



College Majors

Most colleges have a broad range of majors from which students can choose. Here are some of the most popular majors.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Accounting | Journalism |
| Architecture | Marketing |
| Art | Mathematics |
| Biology | Music |
| Botany | Nursing |
| Business | Occupational therapy |
| Chemistry | Physical education |
| Communications | Physical therapy |
| Computer science | Physics |
| Criminal justice | Political science |
| Economics | Pre-law |
| Elementary education | Pre-med |
| Engineering | Psychology |
| English | Public relations |
| Finance | Secondary education |
| French | Social work |
| Geography | Sociology |
| Geology | Spanish |
| History | Special education |
| Information sciences | Zoology |

For additional information, visit these websites:

- | | |
|--|--|
| collegeboard.org | act.org |
| educationplanner.org | studentaid.gov |
| finaid.org | collegesavings.org |

Four-Year College



College Timeline

Following this timeline will help you stay on track for college.

9th grade

- ▶ Get off to a good start academically, and look for ways to develop your interests and talents.

10th grade

- ▶ Work hard to keep your grades up.
- ▶ Be involved in your school and community.

11th grade

- ▶ Take the PSAT/NMSQT in October, and the ACT and/or SAT in the spring. Some colleges are now test-optional, but many still require test scores.
- ▶ Begin to seriously research your college options.
- ▶ Start thinking of your interests and abilities in terms of possible college majors.
- ▶ Talk to your counselor about your college plans.
- ▶ Make college visits.

12th grade

- ▶ Retake the ACT and/or SAT, if necessary.
- ▶ Fill out applications. Be aware of deadlines.
- ▶ Meet with your counselor to discuss your college plans, possible majors, and financial aid.
- ▶ If you need help paying for college, fill out a FAFSA. For information, go to fafsa.gov.

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Four-Year College

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

While all four-year colleges hope to attract bright, motivated students, colleges vary greatly in their admission requirements, size, costs, and in the majors they offer.

At most four-year colleges, students take approximately half of their courses in their major (the subject they have chosen to study in-depth). Their remaining courses are either required general education courses (English, science, history, math, foreign language) or electives (courses they want to take).

"I never thought that I'd be able to go to college, but I worked hard in school, and I've been accepted at a great college. I am really excited because I'll be the first one in my family to go to college." Josh



College Preparation

To prepare for college, take the recommended college prep courses and get involved.

Take college prep courses

Most colleges recommend that students take the following college prep courses in high school:

- 4 years of English
- 3-4 years of math (including Alg I, Geom, & Alg II)
- 3 years of social studies
- 3 years of science
- 2-3 years of the same foreign language
- 1 year of fine or performing arts



Competitive schools and programs consider the above to be the minimum requirements. They recommend that students challenge themselves by taking honors and/or advanced courses whenever possible.

Students who haven't taken several of the above recommended college prep courses may want to start at a two-year college or at a college's branch campus. The requirements for admission are less competitive, the classes are smaller, and there's less pressure.

Be active and involved

Colleges are looking for students who are involved in meaningful activities. Look for ways to get involved in your high school and community, and for ways to develop your interests, skills, and talents.

Choosing a College



When choosing a college, consider each of the following:

Size

Do you want to go to a large college with lots of majors and activities, or to a small college with fewer students and a more personal atmosphere?

Academic programs

While most colleges have popular majors such as business, not every college has every major. If there's a specific subject you want to study, you need to find the colleges that offer that major.

Location

Do you want to go to college close to home? In your home state? Near a big city? Close to nature?

Admissions requirements

Look for colleges that accept students with academic records similar to yours.

Cost

If cost is a concern, keep the following in mind:

- ▶ Public colleges (in-state) are generally less expensive than private colleges.
- ▶ You can save money by living at home and commuting, or by starting at a two-year college.
- ▶ There is a great deal of financial aid available.



Community College Programs

Below are some of the career fields you can prepare for by going to a community college.

