Loan Comparison Chart

2026-27 Award Year

COMPARE	Direct Subsidized & Unsubsidized	Parent PLUS	Grad PLUS*	Optional / Private
Borrower	Undergraduate or graduate/professional student	Parent of an eligible dependent undergraduate student	Eligible graduate/professional **legacy borrower only**	Student; co-signer may be required
Credit check	No	Yes - federal credit review	Yes - federal credit review	Yes - lender criteria
2026-27 interest rate	**Undergrad Subsidized & Unsubsidized**: 6.52% **Grad/Professional Unsubsidized**: 8.07%	9.07%	9.07% for eligible legacy borrowers	Varies by lender
Origination / processing fee	1.057% federal loan fee	4.228% federal loan fee	4.228% federal loan fee	Varies by lender
Interest Accrual	**Subsidized**: government pays during eligible in-school periods (enrolled at least half-time) and during 6-month grace period (after no longer being enrolled at least half-time) **Unsubsidized**: borrower responsible – interest accrues from date of disbursement	Parent responsible from date of disbursement	Student responsible from date of disbursement	Varies by lender (accrued interest may be capitalized as often as monthly)

***Grad PLUS:** Beginning July 1, 2026, the program is not available to new graduate/professional borrowers. A limited legacy exception may apply to qualifying borrowers.

Eligibility & Repayment

Compare borrower requirements and repayment structure.

COMPARE	Direct Subsidized & Unsubsidized	Parent PLUS	Grad PLUS*	Optional / Private
Core eligibility	FAFSA; eligible citizenship status; degree-seeking in eligible program; UCF admission; at least half-time; Meets SAP (Warning & Probation status also eligible); complete required items/verification; no unresolved default or overpayment.	Student completes FAFSA and meets federal/UCF eligibility; student at least half-time; Meets SAP (Warning & Probation status also eligible); parent meets federal credit requirements.	FAFSA; graduate/professional degree-seeking; at least half-time; Meets SAP (Warning & Probation status also eligible); required items complete; federal credit requirements; **must qualify for the limited legacy exception.**	Student/co-signer creditworthy per lender; lender rules may address citizenship, degree-seeking status, SAP, and enrollment.
Repayment / grace	6-month grace period after student drops below half-time.	Repayment generally begins 60 days after disbursement; deferment while student is at least half-time may be requested through servicer.	Eligible legacy borrowers generally receive in-school deferment and a 6-month post-enrollment grace period.	Deferment and grace options vary widely by lender.

Limits, Applications & Resources

COMPARE	Direct Stafford	Parent PLUS	Grad PLUS*	Optional / Private
Loan limits	Subject to annual and aggregate federal limits, Cost of Attendance or financial need constraints, and applicable enrollment-based reductions. For more information regarding borrowing limits, visit the "UCF Direct Stafford Loans" page.	New Parent PLUS borrowers beginning 7/1/26: up to $20,000 per year per dependent student and $65,000 aggregate per student. Legacy provisions may differ. Borrowing cannot exceed the Cost of Attendance.	No new Grad PLUS eligibility beginning 7/1/26. Limited legacy borrowers may continue for up to 3 academic years or remaining expected time to credential, whichever is shorter, subject to program requirements. Borrowing cannot exceed the Cost of Attendance.	Up to Cost of Attendance minus other aid, subject to lender approval and school certification.
How to apply	File FAFSA; complete UCF/federal loan requirements; accept eligible Direct Loan award in myUCF.	File FAFSA; parent completes the federal Parent PLUS application and required MPN/counseling when applicable.	Confirm legacy eligibility; complete applicable federal Grad PLUS application and requirements.	Choose a lender; complete lender application/disclosures; lender sends certification request to UCF.

Resource Links

- UCF Direct Stafford Loans
- UCF Parent PLUS Loans
- UCF Grad PLUS Loans
- UCF Optional / Private Loans
- UCF Loans Overview
- UCF Federal Changes for 2026-27
- FAFSA - StudentAid.gov
- Federal Direct Loan Information
- Federal PLUS Loan Information
- StudentAid.gov
- FY27 Federal Loan Fee Announcement