

Want to Explore Your Career Possibilities?

Dear Student,

In your Universal Encouragement Program (UEP) guidance survey, you indicated that you would like to explore possible careers. That's a great place to start!

Your future offers many possibilities, including careers you may not even know exist. Exploring careers can help you discover what interests you, identify your strengths, and learn how people turn their interests and talents into meaningful work.

Here are seven ways to get started.

1. Discover careers you might enjoy

Explore careers that match your interests, abilities, and personal goals. Find out what people do in different occupations, what they earn, and what education or training they need.

- [My Next Move](#): Explore more than 900 careers.
- [CareerOneStop](#): Discover occupations, career videos, salaries, and educational requirements.

These free resources are provided through programs supported by the U.S. Department of Labor.

2. Find out more about yourself

What activities do you enjoy? Do you like solving problems, helping people, creating things, working with technology, or spending time outdoors? What matters most to you in a job?

Try these free activities:

- [O*NET Interest Profiler](#): Discover your interests and explore careers that relate to them.
- [Work Values Matcher](#): Discover what matters most to you in a job, such as independence, achievement, helping others, or job security.

Your results can suggest careers worth exploring, but they do not determine what you can or cannot become.

3. Experience a career through job shadowing

Would you like to discover what an engineer, nurse, electrician, graphic designer, or another professional actually does? Job shadowing lets you observe someone at work and ask questions about their career. You may discover that a job is quite different from what you imagined! Ask your counselor about opportunities to connect with local professionals.

4. Explore careers through volunteering

Volunteering allows you to gain practical experience while helping others. You might assist at an animal shelter, help organize community events, work with children, or participate in an environmental project.

Volunteering can help you develop teamwork, communication, leadership, and problem-solving skills.

Ask your counselor about school and community volunteer opportunities.

5. Gain experience through internships and summer programs

Internships, summer jobs, and career-related educational programs allow you to explore occupations while developing valuable skills.

Some opportunities are paid, while others provide academic credit or educational experiences. Your counselor can help you identify opportunities appropriate for your age, interests, and goals.

You can also explore youth career and employment resources at [CareerOneStop's GetMyFuture](#).

6. Talk with people about their careers

One of the easiest ways to explore a career is to talk with someone who does that work. A family member, teacher, community professional, or mentor may be happy to share their experiences.

Here are four useful questions to ask:

- What do you enjoy most about your work?
- What are the biggest challenges?
- What education, training, or experience did you need?
- What advice would you give someone considering your career?

Your counselor may be able to help you connect with professionals who share your interests.

7. Explore different paths after high school

There are many routes to a successful and satisfying career. Depending on your interests, you might pursue a certificate, apprenticeship, technical training, community college, university degree, military service, or employment that provides on-the-job training.

You don't need to choose your path today. Learning about your options will help you make informed decisions when the time comes.

Ready to take your first step?

Here's a challenge: Choose two careers that interest you, including one you know very little about. Spend a few minutes researching each career and consider these questions:

- What interests me about this career?
- What skills would I need?
- What would I like to learn next?

Remember, you don't have to know exactly what you want to do with your life. Your interests, abilities, and goals will continue to develop. Exploring new possibilities is an important part of discovering your future.

We are here to help! Visit the guidance office to arrange an appointment. Together, we can explore your interests, answer your questions, and identify some exciting possibilities.

Sincerely,

Your School Counselor