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Accounting | Hospitality management |
| Architectural technology | Interior design |
| Art | Law enforcement |
| Automotive technology | Mechanical drafting |
| Aviation technology | Music |
| Business administration | Nursing |
| Business management | Occupational therapy ass't |
| Computer info systems | Office information systems |
| Court reporting | Paralegal |
| Dental hygiene | Paramedic |
| Dietetics and nutrition | Physical therapy assistant |
| Early childhood education | Real estate management |
| Engineering technology | Respiratory therapy |
| Exercise science | Social work |
| Fashion design | Surgical technology |
| Fire science technology | Veterinary technology |
| Food service technology | Web design |

To find out which programs your local community colleges offer, visit their websites, talk to your counselor, or contact the colleges.

For additional information, go to nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator

Transferring to a Four-Year College

Many students start at a community college and then transfer to a four-year college after a year or two.

- ▶ To save money, many students who want a bachelor's degree take their general education courses (e.g., English, math) at a community college, and then transfer their credits to a four-year college.
- ▶ It's up to a four-year college to say which credits they will accept. While credits in academic courses such as English, math, and science generally transfer, four-year colleges usually do not accept credits in career-oriented courses such as dental hygiene or automotive technology.
- ▶ Community colleges have counselors and advisors available to help students choose courses that will transfer.
- ▶ Students with specific questions about a course or program should contact the four-year college they plan to attend.

Community College



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Community College Features

Community colleges are an increasingly popular college choice.

Students prepare for a specific career

Students in one- and two-year career programs take courses that will prepare them for their chosen career field. For example, students studying business take courses in math, communications, and accounting; art students focus on art courses. *(Students attending four-year colleges are generally required to take a number of courses that are unrelated to their major.)*

Colleges are affordable and classes are small

- ▶ It generally costs much less to attend a community college than a four-year college.
- ▶ Community colleges keep their classes small and they hire instructors who have worked in a related career field. The law enforcement instructor, for example, might be a retired police officer.

Colleges offer activities and services

While community colleges generally do not have dorms, most have a variety of athletic programs, clubs, and social activities, as well as support services such as counseling, career placement, and tutoring.



All high school graduates are welcome

- ▶ For most programs, students need only a general high school education. Some programs, however, have additional academic requirements. For example, a nursing program may require that all students have a year of biology, chemistry, and algebra.
- ▶ Community colleges generally don't require the ACT or SAT; however, to ensure that all students enroll in courses appropriate for their ability levels, many community colleges require that all incoming students take a placement test.
- ▶ Community colleges offer developmental classes to help students who aren't quite ready for college-level work.

Colleges meet the needs of the community

- ▶ Community colleges usually have a very diverse student body. While some students are recent high school graduates, many of the students are older. Some are first-time college students; others are there to update their skills or prepare for a new career.
- ▶ To accommodate the students who work during the day, many classes are offered in the evenings and on Saturdays.



Community College

Community colleges provide affordable, career-oriented programs that enable students to begin their careers after two years of college or less.

- ▶ Community colleges offer programs in high growth career fields such as health care, computer science, and business.
- ▶ Going to a community college can be an excellent choice for students who have specific career goals.
- ▶ Students who want a bachelor's degree can start at a community college and then transfer to a four-year college.

Some states have public technical colleges that also offer affordable one- and two-year career programs. Their credits may also transfer to a four-year college.

"My career goal is to be a dental hygienist. I was really excited to find out that the community college in my hometown has a dental hygiene program—and that I can finish it in just two years." Jessica



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 secretary |
| Barber | Licensed practical nurse |
| Broadcaster | Massage therapist |
| Carpenter | Medical assistant |
| Child care worker | Medical lab technician |
| Commercial artist | Medical secretary |
| Computer programmer | Motorcycle mechanic |
| Computer service technician | Nurse's aide |
| Cosmetologist | Paralegal |
| 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.

Career and Trade School



Do Your Research

While there are many excellent career and trade schools, not all of them are reputable. Visit any school you are considering and get answers to the following questions.

