

Career Options

Below are some of the careers you can prepare for by going to a career or trade school.

Accountant	Heavy equipment operator
Administrative assistant	Hotel manager
Auto body technician	Interior designer
Auto mechanic	Legal assistant / Paralegal
Barber	Legal secretary
Broadcaster	Licensed practical nurse
Carpenter	Massage therapist
Child care worker	Medical assistant
Commercial artist	Medical lab technician
Computer programmer	Medical secretary
Computer service technician	Motorcycle mechanic
Cosmetologist	Nurse's aide
Court reporter	Pharmacy technician
Data entry operator	Photographer
Dental assistant	Plumber
Dental laboratory technician	Respiratory therapist
Drafter	Secretary
Electrician	Surveyor
Electronics technician	Tool and die maker
Fashion designer	Travel agent
Fashion merchandiser	Truck driver
Flower arranger	Veterinarian assistant
Heating / AC technician	Welder

To find the career and trade schools in your area, search online or go to nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator.

Name _____

Defining Your Values

Your values are what's important to you in your personal life, relationships, and career. They are what make life meaningful and worthwhile to you.

What are three values that are most important to you? Circle them below. If you don't see one of the values you find important, write it in.

integrity	open-mindedness	compassion
honesty	leadership	loyalty
initiative	teamwork	courage
respect	adaptability	humility
authenticity	creativity	success
responsibility	service	perseverance
balance	sustainability	endurance
fairness	accountability	strength

Visualizing your values

Answer the questions to explore how your core values align with your personal and professional goals. There are no right or wrong answers—just answer based on your first instinct.

1. How might incorporating your personal interests and hobbies into your future profession contribute to your overall fulfillment and work-life balance?
 - a. It would be awesome! Blending my passions with my career would bring me fulfillment.
 - b. It could help, but I don't think it will make or break my career.
 - c. I don't think it would have an impact because work and my personal life are two separate things.
2. Imagine a situation where your personal values and career goals seem to conflict. How might you navigate this and find a balance between the two?
 - a. I would look for opportunities that align with my values and goals to find a balance.
 - b. I would try to find a compromise or seek guidance from mentors to handle the conflict.
 - c. Depending on the circumstances, I might prioritize one over the other.
3. If you achieve great success in your future career but sacrifice important personal relationships or experiences along the way, how would you feel about that trade-off?
 - a. I would feel unsatisfied with the trade-off and prioritize relationships and personal experiences.
 - b. I might feel some regret, but I believe career success is worth the sacrifice.
 - c. Sacrificing personal relationships or experiences wouldn't affect my career satisfaction.

Name _____

Identifying Your Values

Your values are what's important to you. They are things that make a career or job meaningful, rewarding, and worthwhile to you.

Go through the list below and rate how important each value is to you in a career.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
1. make good money	☐	☐	☐
2. have regular work hours	☐	☐	☐
3. work inside	☐	☐	☐
4. do work that's creative	☐	☐	☐
5. work mostly on my own	☐	☐	☐
6. have job security	☐	☐	☐
7. do exciting work	☐	☐	☐
8. be in charge	☐	☐	☐
9. work mostly with others	☐	☐	☐
10. work outdoors	☐	☐	☐
11. make a difference	☐	☐	☐
12. have opportunities for advancement	☐	☐	☐
13. help others	☐	☐	☐
14. get along well with co-workers	☐	☐	☐
15. have a good work-life balance	☐	☐	☐
16. do work that's active or physical	☐	☐	☐

Look over your responses and choose the top three things you value in a career.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5 Ways to Prepare for a Career



Most careers require education or training beyond high school. Some careers require two or four years of college; others require only one year of training or education. In many cases, your career choice will determine which education option is most appropriate for you.

The following are post-high school education options for you to consider. Read about each of these options and think about which one might be best for you.

- ▶ Two-year college
- ▶ Four-year college
- ▶ Career/trade school
- ▶ Apprenticeship
- ▶ The military

Two-Year College

Two-year colleges provide affordable, career-oriented programs that enable students to begin their careers after two years of college or less. Students completing short-term programs receive certificates or diplomas. Students who complete a two-year program earn an associate degree.

Students who aren't ready to attend a four-year college can start at a two-year college and then transfer after a year or two. Because they are less expensive, many students start at a two-year college in order to save money.

Two year colleges are an increasingly popular education option. For more information, watch this short video.



Four-Year College

A four-year college education, or bachelor's degree, can prepare students for a wide variety of financially rewarding careers.

All four-year colleges recommend that students take college-prep courses in high school. Students who haven't taken several of the recommended college-prep courses may want to consider starting at a two-year college or at a four-year college's branch campus.

Career/Trade School

Career and trade schools offer short-term training in a variety of career fields. Some programs last only a few weeks; others take up to two years. Students usually receive hands-on training from experienced instructors.

When considering a career or trade school, check to see if, and by whom, a school is accredited. Be very wary of any school that is not accredited or claims to be seeking accreditation.

Apprenticeships

Students who prefer a hands-on approach to learning may want to consider an apprenticeship, where they can learn a trade through a combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job training. Apprenticeships are considered the gold standard for training in skilled trades.

The Military

As the nation's largest employer, the military offers applicants a salary, benefits, and free job training. The military also provides discipline, structure, and opportunities for career advancement and travel.

Alternatives to College

Here you'll find information on some of the many ways you can prepare for a career.

Do your research, and make a plan for your future that will be right for you.

College is one path to success in life, but it's not the only path.

Short Term Training Programs

Career/trade schools and community colleges offer short-term training for a number of careers.

Many of the most popular programs are in health care, business, computer science, and hospitality (e.g., travel and tourism, culinary arts).

While some programs take one or two years to complete, others can be completed in a matter of weeks. There are, for example, a number of health care careers that require less than a year of training.

The Military

As the nation's largest employer, the military offers qualified applicants a salary, benefits, and free job training. The military also provides discipline and structure, as well as opportunities for career advancement and travel.

For those who may want to attend college later, under the Montgomery GI Bill, enlistees who contribute to a college fund can receive over \$50,000 for college.

You may also want to consider joining the National Guard or the Reserves. As part-time members of the military, enlistees go through basic training and job training.

Visit todaysmilitary.com for more information.

Apprenticeships

Apprentices learn their trade through a combination of on-the-job training and classroom instruction. Apprenticeship programs are available in a number of career fields, but the majority are in construction and manufacturing.



Apprentices start out by doing simple tasks under the guidance and supervision of a journey worker. Apprentices are given more difficult work to do as their skills and knowledge increase.

While apprenticeships are an excellent way to learn a skilled trade, there is often a great deal of competition for apprenticeship positions. If you're interested, do an online search for the apprenticeship programs in your area.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a national service program in which individuals help communities with their education, public safety, and environmental needs. After a year of service, students receive an Education Award of \$5,800. For information on AmeriCorps visit nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriCorps.

Enter the workforce

Lots of jobs do not require a college degree, and many offer opportunities for advancement—especially for those who are reliable, enthusiastic, hard-working, and able to get along well with co-workers and supervisors. To ensure that you have a job you'll enjoy, and one that you'll be good at, find a job that is a good match for your skills, talents, and interests. Also look for a job in a field you're considering as a career.

If you think you may be interested in going to college, but just aren't sure if college is right for you, consider taking one or two courses at your local community college. It's a great way to give college a try.