Welcome to the guided tour for student loan borrowers. On this tour, you'll find out how to receive a student loan and get advice on managing your student loan debt. You can leave the tour at any time to find out more about a subject by clicking on the highlighted text. If you have a question about your student loan and don't find your answer here, try our interactive Loan Wizard.

Troops and families: Student loan repayment may be one of the issues on your minds. Read more about your options.

Ten Steps for Managing Your Student Loan Debt:

1. Consider student loans only after you have researched all the sources of free financial aid.

2. Consider the loan programs available to you and your parents.

3. Plan an in-school and after-school budget before you take out your first student loan.

4. Manage your student loan debt by deciding how much you can afford to borrow and how much you can realistically repay.

5. Estimate your student loan payment so you will know how much you will be expected to repay each month. Establish a good credit history by repaying your student loan on time (view the Repayment Options webcast for additional information).

6. Contact your loan holder about any changes in your status or anything that may affect your ability to pay your loan. These changes may include transferring to another school, changing your name or address, leaving school, or graduating. If you are unsure of who holds your loans, visit our Locating Your Loans page.

7. Consider deferments or forbearances if a situation occurs that requires you to adjust or suspend your payments temporarily. Research your loan forgiveness, cancellation, and discharge options.

8. Consider a Federal Consolidation Loan if you want to consolidate several loans or types of loans into one loan. View the Making Sense of Loan Consolidation webcast.

9. Understand the consequences of a student loan default. If your loan currently is in default, consider your options.

10. If you have an issue you've been unable to resolve with your school, loan holder, or
guarantor, contact your student loan ombudsman.