

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

The Common Application Tutorial



STEP 1: VISIT THE COMMON APP WEBSITE

Go to commonapp.org to get started.

STEP 2: CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT

Click the "Create an account" button in the upper right corner to start using the Common App platform.

STEP 3: SELECT YOUR USER TYPE

Select how you will use the system. If you are unsure about which options fit for you, click the question mark icons to read each description. Your user options are "First year student," "Transfer student," "Education professional" and "Parent or other adult."

STEP 4: CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT

Fill out all of the information on this page, and then click "Create Account." Keep your password written down somewhere safe so you can log back in.

STEP 5: SEARCH FOR SCHOOLS

Add the University of South Florida to your dashboard. Locate the "College Search" tab at the top of the screen. Here you will type in "University of South Florida," then click the blue plus icon to add USF to your "My College List."

STEP 6: PROVIDE BASIC INFORMATION

Next, you will provide your information under the "Common App" tab at the top of the page. This will be the basic information about yourself that can be used on all college applications. Throughout this process, anything labeled with a red asterisk is required information.

STEP 7: FINISH YOUR PROFILE

Following the tabs on the left side of the screen, click on "Profile." Begin by entering your personal information. Most of this section should already be filled in with the information that you entered while creating your account. Confirm all of the required sections are filled.

STEP 8: ENTER YOUR ADDRESS

Your permanent home address will probably be the same as what you provided earlier, but make sure that it is still up to date. Then, indicate if you would like to use an alternative mailing address before continuing.

STEP 9: ENTER CONTACT DETAILS

On "Contact Details," check off your preferred phone, make sure the number is correct, and add an alternative phone number if you wish to do so.

STEP 10: INDICATE DEMOGRAPHICS

Provide your demographic information. While the questions on this page are sometimes helpful for colleges, they are completely optional. However, you are required to indicate that you have completed the section to your satisfaction before moving on.

STEP 11: PROVIDE GEOGRAPHY INFORMATION

Enter the country and city in which you were born. Additionally, you will need to indicate how many years you have lived in and/or outside the United States.

STEP 12: PROVIDE LANGUAGE DETAILS

Fill out the "Language" section.

STEP 13: PROVIDE CITIZENSHIP INFORMATION

Complete the "Citizenship" section. Depending on your citizenship status, you will need to provide additional information. For example, if you select U.S. Citizen, you will need to provide your Social Security number. If you have a Social Security number, we strongly encourage you to provide it on your application where it is requested. If you do not list your Social Security number on your application before you submit, you will have to submit a copy of your Social Security card to the USF Office of Admissions at a later date.

STEP 14: COMPLETE FEE WAIVER

Complete the "Common App Fee Waiver" section. Answer a question to help Common App determine if you qualify for an application fee waiver. If you answer "yes" to this question, fill out the rest of the page.

Please note that you will still need to submit a fee waiver form to the USF Office of Admissions if you qualify. To receive a fee waiver form, email admissions@usf.edu with the subject line "Fee Waiver Form Request." Your recruiter will provide you with information on the ways to request an application fee waiver through either CollegeBoard, ACT, or NACAC. Typically, you can get this form from your high school counselor, who will send it to USF on your behalf.

STEP 15: ENTER FAMILY INFORMATION

Complete the fields in the "Family" section. Provide information about your household, parents or guardians, and siblings. This information is helpful for colleges to gain a better understanding of your home life.

STEP 16: ENTER EDUCATION DETAILS

In the "Education" section, you will be asked information regarding the high school or schools that you attended. Indicate if you have ever taken college courses or earned college credits. Depending on your response to this question, you may need to provide more information.

Next, you will answer questions regarding grades, courses and the scheduling system.

NOTE: Completing this section is a required step through the Common App system but does NOT replace the need to submit a Student Self-Reported Academic Record (SSAR) or transcripts to USF.

STEP 17: PROVIDE HONORS DETAILS

In the "Honors" section, indicate if you wish to include any honors-related information in your academic achievements. If you do, finish answering the questions on this page.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

The Common Application Tutorial



STEP 18: DESCRIBE AFFILIATION WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Answer the questions about your affiliation with “Community-Based Organizations.”

STEP 19: DESCRIBE FUTURE PLANS

In “Future Plans,” indicate your career interests and the highest degree you intend to earn.

STEP 20: REPORT TESTING INFORMATION

In the “Testing” section, you will have the option to self-report scores or future test dates. Please keep in mind that all test scores must be sent from the official and original source.

STEP 21: LIST ACTIVITIES

In the “Activities” section, you may report activities to help colleges gain a better understanding of your life outside of school. Some examples include your participation in arts or music, clubs, sports and community activities.

STEP 22: COMPLETE WRITING SECTION

The final section of the Common App is “Writing.” Depending on which college you are applying to attend, you may need to write an essay.

NOTE: USF does NOT require a written essay with the application.

STEP 23: PROVIDE FINAL COLLEGE INFORMATION

When you are finished filling out your Common App, navigate to the “My Colleges” tab.

Locate the University of South Florida on the left-hand side panel. If you click this box, you will see a drop-down list of the college information and everything that needs to be completed for the USF application. Be sure to input all of the necessary information under the “Questions” section, as well as the “Recommenders” and “FERPA” sections.

STEP 24: REVIEW AND SUBMIT

In the “Review and Submit” Common App section, review for any final changes. Any incomplete items will be listed on this page for you to easily go back and correct. If you need to go back to make changes, navigate to the section that you want to change, make your updates and save. Then review your information once more. When everything is complete, review and submit your application.

STEP 25: UPDATE YOUR APPLICATION

If there are any changes to your application or information after you have submitted, please submit the Application Addendum Form through [the USF Applicant Portal](#).

AFTER YOU SUBMIT

Your next step is to submit your additional documentation, including test scores, Student Self-Reported Academic Record/transcripts and residency.

Test scores must be sent directly to USF from the testing agency. Our SAT code is 5828, and our ACT test code is 0761. Additionally, request submissions for any AP/IB/CLEP/AICE exams you have taken.

U.S. FRESHMAN STUDENTS:

If you completed all four years of high school at a U.S. institution, you will need to fill out the Student Self-Reported Record via link sent to your email or found in the [USF Applicant Portal](#).

If you completed any year of high school at an institution outside of the U.S., you will need to submit high school transcripts instead of the Student Self-Reported Academic Record.

You can find more details on the Student Self-Reported Academic Record at admissions.usf.edu/SSAR

INTERNATIONAL FRESHMEN STUDENTS:

Request transcripts to be submitted from each school you have attended — this includes official high school transcripts, official college transcripts from dual enrollment courses and official transcripts from any college attended.

To submit residency documentation and other supplemental documentation, use the USF NetID number provided to you in an email to activate your USF NetID. You will then use it to log in and submit your documentation through the [USF Applicant Portal](#).

CONTACT USF’S OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS

Email: admissions@usf.edu

Phone: 813-974-3350