



**Optometry Centralized Application Service
OptomCAS Applicant Data Report – A National Snapshot
2016-2017**

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Introduction

OptomCAS is the centralized application service for the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) and is administered by Liaison International Inc., an education information technology company located in Watertown, MA. OptomCAS allows optometry applicants to use a single web-based application and one set of materials to apply to multiple schools and colleges of optometry. Applicants who apply through OptomCAS submit a completed web-based application comprised of biographical data, colleges and universities attended, academic course history, letters of recommendation, work experience, extracurricular activities, honors and a personal essay. It is the applicant's responsibility to read and follow specific instructions for OptomCAS and the schools and colleges of optometry.

OptomCAS began its first year on July 15, 2009 for Admissions Cycle 2009-2010. Since its implementation, all eligible schools and colleges of optometry have participated in the centralized application service. OptomCAS provides validated numbers for the optometry application process.

This report will focus on OptomCAS Cycle 8, which is the Admissions Cycle 2016-2017. This cycle opened on June 29, 2016 and closed on June 2, 2017. The application fee was \$165 for one institution and \$65 for each additional institution.

Participating Institutions for 2016-2017

As noted in Table 1, twenty-three schools and colleges of optometry participated in OptomCAS in Admissions Cycle 2016-2017.

Table 1.

Chicago College of Optometry, Midwestern University	Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry
Illinois College of Optometry	Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University
Indiana University School of Optometry	Southern College of Optometry
Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry	State University of New York State College of Optometry
MCPHS University School of Optometry	University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry
Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University	University of California, Berkeley School of Optometry
Midwestern University Arizona College of Optometry	University of Houston College of Optometry
New England College of Optometry	University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg

	School of Optometry
Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry	University of Missouri at St. Louis College of Optometry
Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry	University of Pikeville, Kentucky College of Optometry
The Ohio State University College of Optometry	Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry
Pacific University College of Optometry	

OptomCAS Trends

Applicants and Applications

The number of OptomCAS individual verified applicants to the twenty-three schools and colleges of optometry for 2016-2017 was 2,687. These applicants submitted a total of 13,339 applications for an average of 4.96 applications per applicant. See Table 2 below for a comparison to previous cycles.

Table 2.

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Verified Applicants	2,545	2,639	2,604	2,732	2,812	2,687
Verified Applications	13,393	13,210	13,164	13,261	13,620	13,339
Total Verified Applications per Applicant	5.26	5.01	5.06	4.85	4.84	4.96

There was a 4.4% decrease in the number of applicants compared to the previous cycle. The total verified applications decreased by 2.1% to an average of 4.96 applications per applicant.

Designations

The top three designations for applicants to the Doctor of Optometry program were: Illinois College of Optometry, Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry and Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry (reference Table 3). Please note these are OptomCAS applicant numbers and some institutions have a supplemental application that must be completed before an applicant will be considered for their program.

Table 3.

State	School	Total Applicants	Applicants Denied	Applicants Offered
IL	Chicago College of Optometry, Midwestern University	500	337	163
IL	Illinois College of Optometry	1102	788	314
IN	Indiana University School of Optometry	535	379	156
PR	Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry	275	170	105

