

# Make YOUR PLAN

## What are you going to do after high school?



1. By what age do your parents expect you to be partly self-supporting? When do they expect you to be **fully** self-supporting?

2. Are you planning on working for money? Are you planning on being an employee?

- Most “good jobs” need additional training or education after high school. (The definition of good job is personal but often described as well-paying, challenging, interesting work that is not overly stressful.)
- 60% of today’s jobs require training, education, or both after high school.
- 22% of those jobs need a bachelors, masters or doctoral degree.
- Learn and use effective communication skills for your hoped-for field. The ability to communicate is **the #1 skill employers** want

3. **You are not picking a job for life!** You are picking what you are going to do to earn a living when you leave school, at whatever level that turns out to be. □

4. **Jobs are like clothing.** You have to try on quite a few in order to find one or two that fit you really well. □ Have dozen job shadowing experiences before your senior year.

5. **A job finances your life.** What kind of a life do you want to have as a young adult in your twenties? What lifestyle do you want to work towards?

6. Before you commit any money for training or education, talk with 6 to 9 people who do the jobs that interest you or hirer for those jobs.

- If you take the time to do this, you’ll learn about new jobs you never knew existed, create a network of people who know you and who can tell you about vacancies, possible job shadowing or internship opportunities. (
- Through this field research you may learn about training shortcuts and develop skills that will help you do well in employment interviews. (

What’s the quickest route to get qualified for an in demand entry-level job in your favorite field? What will that cost? How much time will it take? What jobs will you be qualified to do? (Always check your state’s community colleges programs first.)

8. Do the jobs you most want to do happen in places where you would most like to live?  What's the demand for those jobs where you want to live?
- Do you want to stay living near where you grew up? This is the job market you must thoroughly research.
  - Do you want to move away from where you grew up? Do you know where? Does that place have jobs you most want?
9. What are the starting salaries for work that interests you? Many reports about salary use averages. Your first salary will be much lower. Is that enough?
- If you are going to borrow money to cover educational expenses, don't borrow more than **2/3rds** of your likely starting salary or you'll be living back home.
  - Never, ever take out a private loan for education or training. Private loans cost too much.
10. It's hard to be a success at something you don't like.
- What are the most repetitive tasks of the jobs you most want to do?
  - How will you feel about doing those tasks day after day?
11. Talk with the youngest people you can find who are doing the jobs that most interest you. The experience of recent hires can be very different from those who have been doing that job or kind of work for years.
12. Does job hunting scare you? Learn effective job search techniques. No matter how great your education, training, skills or experience, if you can't get a job in the field you most want to work in, you won't have a career in that field.
13. Finding a job you'll enjoy—one that matches your ambitions, education and interests—is your responsibility. Lots of people can help you, but don't expect someone to do this for you.

*AND...* Leave room in your life for the unexpected. The unexpected happens. Plans or goals must change. If you can learn to be flexible and quickly set new goals, you won't be devastated when life takes an unexpected turn.