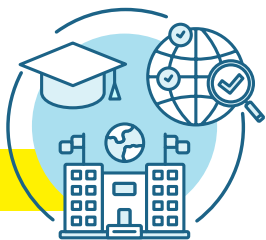


College Options



Most careers require education and/or training beyond a general high school education. Many students choose to prepare for their career—and their future—by attending college.

Here are some things to consider as you start thinking about your college options.

Types of colleges

There are several different kinds of colleges: four-year colleges, two-year colleges, career/trade schools, and specialty colleges. Most of the students who continue their education beyond high school attend a two- or four-year college.

Two-year colleges

Most two-year colleges are community colleges. These colleges provide affordable programs that make it possible for students to begin their career after two years of college or less. Two-year colleges offer two types of programs.

Career-oriented programs

These programs prepare students for a specific career. Many of these programs are two-year programs; others take one year or less to complete.

University parallel programs

Many students who want a four-year degree start at a two-year college. This is a good option for students who don't feel ready to attend a four-year college, and also for students who want to save money. Students in these programs take courses they know will transfer to the four-year college they plan to attend.

Four-year colleges

A four-year college degree provides students with a wide range of career choices and opportunities. *Students who want to attend a four-year college need to take college prep courses in high school and work hard to get good grades.*

Four-year college entrance requirements vary greatly. Colleges with an open admissions policy generally accept all high school graduates until spaces are filled. Selective colleges, on the other hand, look for students who have an impressive academic record.

Four-year colleges offer a variety of majors. A major is the subject you choose to study in depth. Four-year colleges offer a wide variety of majors, from popular majors like business and nursing to very specific majors like urban forestry. If you have a specific career you want to pursue, you'll need to attend a college with a major that will prepare you for that career.

Four-year colleges can be expensive. While a college education can cost a lot, most college students receive some kind of financial aid. There are also lots of ways to cut college costs. Don't ever think that you can't afford to go to college!

Other factors to consider

Here are some factors to consider when you're thinking about what's important to you in a college.

- ▶ **Size:** What size college do you want to attend?
- ▶ **Location:** Where do you want to attend college? Close to home? In a city? Close to nature?
- ▶ **Activities:** Are there specific activities or sports you want to participate in?

For more on what to consider when choosing a college, watch this video.