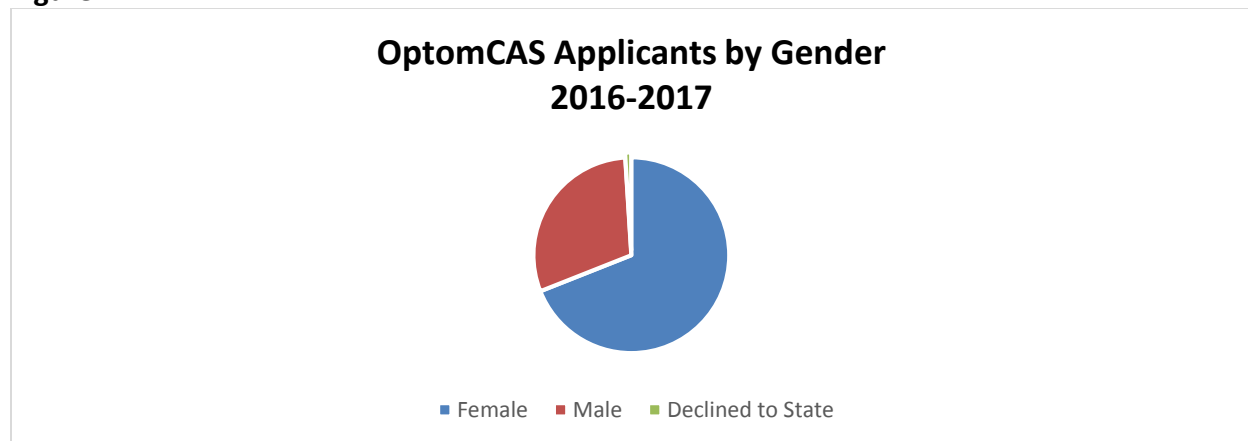
MA	MCPHS University School of Optometry	633	504	129
MI	Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University	177	123	54
AZ	Midwestern University Arizona College of Optometry	626	472	154
MA	New England College of Optometry	831	514	317
OK	Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry	293	242	51
FL	Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry	1049	829	220
OH	The Ohio State University College of Optometry	525	429	96
OR	Pacific University College of Optometry	546	397	149
PA	Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry	1072	632	440
CA	Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University	531	366	165
TN	Southern College of Optometry	801	653	148
NY	State University of New York State College of Optometry	512	411	101
AL	University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry	377	263	114
CA	University of California, Berkeley School of Optometry	240	174	66
TX	University of Houston College of Optometry	626	496	130
TX	University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry	564	496	68
MO	University of Missouri at St. Louis College of Optometry	329	241	88
KY	University Pikeville, Kentucky College of Optometry	490	399	91
CA	Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry	705	581	124

Demographic Information on the Doctor of Optometry Applicant

OptomCAS demographic data are captured on the OptomCAS application. This information cannot be verified by Liaison staff.

Gender

Figure 1.



As shown in Figure 1, females comprised 67% of the OptomCAS applicant pool with males at 33%. Less than 1% of the applicant pool's gender was unknown. There was a decrease in female

applicants and an increase in male applicants compared to the previous OptomCAS admission cycle.

Age

Figure 2.

