you take out a federally backed student loan, you must complete entrance counseling to learn about debt management and default prevention. Defaulting on your loan can seriously harm your credit rating, and make you ineligible for more federal financial aid if you go back to school. Your lender, guarantor or the federal government will take steps to collect all the money owed, plus interest and penalties.

Remember: *The amount of student loan debt you accumulate may affect the amount of money lenders may offer you later in life for other needs, so only borrow now what you need to cover school expenses.*

Tax Benefits to Help Pay for College

Many families and students can take advantage of tax benefits to help pay their college expenses. You may be eligible for one or more of three tax credits and ten additional education related tax benefits. Whether you can use these benefits depends on your individual circumstances, including your income. Be sure to get a complete explanation from your tax advisor.

These benefits are subject to changes in federal law and regulation changes by the IRS. For more details read IRS publication 970 on **IRS.gov**. Consult with a tax advisor before you make financial decisions or claim the benefits on your federal income tax returns.



Student Rights and Responsibilities

As a federal student loan borrower, you are responsible for the following:

TO YOUR SCHOOL

- Reading and keeping copies of forms you have signed and letters you have sent
- Notifying your school if there is a change in your name, address, phone number, or attendance status
- Completing deferment and forbearance forms accurately, truthfully and on time
- Attending an exit interview before leaving school and providing all information that is requested

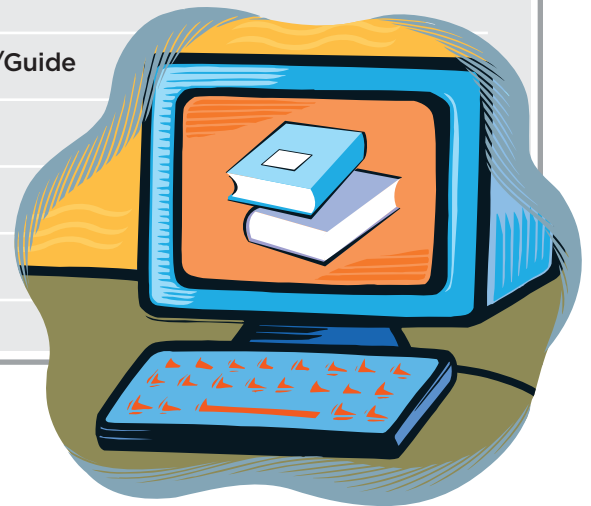


TO YOUR LENDER

- Notifying your lender or the holder of your loan(s) when you graduate, drop out, re-enroll in school, transfer to another school, or drop below half-time status
 - Notifying your lender or the holder of your loan(s) if you change your name, address, phone number, Social Security Number, or graduation date
- Making monthly payments on your loan(s) according to your repayment schedule

Internet Resources – Today there is a wealth of free information available on the Internet. These sources can provide access to many scholarship databases. Here are some helpful Web sites to check out.

Fifth Third Education Lending	www.53EducationLending.com/Guide
College Answer®	www.CollegeAnswer.com
U.S. Department of Education	www.ed.gov
FAFSA on the Web	www.fafsa.ed.gov



College Goal Sunday

College Goal Sunday is a volunteer program that provides free information and assistance to students and families seeking financial aid for post-secondary education. On College Goal Sunday, financial aid professionals from colleges and universities, along with other volunteers, help college-bound students and their families complete the FAFSA.

The program is open to all college-bound students, regardless of age. By delivering help to families in their own communities, College Goal Sunday helps ensure that students get the help they need to qualify for financial aid.

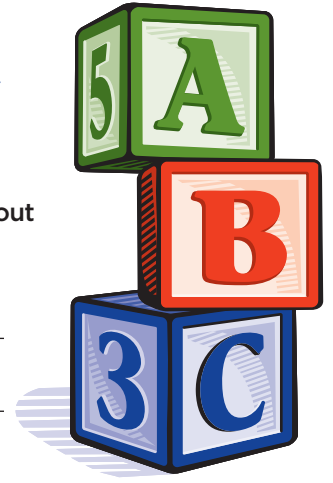
For more information about this program visit www.collegegoalsundayusa.org.

Following Your ABC's

As you research education funding options, use this page to keep track of what you learn as you progress through the ABC's of Financial Aid.

ALWAYS take advantage of free money such as grants and scholarships before taking out a loan to pay for college.

Notes:



BE SURE to explore federal student loans. Available to both students and parents, federal student loans offer low, fixed interest rates and flexible repayment options.

Notes:

CONSIDER private student loans ONLY after all other options have been exhausted.

Notes:

About Fifth Third

Since its beginning, Fifth Third Bank has remained true to a philosophy of strength and stability. The growth of the bank spans nearly 150 years, and from the start, Fifth Third has provided superior customer service and followed sound banking principles. Fifth Third has more than 1,300 financial centers in 12 states.

We see our commitment to funding education as an investment in a better tomorrow. That's why we work closely with families to develop a college financing plan that meets their individual needs and works within their budget. When we fund a student's education, we're doing more than meeting a present need; we're making an investment in that student's future. At Fifth Third, we help students and families make the right choices in financing their education today — so they can focus on tomorrow, and the road ahead.



www.53EducationLending.com/Guide

1-800-222-7192

¹ Borrow up to the cost of attendance (minimum \$1,000) as certified by your school and confirmed by Sallie Mae®, less other financial aid received. Sallie Mae reserves the right to approve a lower loan amount than what the school has certified.

All loans are funded by Fifth Third Bank. Fifth Third and Fifth Third Bank are registered service marks of Fifth Third Bancorp.

All loans subject to credit review and approval. Smart Option Student Loan, Residency and Relocation Loan, Bar Study Loan and College Answer are registered service marks of Sallie Mae, Inc. SLM Corporation and its subsidiaries, including Sallie Mae, Inc., are not sponsored by or agencies of the United States of America. ©2010 Sallie Mae, Inc. All rights reserved. GCR2115

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