- ▶ **Licensing and Accreditation**
Is the school accredited? Who is the school accredited by? Be wary of any school that is not accredited.
- ▶ **Facilities** – Is the equipment up-to-date and adequate for the number of students? What are the buildings and classrooms like?
- ▶ **Placement** – What percentage of the school's graduates find a job? Who hires their graduates? What are their starting salaries?
- ▶ **Cost** – What is the total cost of tuition, fees, and supplies? What is the refund policy? Is financial aid available?
- ▶ **Quality of Instruction** – Are the courses and instructional materials up-to-date? What are the qualifications of the instructors?
- ▶ **Reputation and Stability** – How long has the school been in operation? What percent of the students finish their program?

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Career and Trade School

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Career and Trade School

Students today can prepare for many high growth careers by going to a career or trade school.

Career and trade schools focus on teaching students the skills they need for a specific career.

If you know what career you want to pursue, going to a career or trade school might be the right choice for you.

"I'm studying to become a medical assistant. My classes are small and I love the fact that all of the courses I am taking will prepare me for my career." Kate



Education and Training

Training is available in a wide variety of careers

Career and trade schools offer training for a large number of careers. Many of the most popular programs are in healthcare, business, computer science, and hospitality (travel and tourism, culinary arts, and hotel management).

Students prepare for a specific career

The education that students receive at a career or trade school is very focused, and the courses students take are directly related to their chosen career field. Art students study art, cosmetology students learn how to cut and style hair, and students wanting to be an auto mechanic learn how to repair cars.



Students receive hands-on instruction

Students spend the majority of their class time in job-related settings where they receive hands-on training from experienced instructors. The student-teacher ratio is low, and students generally receive a great deal of individual attention.

Programs vary in length

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 healthcare careers that require less than a year of training.

Things to Consider



Costs vary greatly

Career and trade schools are privately owned and in business to make a profit. While these schools can be expensive, their costs vary depending on the school and the program. Students who qualify may be eligible for financial aid.

All high school graduates are accepted

A high school diploma (or GED) is generally all that's required for acceptance to a career or trade school. Schools are looking for students who have good basic skills, an interest in their chosen field, and a desire to learn.

Credits usually do not transfer

Because career and trade schools vary tremendously in their requirements and in the programs they offer, their credits usually are not accepted by two- or four-year colleges. Students should, therefore, never go to a career or trade school with the idea of transferring.

Consider all of your options

Many of the programs offered at career and trade schools are also available at community colleges, where they are often less expensive. Research and compare *all* of your options.



Training and Education

Basic Training

- ▶ Basic training is 8–12 weeks of intense physical and mental preparation.
- ▶ Also known as boot camp, basic training includes a combination of classroom instruction, field exercises, and physical training.
- ▶ Enlistees learn discipline, physical endurance, and respect for authority.

Advanced Individual Training (AIT)

- ▶ After basic training, enlistees typically go to Advanced Individual Training where they receive instruction and training for a specific job.
- ▶ Advanced training can last a few weeks or several months.
- ▶ Enlistees are trained in occupational fields such as accounting, communications, computers, healthcare, construction, law enforcement, mechanical repair, and culinary service.

For More Information

The best way to learn about the military is to talk to a recruiter. The career, training, and educational opportunities are different for each branch, so talk to recruiters representing two or more branches of the military.

For more information, go to todaysmilitary.com and usa.gov/join-military. Also, watch this short video.



VIDEO

The Military



Qualifications

Basic qualifications

- ▶ High school diploma (GED candidates have limited opportunities)
- ▶ 18 years old (17 with parental consent)
- ▶ US citizen or Permanent Resident Alien

Physical requirements

- ▶ Good physical condition
- ▶ Appropriate weight
- ▶ Able to pass a physical exam

ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery)

- ▶ The ASVAB is a 3-hour test designed to identify a person's aptitudes, abilities, and strengths.
- ▶ To enlist in any branch of the military, one must earn a minimum score on the ASVAB.
- ▶ Recruiters generally make the testing arrangements and interpret ASVAB scores.
- ▶ Each military branch has its own score requirements.
- ▶ The higher a person's scores, the more career and training options he/she will have.
- ▶ For information and to see sample questions, go to todaysmilitary.com.

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The Military

The United States military is the nation's largest employer.

