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3 Tips for Repaying Student Loans

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What can you do to prepare and avoid falling behind on your payments? Here are three steps you can take to plan ahead and manage your debt:

1. **Know your loan servicer and your balance.** Your loan servicer is the company that handles your loan payments and communicates with you on behalf of the Department of Education. You can find out who your loan servicer is and how much you owe by logging in to your account at studentaid.gov. You should also check your contact information and make sure it is up to date.
2. **Review your repayment plan and options.** Depending on your income, family size, and loan type, you may be eligible for different repayment plans that can lower your monthly payments or extend your repayment term. You can use the [Loan Simulator](https://studentaid.gov/loan-simulator) tool at studentaid.gov to compare different plans and see how they affect your payments and interest. You can also apply for an income-driven repayment plan or a deferment or forbearance if you are facing financial hardship or other qualifying circumstances. Deferment and forbearance are legal terms that refer to different ways of temporarily delaying repayment. Learn more about the new, income-driven repayment plan, called SAVES, at studentaid.gov/announcements-events/save-plan.
3. **Budget for your payments and save what you can.** If you have not been making payments on your

loans for more than three years, it may be hard to adjust your budget and find room for them. Read the article "[Establishing a Budget](#)." Then, look for ways to reduce your expenses or increase your income, such as cutting back on unnecessary spending, refinancing other debts, or finding a side hustle.

By following these steps, you can prepare yourself for the change and make smart decisions about your loans.

One last tip: Be alert to potential scams. Some scammers may try to take advantage of borrowers who are confused or worried about their loan repayments. They may offer help in exchange for a fee, or ask for your personal or financial information. Do not fall for these scams, and never pay anyone to manage your loans.

You can get free and legitimate help from your loan servicer, the Department of Education, the CAPTRUST Advice Desk, or a nonprofit credit counselor. To reach the CAPTRUST Advice Desk, call 1-800-967-9948.