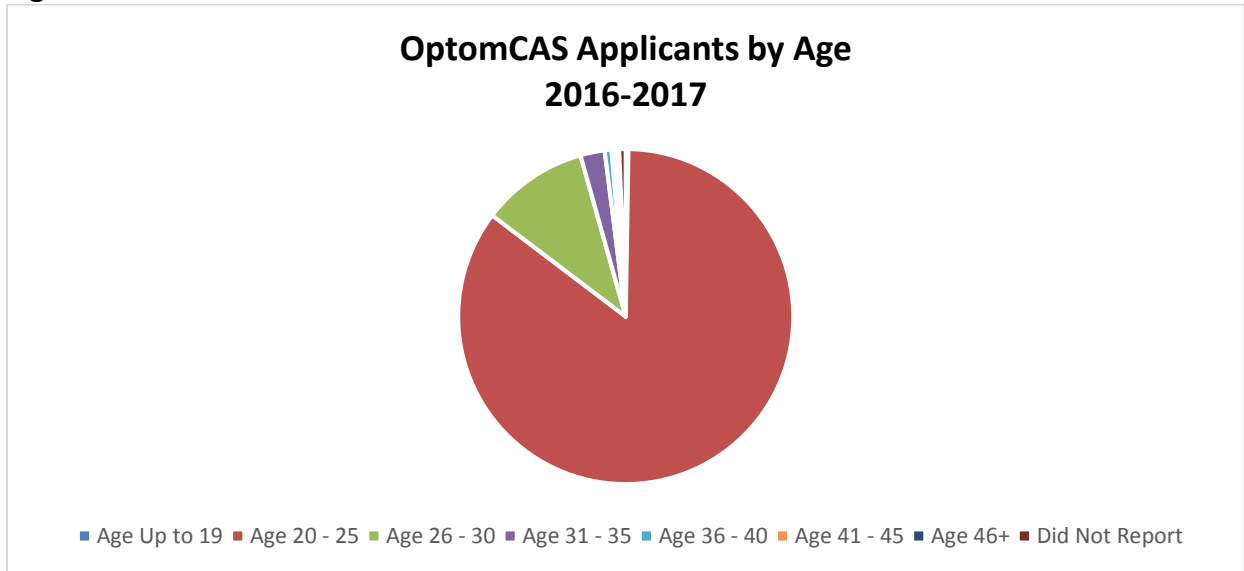
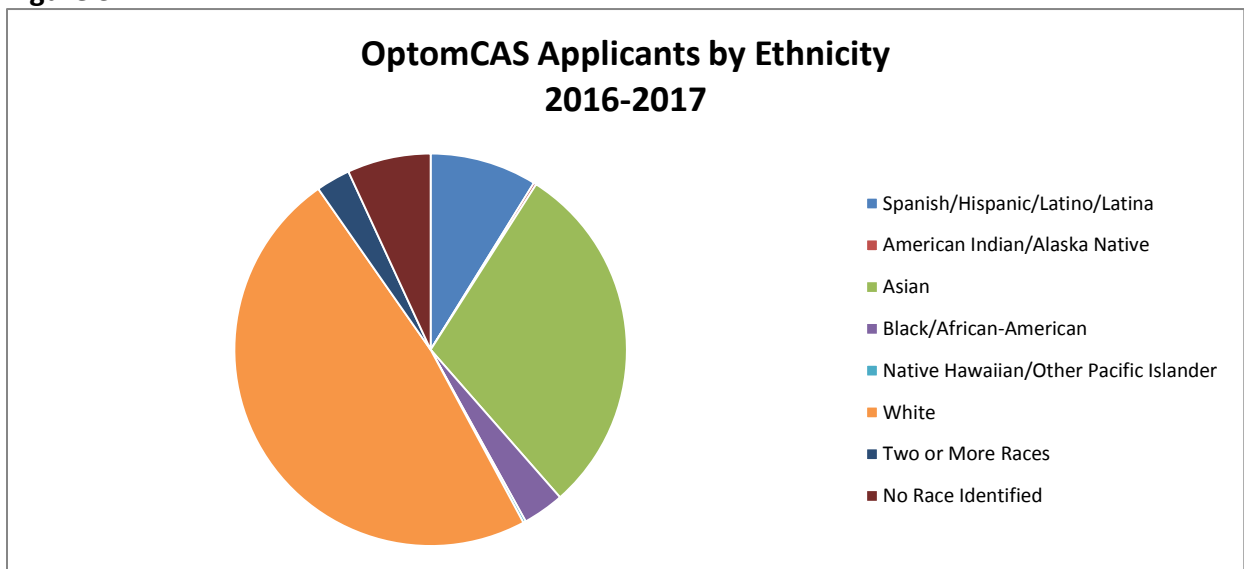


Figure 2 shows that the majority of applicants were in the 20-25 age range. The average age for all applicants was 23.2 with a median age of 22. The youngest applicant was 17 and the oldest was 59. There was a very slight change from the previous OptomCAS admissions cycle regarding the average and median age.