Military Benefits

- ▶ **Free job training** – The military offers training in over 2,000 jobs, most of which have civilian counterparts.
- ▶ **Steady pay that increases with rank and years of service** – Most enlistees begin at pay grade E-1 and receive about \$1,680 a month.
- ▶ **Good benefits** – Enlistees get free housing and free medical care.
- ▶ **Discipline and structure**
- ▶ **Travel and adventure**
- ▶ **Opportunities for career advancement**
- ▶ **Money for college** – Under the Montgomery GI Bill, enlistees who contribute to a college fund can receive \$50,000+ for college.

Military Obligations

Enlisting is a serious commitment

Enlistees generally obligate themselves to four years of active duty. It is very difficult to leave the military before an enlistment period is over.

Military Branches

Army

Founded in 1775, the Army is the oldest and largest branch of the armed services. The Army is primarily responsible for land-based military operations.

Navy

The Navy's mission is to maintain, train, and equip combat-ready naval forces, and to protect and defend our right to move freely on the oceans. The US Navy is the largest navy in the world.

Air Force

The Air Force became a separate military service in 1947. It includes aviation forces for both service and combat. Air Force troops are organized, trained, and equipped for offensive and defensive air operations.



Marine Corps

The Marine Corps specializes in amphibious operations, rapid deployment, and self-sufficiency. An elite fighting force with close ties to the Navy, the Marine Corps is often first on the ground in conflicts.

Coast Guard

The Coast Guard is primarily concerned with sea rescue, law enforcement, boating safety, and illegal immigration control. During wartime, the Coast Guard can become part of the Navy.

Other Military Opportunities

Reserves and National Guard

As part-time members of the military, enlistees go through basic training and job training. They train for one weekend once a month, and for two weeks once a year. They're paid for the days they work, and they receive education benefits.

The Reserves and the National Guard can be called to active duty when there's a national emergency, or in the event of a conflict.

Delayed Entry

Through the Delayed Entry Program, students can have an opening in a specific career field reserved for them, and enter the military after they graduate.

ROTC and the Academies

ROTC programs are available for those who want to attend college before they enter the military. For those who qualify, there are excellent educational opportunities at the military academies.



"I plan to join the military after I graduate from high school. I'll get free career training, and I'll be doing work I really believe in." Jason





How to Get an Apprenticeship

Step 1 – Find a program

- Do an online search for the apprenticeship programs in your area at apprenticeship.gov.
- Contact trade associations, unions, and other professional organizations.

Look for a *registered* program. A certificate from a registered program is a nationally recognized credential.

Step 2 – Complete the application

Once you've found a program, contact the program directly and ask if they are taking applications. Complete the application and take any required tests. Be sure to follow all of the instructions.

Step 3 – Interview for the position

An apprenticeship interview is like a job interview. Arrive early and be courteous and friendly to everyone. Emphasize that you are eager to learn and willing to work hard. Write a thank you note.

What happens after the interview?

After the interview, an applicant is given a numerical rating based on his/her employment history, education, test scores, and interview. Applicants are ranked and put on a waiting list. An applicant may have to wait weeks or months to be placed in an apprenticeship program.

Popular Apprenticeship Occupations

Below are just some of the careers that you can prepare for through an apprenticeship.

Automobile mechanic	Heating and A/C installer
Bricklayer	Heavy truck driver
Cabinetmaker	Interior designer
Carpenter	Jeweler
Carpet layer	Landscaper
Cement mason	Legal secretary
Child care specialist	Locksmith
Computer programmer	Machinist
Construction laborer	Optician
Cook	Painter
Corrections officer	Paralegal
Cosmetologist	Paramedic
Dental lab technician	Photographer
Diesel mechanic	Plumber
Draftsman	Police officer
Drywall installer	Rofer
Electrician	Sandblaster
Exterminator	Sheet metal worker
Firefighter	Steel worker
Florist	Tool and die maker
Graphic designer	Upholsterer
Greenskeeper	Welder

For more information,
watch this quick video.



VIDEO

Apprenticeship



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Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship programs are an excellent way to learn a skilled trade.

Apprentices learn their trade through a combination of on-the-job training and classroom instruction.

