



Career Planning for Teens

Teens today have a world of opportunities to consider for their careers. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, Texas has more than 29,561 separate occupations. These many options offer teens a chance to find jobs to fit their values, skills, personality and interests.

The teenage years are very important. The decisions you make now will affect your life in the future. If you learn to make plans and set goals, and then work to reach those goals, you will be more likely to find a job and build a career that you enjoy.

When deciding what career is best for you, look first at your interests. Second, decide how much of a sacrifice you are willing to make to reach your goals.

In deciding what career to choose, consider the points below and circle all that apply to you:

Main interests

What kinds of things do I really enjoy?
(hobbies, clubs, interests)

- Being outdoors
- Animals

- Physical activity
- Art
- Traveling
- Computers
- Reading
- Working with people
- Other_____

What would I like to learn more about?

- Science
- Mechanics
- Math
- Psychology
- Writing/literature
- Law
- Music
- Art
- Other_____

Edited by
**Rosemarie
Hoffman**

Assistant Professor
and Extension Individual
and Family Development
Specialist, The Texas
A&M University System

The decisions you make now will affect your life in the future.

What are my talents and special qualities?

- Writing
- Getting along well with others
- Listening
- Solving problems
- Other _____

Requirements and benefits of this field

How much education will I need to enter this field?

- High school or graduate equivalency degree (GED)
- A short training program
- Trade or technical school
- Junior college or community college
- University
- Professional school
- Other _____

What programs are available to make it easier to pay for my education?

- Guaranteed student loan (must pay loan back)
- Grant-in-aid (must pay back)
- Scholarships
- Work/study (work part-time, take classes part-time)
- Other _____

How can I work and go to school, too?

- Part-time job

- Federally funded research/employment programs for minorities
- Work/study
- Other _____

Describe your most outstanding talent and how you might use it in a career:

When you are beginning to make decisions about your future, it is important to face situations that seem to hold you back. Here are some situations that may keep you from reaching your goals:

- Unwanted pregnancy
- Illnesses/disease (high blood pressure, AIDS, venereal disease)
- Death of a parent, family member or close friend
- Failing grades, or failure to complete high school
- Too many absences
- Negative attitude
- Trouble with the law
- Alcohol/drug abuse
- Divorce/family-related problems
- Violence/abuse

It can be difficult to deal with situations that are beyond your control, such as the death of a parent, divorce or family violence. But you can decide whether

to make the most of these situations or let them overwhelm you. Don't let these problems stop you from reaching your goals.

However, there are many areas in preparing for a career that you can control. These include attending school regularly, making passing grades and avoiding activities that will get you into trouble with the law. When you take school seriously, many doors can be opened that would otherwise be closed.

Your first step in preparing for a career is to get training. A major consideration in choosing a career is how much education you will need. Below are the levels of education you can achieve and a list of the types of degrees earned if you choose to complete that particular level.

Level 1: High school or graduate equivalency degree (GED)

Degree: Diploma

Level 2: Trade school or business school

Degree: Certificate of completion

Level 3: Junior or community college (2 years)

Degree: Associate in arts degree

Level 4: College or university (4 or more years)

Degree: Bachelor's degree

Level 5: Graduate school

Degree: Master's (6 or more years),
Doctorate (8 or more years)

Level 6: Professional school

Degree: Medical doctor, dentist,
lawyer, veterinarian

Note: Some professional schools, such as The Juilliard School for musicians, may not give a degree.

In most cases, education involves a series of steps. To enter one level of study, you must first complete the steps before it. For example, if Jane wants an associate's degree, she must first complete high school or a GED and meet the appropriate college entrance requirements before she can enter a junior college.

College isn't your only choice. Technical, trade and business schools are other alternatives after high school. In most cases, the more education you have in your field, the more money you can make.

Taking time for training now will pay off in the future. For example, with just a high school diploma, you may earn from \$12,000 to \$14,000 a year. With a college degree or trade school, you may earn \$19,000 to \$25,000 or higher.

You might find out how much a person in your community would earn in each of these jobs to see how worthwhile it would be to complete more education. Here are some examples of this process:

Bob likes working on car engines. He is interested in how engines are put together and how they work. Bob has several career choices. This is what is required for each choice. How much does a person in each of these jobs make in your community?

Job title	Education needed
Mechanic	High school, experience or trade school
Industrial arts teacher	Bachelor's degree
Mechanical engineer	Bachelor's, master's or doctorate

Jane's favorite subject in high school was biology. She enjoys learning about how her body works, and she also enjoys helping other people.

Don't let negative situations stop you from reaching your goals.

Gain as much experience in your chosen field as possible.

Job title	Education needed
Nurse's aide	High school and training program
Licensed vocational nurse	Hospital training program
Physical therapist	Bachelor's degree
Registered nurse	Bachelor's degree
Lab technician	Bachelor's degree
Doctor	Medical school

Lloyd likes video games and computers. He's good with puzzles and working out mechanical problems.

Job title	Education needed
Data entry, software application	High school technical school
Computer programmer	Technical school, college
Computer repairer, technician	High school, trade school experience
Computer science teacher	Bachelor's, master's or doctorate

There are other considerations when choosing a career. Some ideas are listed below. Check those that apply to you.

1. I like to work 3. I like to travel

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> indoors | <input type="checkbox"/> yes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> outdoors | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| <input type="checkbox"/> both | |

2. I like working 4. I like a routine

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> with people | <input type="checkbox"/> constant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> by myself | <input type="checkbox"/> change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> both |

What type of work setting would I enjoy? Circle one:

- Office
- Classroom
- Hospital
- Park
- Factory
- Outdoors

If you love excitement, think about choosing a career as a police officer, fire-fighter, paramedic, emergency medical technician or corrections officer, or joining the armed forces. Most of these jobs require intensive training programs, but the training is often given on the job. Some may require college credits.

Once you have decided what your interests are and have some idea of what type of career you would enjoy, then talk with people who work in that field. This will give you a true picture of what that job will really be like.

Next, gain as much experience in that area as possible. For starters, you may consider volunteer work. Jobs are easier to get with experience. Volunteer jobs offer you the chance to get your first bit of experience.

Another option is to join a training program for that particular job. Training programs will usually help you find a job after you have completed your courses. If you attend college, the university usually offer job placement services to help you find a job.

On the next page are some general titles and lists of the places you can check to start your career search.

Cook	Office Work	Pet Care	Outdoor Jobs
(If you like to cook and work around people.) Restaurant Child care center School cafeteria Prison Hospital	(If you enjoy routine and have an interest in computers.) Government agencies School offices Small businesses Hospitals Companies or corporations	(If you enjoy working with animals.) Veterinarians Kennels Pet stores Laboratories Humane Society Farms	(If you like the outdoors and plants.) Landscaping contractor Road work companies Golf course, parks Government: parks, forestry, ecology, fish and wildlife

When checking out any of these places, ask to speak to or make an appointment to see one of the people listed below. He or she will be able to give you the most information about the job.

- Personnel officer
- Owner
- Department head
- Manager
- Supervisor
- Director

Remember, you must take time and carefully consider the options in order to choose the right career for yourself. If you already have a job and are considering changing to a different field, follow these same guidelines so that you can make the best decision possible.

The goals you set for yourself can be as high as you want them to be. You already have the talent, interest and desire, it's just a matter of putting your skills and determination to work. Your future depends on it.

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This publication originally developed by Dorthy Taylor, former Extension Family Life Specialist, The Texas A&M University System, and Tracey R. Jones, Graduate Assistant, Minority Job Skills Project, The Southern Rural Development Center at Mississippi State University.

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