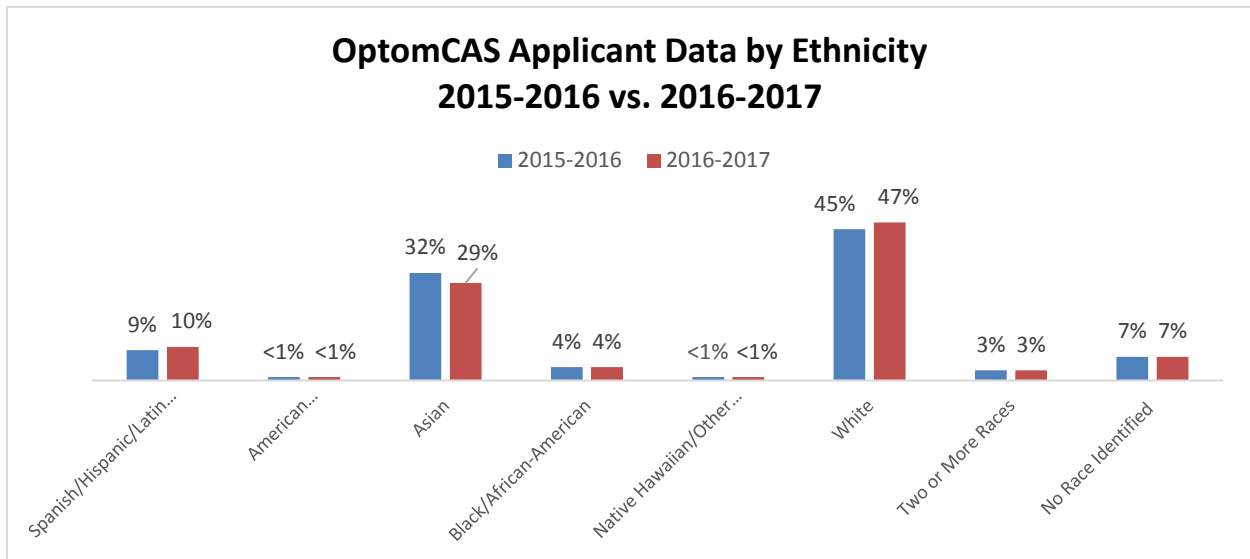
Ethnicity

Figure 3.



As shown in Figure 3, the majority of applicants were White (47%) with the other applicants reporting Asian (29%), Spanish/Hispanic/Latino/Latina (10%), Black/African-American (4%), Two or More Races (3%), American Indian/Alaska Native (less than 1%), and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (less than 1%). Seven percent of applicants did not report a race.

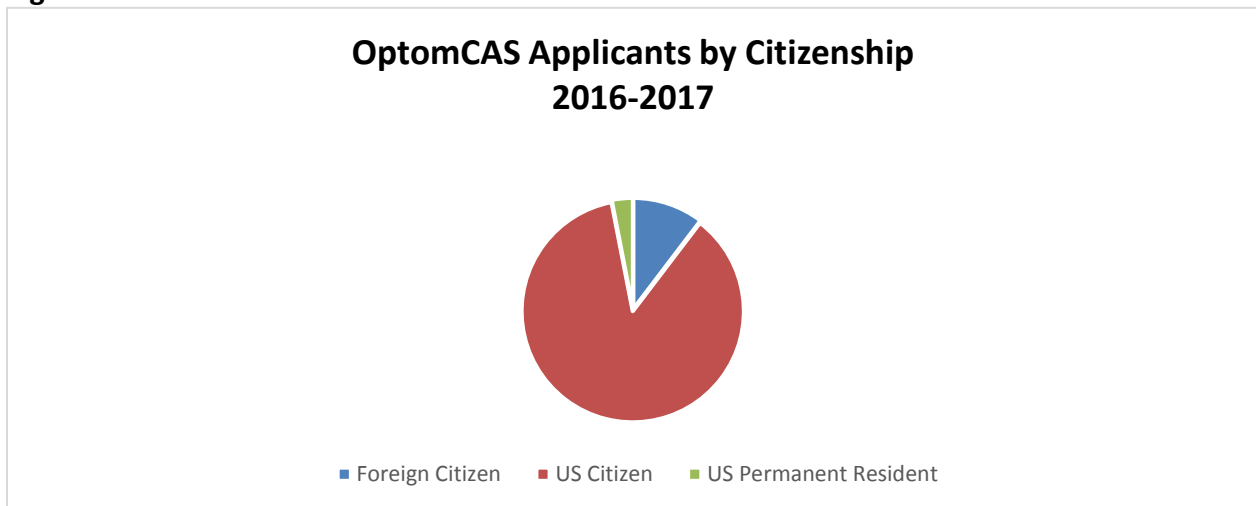
Figure 4.



As shown in Figure 4, there were minor shifts in the ethnicity categories for this application cycle from last cycle with a slight increase in Spanish/Hispanic/Latino/Latina and White applicants. There was a decrease in Asian applicants.