Apprenticeship Facts

- ▶ Apprenticeships are available in over 1,000 occupations.
- ▶ While apprenticeship programs are available in a number of career fields, the majority of programs are in construction and manufacturing.
- ▶ Employers and employee associations manage apprenticeship programs, choose apprentices, and pay their wages.
- ▶ Apprentices who complete a registered program receive a certificate from the U.S. Department of Labor. They then become journey workers.
- ▶ There is often a great deal of competition for apprenticeship positions. Apprenticeships can therefore be difficult to get.

Training and Instruction

On-the-job training

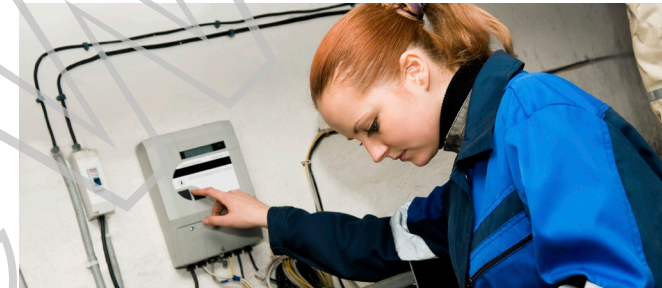
- ▶ Apprentices start by doing simple tasks under the guidance and supervision of a journey worker. Apprentices are given more difficult work to do as their skills and knowledge increase.
- ▶ Apprentices must have at least 2,000 hours of structured, supervised work experience.
- ▶ While apprenticeship programs can last anywhere from one to six years, most apprenticeships are four-year training programs.



Instruction

- ▶ Apprentices take classes to learn techniques, theories, and safety regulations. For example, an apprentice carpenter is likely to receive instruction in basic math, carpentry techniques, first aid, blueprint reading, and safety.
- ▶ Most apprenticeship programs require at least 144 hours of classroom instruction per year.
- ▶ How, when, and where apprentices receive instruction varies greatly. For example, an apprentice could work a 40-hour week and have a four-hour class one night a week, or work eight weeks and go to school for one week. Classes may be held at a community college, vocational school, or online.

Qualifications and Benefits



Qualifications

- ▶ Most programs require that an applicant be 18 years old and a high school graduate.
- ▶ Some programs require that applicants take an aptitude test; others require a physical exam.
- ▶ Applicants who have had experience, training, or a related job generally have an advantage.

Benefits

- ▶ Apprentices are considered employees and are paid at least minimum wage.
- ▶ Apprentices start off earning approximately half of what experienced workers earn. As their skills improve, their wages increase.
- ▶ Benefits vary. Some employers provide benefits such as health insurance.

"I work 40 hours a week as an apprentice electrician and I love it. I'm getting paid while I learn the skills I need for a great career. It's like getting a free education." Michael





Interview Tips

Prepare for the interview

- ▶ Learn as much as you can about the company or business.
- ▶ Have a one-minute speech about yourself ready.
- ▶ Prepare a few questions for the interviewer.

Interview well

- ▶ Dress appropriately.
- ▶ Arrive early and turn off your phone.
- ▶ If you have a resume, bring a copy with you.
- ▶ Be courteous and friendly to everyone.
- ▶ Sit up straight and make eye contact.
- ▶ Emphasize that you're eager to learn and willing to work hard. Show enthusiasm for the job.
- ▶ Keep your answers brief and positive.
- ▶ If you want the job, tell the interviewer.
- ▶ Thank the interviewer for the opportunity.

After the interview

The day after your interview, write a thank you note and thank the interviewer for their time. Also mention a few of the reasons why you would be a good choice for the job.

How to Succeed at a Job

Be responsible and reliable

- ▶ Be at work on time every day.
- ▶ Be honest and trustworthy.

Know your job

- ▶ Understand your responsibilities and duties.
- ▶ Know the procedures you are to follow with regards to safety regulations, asking for help, etc.

Do your job well

- ▶ Be enthusiastic and have a good attitude.
- ▶ If you don't understand something, ask for help.
- ▶ Try to do your job to the best of your ability.
- ▶ Treat each customer and client the way you would like to be treated.

