

Cash for College: 5 Fintech Tools to Help You Pay for School

If you are a high schooler preparing for college, investing in higher studies would be one of your most significant financial commitments. With escalating college costs, rising tuition fees, and many associated expenses, how do you plan to manage your money?

Thankfully, high schoolers and college freshers now have access to powerful fintech tools. Recent advancements in financial technology have made college life much easier. Your peers might already be managing college funds like a pro.

So, why would you be missing out on something as crucial as your money management? These innovative solutions from leading fintech platforms can help you excel in managing college expenses, besides strengthening your financial literacy.

Let's explore the potential of fintech apps for college students and make the most of it.

How relevant is fintech to college students?

Your college days give you the essence of independence, and you learn to live away from your family. Well, this is the ideal time to start with personal finance concepts. Acquiring financial literacy early in your life would deliver its bonus throughout your thirties, forties, and late into your retired life!

Let's examine the numbers to determine how relevant fintech is for college students.

- As much as 72% of college students make payments using smartphone apps, while 93% of students have access to digital payment solutions.
- Fintech companies have helped thousands of students access scholarships and manage their college expenses.
- Currently, the student loan debt in the US stands at \$1.71 trillion. Naturally, students need fintech apps to ease their loan repayment process and responsibly manage debt.

While personal finance often intrigues teens or tweens, fintech solutions can help you navigate these complex concepts. A lucid understanding of finance and responsible money-handling habits equip students with essential skills for a successful future.

These valuable tools go a long way in nurturing financial literacy, helping you stride toward financial independence.

How can fintech apps make you financially resilient?

Using fintech apps to cultivate financial literacy and manage expenses empowers college students to control their finances responsibly. With the right approach, you can take the initial steps to understand your income and accumulate savings. Finance management becomes amazingly efficient with the right set of tools at your disposal.

Budgeting and college expense tracking

College life is hectic, and it might be overwhelming to juggle multiple responsibilities. Students often feel financially stressed and unable to manage their expenses. Familiarizing

yourself with fintech solutions can help you simplify serious monetary responsibilities like expense tracking, budgeting, and paying your bills. Whether you remain obsessed with your studies or side hustles, money management becomes breezy with fintech solutions.

Getting started with investments

Fintech apps go a long way in bridging the gap between financial services and college education. Traditionally, you might have considered investments in stocks, bonds, or cryptocurrencies inaccessible. However, the reality is evolving, and you might start building your investment portfolio even before you graduate!

Access to loans, grants, and scholarships

Fintech apps also bring you a plethora of loans and refinancing options. Also, these AI-backed platforms ease up your grant and scholarship applications. Fintech solutions fast-track your access to all sorts of financial resources that might help you manage your college expenses.

Top fintech tools every college student should use

Check out these robust fintech tools that can simplify money management for students.

Acorns: Micro-Investing for College Savings

Acorns is a popular fintech app among college students that enables you to save for college, rounding up your daily expenses to the nearest dollar. The tool invests the spare change in a variety of avenues. Therefore, you may use Acorns as a micro-investing platform to help you grow your savings as

you graduate.

Key features of Acorns

- The app has been designed to automatically invest spare changes from daily transactions of students into diversified portfolios.
- You can set up recurring contributions from your bank account as a student. So, putting aside a part of your income from a part-time job or side hustle into your portfolio is wise.
- Acorns have also partnered with different brands that offer cashback rewards to students. The fintech solution automatically invests these amounts into your portfolio.

The provision for setting up recurring contributions helps students cultivate the habit of saving. This way, you keep contributing to your college fund. Besides, the Found Money feature boosts your savings by turning rewards into investment opportunities. Acorns, therefore, deploy a plethora of smart mechanisms to accelerate the growth of your savings.

Upstart: Alternative Student Loans

One of the leading online platforms for obtaining student loans, Upstart has gained popularity due to its innovative funding solutions. Being a student, you might not have a substantial credit record to qualify for traditional loans from private banks. Upstart can make college funding easier, serving as an alternate source of student loans.

The groundbreaking fintech solution primarily banks on AI solutions to evaluate the repayment capabilities of borrowers based on their future earning potential. Accordingly, it offers college students access to affordable loans.

Key features of Upstart

- Upstart offers flexible eligibility criteria, examining factors beyond credit scores. For instance, their AI algorithms scrutinize the job market associated with the given profession, the majoring domain, and salary trends to determine job eligibility.
- For students, obtaining loans at competitive interest rates is no more a barrier. Upstart has made student loans available at reasonable interest rates.
- Most importantly, the digitized interface of the AI-driven platform enables faster loan approvals. The disbursed loans would typically get credited to your account within a few days.

Upstart's innovative approach to serving as an alternative source of student loans has been a novel idea. The fintech company has rightly identified the pain points of students struggling to qualify for private loans. The evaluation approach of Upstart is much more holistic and opens up opportunities for college students who would otherwise be struggling to secure loans.