Citizenship

Figure 5.



As shown in Figure 5, the majority of applicants in 2016-2017 were US citizens at 89%. Eight percent of applicants reported they were foreign citizens and 3% US permanent residents. This was very similar to last year.

State of Residence

The top five states where OptomCAS applicants claimed their state of residence in 2016-2017 were: California, Texas, New York, Florida and Illinois. There were 200 applicants from Canada. In the 2015-2016 Admissions Cycle, the top five states were: California, Texas, Florida, New York and Illinois and 223 applicants from Canada.

First Generation College Student

In 2016-2017, 63% of submitted OptomCAS applicants had a parent who attended/graduated from college, while 28% of applicants are first generation college students. Nine percent declined to answer the question. This was similar to last year.

Military Experience

Less than 1% of OptomCAS applicants had previous military experience, which was the same as the last admissions cycle.

Influences

The top five influences on why an applicant chose to apply to a Doctor of Optometry program were: non-relative optometrist, a parent who is a non-optometrist, relative optometrist, other health professional and friend. These influences were the same as last admissions cycle.

Academic Information on the Doctor of Optometry Applicant

Major

The most selected major on the OptomCAS application was Biology. Biology was also the top major last year.

Institution

The California higher education system claimed four of the top five spots for feeder institutions for OptomCAS applicants. These institutions were: University of California, Irvine; University of Houston; University of California, Los Angeles; University of California, San Diego and University of California, Berkeley. In 2015-2016, the top five feeder schools were: University of California, Irvine; University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Los Angeles; University of Houston and University of Florida.

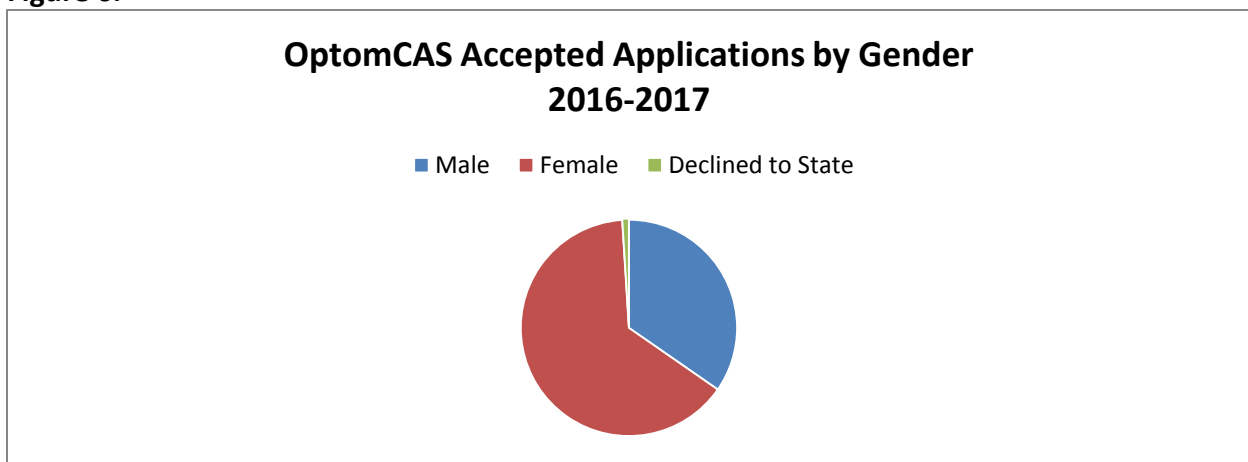
GPA

OptomCAS calculates a standardized GPA to aid the schools and colleges of optometry in evaluating applicants using uniform and consistent criteria. The overall cumulative GPA for all applicants was 3.33 – for males it was 3.30 and 3.35 for females. The GPAs were similar in the last admissions cycle – 3.28 for males and 3.33 for females.

Accepted Profile of the Doctor of Optometry Applicant

Gender

Figure 6.



For Admissions Cycle 2016-2017, 65% of accepted applications were female and 35% were male. Less than one percent declined to state their gender. In 2015-2016, 71% of accepted applications were female and 29% were male. Less than one percent declined to state their gender.