Do more than is expected of you

- ▶ Be willing to take on extra work.
- ▶ Show initiative. If you see something that needs to be done, do it.

Get along with co-workers and supervisors

- ▶ Learn to adapt to your supervisor's style of leadership and supervision.
- ▶ Take an interest in the people you work with.
- ▶ Be friendly and respectful to everyone.

On-the-Job Training



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On-the-Job Training

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On-the-Job Training

Employers generally provide on-the-job training for new employees.

This training can last a few hours to several months. It is designed to teach you what you need to know to perform a specific job.

To make the most of your on-the-job training, and to prepare for your future career, do the following:

- ▶ **Find a job in a field you're considering.**
For example, if you want a career in the fashion industry, try to get a job at a clothing store.
- ▶ **Increase your chances for advancement.**
Be polite, enthusiastic, and willing to learn. Have excellent attendance, and make every effort to get along with your co-workers and supervisors.
- ▶ **Consider additional education/training.**
Remember, you can always go back to school, even if it's just to take one course.
- ▶ **Make a three-year plan.**
Making a three-year plan will help ensure that you don't get trapped in a dead-end job.

How to Find a Good Job

Think about your skills, talents, and interests

Before you begin your job search, do a quick self-assessment. Make a list of your interests, talents, and skills (e.g., cooking, computers, working with children). Having this information will help you find a job you'll be good at, and one that you will enjoy.

Determine what kind of job you want

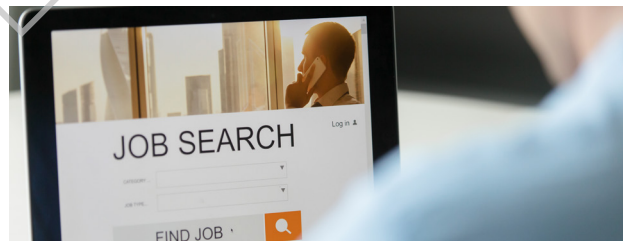
- ▶ Do you want to work days? Nights? Weekends? What hours are you available to work?
- ▶ Are you looking for a part-time or full-time job?
- ▶ Would you rather work inside or outside? Do you want to work where there's lots of activity or where it's quiet? With people or by yourself?

Network

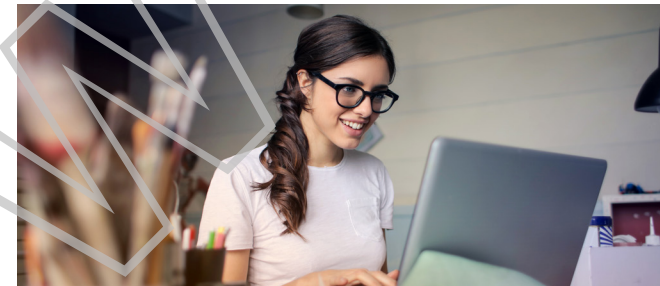
Talk to family and friends about job possibilities and tell everyone that you're looking for a job. Most employers would rather hire a person that's been recommended by someone they know than sort through applications, do interviews, and then hire a stranger. This is why most jobs are never advertised. *Networking is the best way to find a job!*

Search for job openings

Check out your local newspaper and free websites such as indeed.com and monster.com for job openings.



Application Tips



Submit an impressive application

- ▶ A company's application may be available online. You can go and pick one up in person, or contact the business and ask them to send you one.
- ▶ Use blue or black ink and print neatly. Don't leave any lines blank. If a question doesn't apply to you, write N/A.
- ▶ Answer all questions truthfully. If there's something on your application that could be seen as negative, explain how much you've learned and grown from the situation or experience.
- ▶ Include any volunteer or unpaid jobs you've had.
- ▶ If you have a resume, attach it to your application.
- ▶ Make sure your application looks neat, clean, and professional. Do not bend or fold it.
- ▶ Remember, the application is your opportunity to "sell yourself."

"I just graduated from high school and now I'm working as a waiter. Someday I hope to go to cooking school and work as a chef—or maybe own my own restaurant." Jeremy

