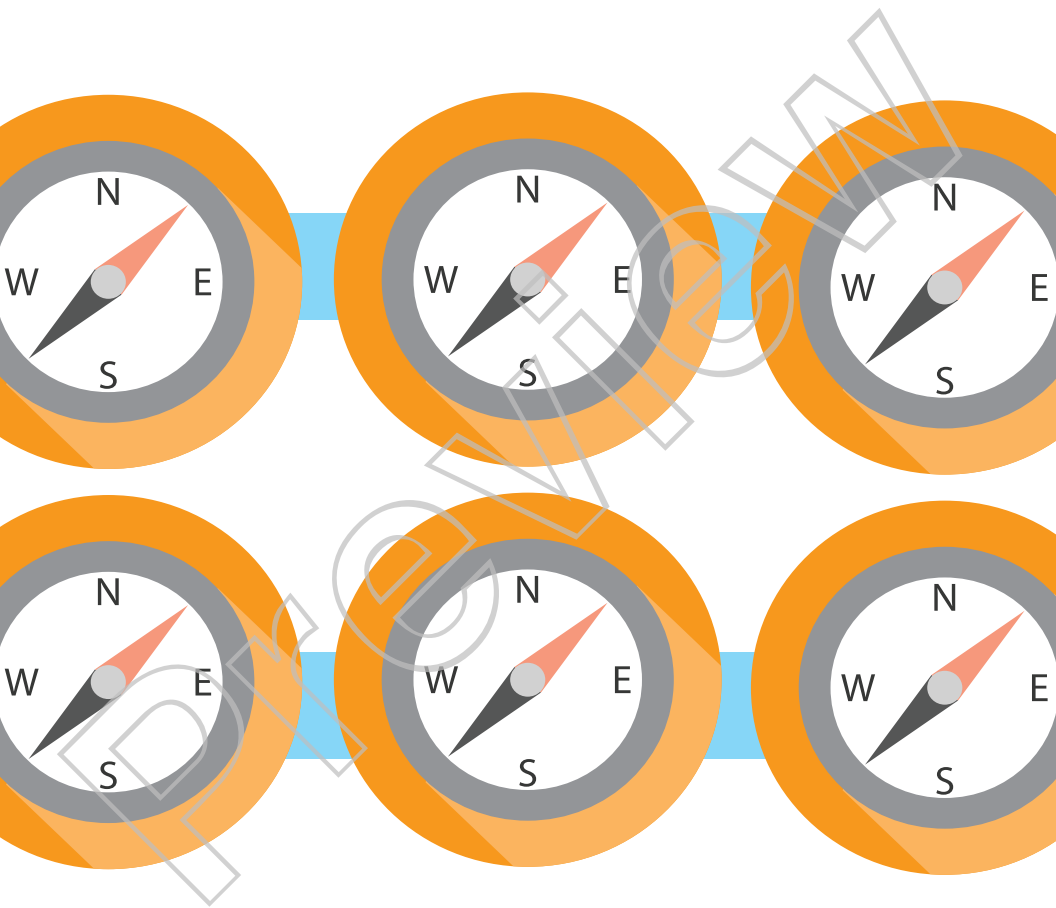


# Preparing for a Career

## Career Exploration Activity Book



Activities to help you learn about the various ways you can prepare for a career

# Getting Started

There are many ways to prepare for a career, and it's important that you consider all of your options. In this booklet, we will look at five different ways that you can prepare for a great career.

## How will you prepare?

Given what you know now, indicate how you feel about each of the following.

Check **Yes** (this is how you want to prepare for your career), **Maybe** (you'd like to learn more), or **No** (you don't think this option is for you).

- |                        |                              |                                |                             |
|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Two-Year College    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Four-Year College   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Career/Trade School | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. The Military        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Apprenticeship      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Each of the above choices has positive and negative aspects. Try to learn as much as you can about each option so that you can make the best choice for you. *The information in this booklet will get you started.*

### On the following pages...

For each of the five ways you can prepare for a career, you will first be asked three True/False questions, just to see what you know. (Answers are at the bottom of each page.) You'll then be given a list of popular career fields you can prepare for, along with a list of important things to know.

# Two-Year College

Two-year community colleges provide affordable, career-oriented one- and two-year programs.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. To be accepted at a community college, you must take certain college prep courses in high school. T  F
2. One year at a community college and one year at a four-year college generally cost about the same. T  F
3. You can start at a community college and transfer after a year or two to a four-year college. T  F

## Popular career fields you can prepare for

Accounting	Fire science technology	Paralegal
Automotive technology	Information systems	Paramedic
Business management	Interior design	Physical therapy ass't
Dental hygiene	Law enforcement	Veterinary technology
Early childhood education	Nursing	Web design

## Important to know

- ▶ All high school graduates are welcome.
- ▶ Going to a two-year community college can be an excellent choice for students who have specific career goals.
- ▶ Attending a two-year community college for a year generally costs less than half of what it costs to attend a four-year college for a year.
- ▶ To save money, many students take their general education courses at a two-year college and then transfer to a four-year college.
- ▶ For more information, go to [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org).