Age

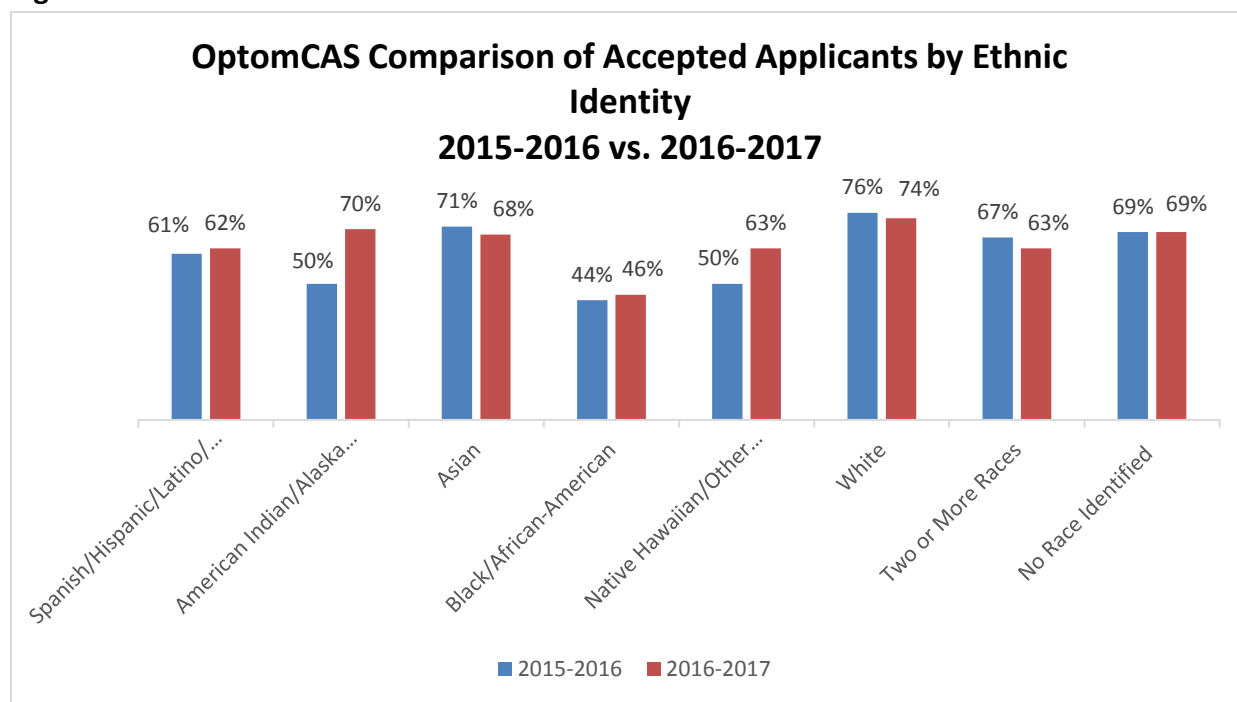
The median age for accepted applicants was 22 years old. It was 22.5 years old last admissions cycle.

Ethnicity

As shown in Figure 7 below, White and American Indian/Alaska Native had the highest rate of acceptance at 74% and 70%, followed by No Race Identified at 69%, Asian at 68%, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander and Two or More Races at 63%, Spanish/Hispanic/Latino/Latina at 62%, and Black/African-American at 46%.

Spanish/Hispanic/Latino/Latina, American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African-American and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander increased the rate of acceptance from 2015-2016.

Figure 7.



Citizenship

Eighty-nine percent of applicants accepted were US citizens, 8% were foreign applicants (this includes Canadian residents), and 3% were permanent residents of the US. In 2015-2016, the breakdown was 87% were US citizens, 10% were foreign (this includes Canadian residents), and 3% were permanent residents of the US.

GPA

For 2016-2017, the average GPA for accepted applicants at the twenty-three schools and colleges was 3.43.

More Information

Please submit any questions or comments you have on the OptomCAS Applicant Data Report – A National Snapshot to:

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