Mint: Budgeting and Expense Tracking

Mint continues to be an extensively used app to manage personal finance. However, college students primarily use this fintech app for budgeting and expense tracking. Mint provides real-time insights into spending habits and patterns. This fintech solution can empower you to make informed financial decisions based on analytics to save money for college.

Key features of Mint

- As a student, you must create customized budgets for different overheads such as tuition fees, living expenses, and socializing costs. Mint would help you segregate your expenses and organize your budgeting

process.

- It also supports features like tracking expenses and alerts users when they exceed their stipulated budget limits.
- Mint can send you timely reminders to clear your bills so you never miss out on your deadlines. This can save you from penalties and late fees.
- You can also count on the app to monitor your credit score. It offers personalized recommendations to boost your credit score.

Overall, Mint offers necessary tools to college students to track their expenses and master the basics of finance management. You can learn to allocate your funds intelligibly, set spending limits on different overheads, and remain within your budget.

Scholly: Scholarship search and application app

If you are struggling to apply for FAFSA or scholarships through the official website, try Scholly. This is a dedicated fintech solution designed to streamline the scholarship application process. This tool would help you search for suitable scholarships, filtering the most suitable ones from millions of funds. With the right recommendations and filtering assistance, this app strengthens your chances of securing the necessary financial aid.

Key features of Scholly

- The scholarship matching feature of Scholly eases up the application process. The tool can recommend relevant financial aids based on your qualifications and unique profile, thereby saving efforts and time.
- It tracks your scholarship applications, document requirements, and deadlines. This would keep you

organized throughout the process.

- You might find the essay assistance feature of Scholly effective. This should help you develop impactful scholarship essays that can make a difference.

Scholarships are free funds that go a long way in alleviating your financial burden. With a plethora of these funding options available, you might not be sure which one to apply for. With Scholly, you can address this challenge since the innovative algorithm matches suitable scholarships to the student profile.

Moreover, you can stay organized with its application tracking feature and ensure you do not miss your deadlines.

SoFi: Student Loan Refinancing

SoFi is one of the most reliable fintech platforms in the US, specializing in refinancing student loans. The attractive refinancing option of SoFi can help you save significantly on your loan interest. A sizable student population is already refinancing their federal and private loans with affordable SoFi loans to enjoy better interest rates and repayment flexibility.

Key features of SoFi

- College students heavily rely on SoFi since it offers competitive interest rates for refinancing student loans. With a strategic approach, you can save interest worth thousands of dollars.
- The repayment options are flexible, and students can choose from several repayment terms and options, considering their goals and financial situations.
- SoFi also brings bonus benefits, such as access to financial planning resources, networking events, and career coaching.

If you are struggling with your existing student loans, switching to a new one through refinancing can ease your debt burden. You would also find its financial planning and career coaching resources beneficial.

College finance can be challenging – and tricky!

Financing your college education shouldn't prompt you to live on noodles or compromise your social life! With many fintech tools available, you can manage your college expenses without allowing debt to get the better of you.

Fintech holds a lot of potential for students. You simply need to channel your financial literacy and pursue your academic goals with confidence. A strategic approach to money handling at college defines your foundation for embracing financial independence early in your life.

We have presented five fintech solutions addressing various financial concerns for college students. From alternative student loan apps like Upstart to micro-investing platforms like Acorns, you can use these apps to budget, track expenses, borrow, save, and apply for scholarships.

FAQ

Should I start using fintech apps while in college?

The earlier you start using fintech apps as a college student, the better you can track your expenses. When you live on limited funds, fintech apps can help you manage your budget and curtail expenses. Also, this will help you cultivate financial responsibility early in your life.

Should college students use micro-investing apps?

Definitely! Before investing more significant amounts in stocks, mutual funds, or bonds, micro-investing apps can help you understand the basics of portfolio diversification. Besides, you can start investing small amounts, like your spare change, to gradually grow your portfolio.

Can alternate student loan providers lend me at reasonable interest rates?

Yes, popular refinancing fintech platforms offer student loans at competitive interest rates. They won't consider your credit score the only factor to assess your eligibility. So, if you find obtaining a student loan from traditional banks challenging, it's worth contacting reputed fintech platforms.

How can fintech apps help you build by credit score?

It's wise to start building your credit score as a student, as you can demonstrate your creditworthiness while obtaining loans. Many fintech apps allow you to monitor credit scores. Besides, their personalized recommendations can help you improve your credit score and build a strong credit record.

How can fintech apps help me increase my chances of getting scholarships?

Some scholarship matching apps like Scholly can help you find and apply for suitable scholarships. You don't end up wasting your time using it at random places. Moreover, this tool can recommend the most relevant financial aid based on your qualifications and academic profile. Once you know your eligible scholarships, you can opt for a smaller student loan to lower your liabilities.

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