# Four-Year College

A four-year college education (bachelor's degree) can prepare you for a wide range of careers.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. You need to have at least a B average in high school to go to a four-year college. T  F
2. College students spend less time in class than high school students. T  F
3. If you pay your bills, you can continue at a four-year college as long as you like, regardless of your grades. T  F

## Popular career fields you can prepare for

Accounting

Biology

Business

Communications

Computer science

Education

Engineering

English

Information sciences

Journalism

Marketing

Nursing

Political science

Psychology

Zoology

## Important to know

- ▶ Four-year colleges vary greatly in their admission requirements, size, costs, and in the majors they offer.
- ▶ Four-year college students take about half of their courses in their major (the subject they have chosen to study in depth).
- ▶ To provide students with a well-rounded education, all students are required to take general education courses (English, math, science).
- ▶ Students who want to attend a four-year college should take college prep courses in high school and work hard to get good grades.
- ▶ For more information, go to [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org).

# Career/Trade School

Career and trade schools offer short-term training in a variety of career fields.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. Career and trade schools all cost about the same. T  F
2. Career and trade school programs are all two-year programs. T  F
3. All career and trade schools provide their students with a quality education. T  F

## Popular careers you can prepare for

Auto mechanic

Bookkeeper

Broadcaster

Carpenter

Child care worker

Cosmetologist

Dental assistant

Electrician

Graphic artist

Interior designer

Legal assistant

Massage therapist

Nurse's aide

Pharmacy technician

Truck driver

## Important to know

- ▶ All high school graduates are accepted.
- ▶ Some programs take one or two years to complete; others can be completed in a matter of weeks.
- ▶ Career and trade schools are privately owned and in business to make a profit. Their costs vary greatly, and they can be expensive.
- ▶ Thoroughly check out any career/trade school you're considering. Some of them are not reputable. Consider all of your options.
- ▶ Visit [nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator) to find the career/trade schools in your area.

# Apprenticeship

Apprentices learn a skilled trade through classroom instruction and on-the-job training.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. Apprentices don't earn any money during the first six months. T  F
2. Most apprenticeship programs are two-year programs. T  F
3. Programs generally require that an applicant be 18 years old and a high school graduate. T  F

## Popular careers you can prepare for

Auto mechanic

Carpenter

Cement mason

Construction laborer

Cook

Electrician

Firefighter

Florist

Landscaper

Machinist

Paralegal

Photographer

Plumber

Tool and die maker

Welder

## Important to know

- ▶ Apprentices start by doing simple tasks under the supervision of a journey worker.
- ▶ While apprenticeship programs are available in many career fields, the majority of programs are in construction and manufacturing.
- ▶ Apprentices start off earning about half of what experienced workers earn. As their skills improve their wages increase.
- ▶ There is often a great deal of competition for apprentice positions. Apprenticeships can therefore be difficult to get.
- ▶ For more information, go to [apprenticeship.gov](http://apprenticeship.gov).

# The Military

The U.S. military offers enlistees free job training in over 2,000 job specialties.

## What do you think? True or False?

1. If you enlist in the military, you are obligated for 10 years of active duty service. T  F
2. As a first-year enlistee, you must pay for your own medical care and housing. T  F
3. The U.S. military is the nation's largest employer. T  F

## Popular careers you can prepare for

Accountant	Dental assistant	Public affairs officer
Aircraft mechanic	Firefighter	Radar operator
Computer programmer	Machinist	Security officer
Computer repairer	Medical assistant	Welder
Cyber security specialist	Office manager	X-ray technician

## Important to know

- ▶ Enlistees generally obligate themselves to four years of active duty.
- ▶ After 8-12 weeks of basic training, enlistees typically go to Advance Individual Training where they receive training for a specific job.
- ▶ The career, training, and educational opportunities are different for each branch of the military, so it's important to talk to recruiters representing two or more branches of the military.
- ▶ To enlist in any branch of the military, one must earn a minimum score on the ASVAB (a 3-hour test that identifies abilities).
- ▶ For more information, go to [todaysmilitary.com](http://todaysmilitary.com).

# Planning Your Future

**What career(s) or career field(s) do you think might be a good match for you?**

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**What do you think will be the best way for you to prepare for your career?**

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*Having career and educational plans can provide you with focus and motivation, but remember, as you grow and learn more about yourself and your choices, you can always change your goals and your plans.*

**What can you do between now and the time you graduate to help you achieve your career and educational goals—and ensure that your future is bright and full of possibilities?**

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## FINAL WORDS

The best way to create a future that's bright and full of options is to get a good education. Work hard in school, get the best grades you can, and you will have a future that is full of possibilities!