

Want to Know How You Can Find an Internship?

Dear Student,

In your Universal Encouragement Program guidance survey, you indicated an interest in participating in an internship. An internship can help you explore a career, develop skills, and learn what working in a particular field is really like.

You do not need to have your future career decided before you begin. An internship can help you discover what interests you—and what you might prefer to explore further.

What is an internship?

An internship is a structured learning experience with a business, public agency, nonprofit organization, or other workplace. A useful internship includes clear learning goals, appropriate tasks, and guidance from a supervisor or mentor.

Internships vary in length. They may last several weeks, a summer, a semester, or longer. Some are part-time during the school year; others take place during school breaks. Opportunities may be in person, remote, or a combination of both.

Internships may be paid or unpaid; some offer a stipend. Ask about compensation rather than assuming you must work without pay. School credit may also be available, but you should arrange approval with your school before starting.

How can you find an opportunity?

1. Start with the counseling office.

Ask about internships, career and technical education programs, and other work-based learning opportunities connected to your school. Your counselor may know employers that already work with students and can help you understand application requirements.

2. Choose a few interests to explore.

Think about subjects, activities, or problems that interest you. For example, an interest in health might lead you to explore a hospital, public health agency, research program, or community organization. Consider related fields as well as familiar job titles.

3. Search organizations' official websites.

Look for sections labeled “Careers,” “Student Opportunities,” “Internships,” or “Youth Programs.” Search terms such as “high school internship,” “summer student program,” and your city or region can help narrow your search.

Check age and grade requirements carefully. Some programs serve high school students, while others are limited to college students. Summer programs may accept applications months before they begin.

4. Ask people who can help you make connections.

Teachers, family members, coaches, mentors, and community leaders may know organizations willing to work with students. Ask whether they can introduce you to someone who coordinates student opportunities.

If you do not have these connections, the counseling office can help you get started.

5. Contact organizations directly.

Even if an organization does not advertise internships, it may offer another supervised learning opportunity. With help from your counselor, send a brief, professional inquiry that includes:

- Your name, school, and grade.
- The field you would like to explore and why it interests you.
- Relevant classes, activities, skills, or projects.
- Your availability and any school requirements.
- A request for information about opportunities for students your age.

Look for an internship coordinator, education or outreach coordinator, hiring manager, or human resources contact. In a small organization, the owner or program director may be the appropriate person.

6. Explore youth employment resources.

[CareerOneStop's GetMyFuture](#) provides career planning tools and connections to local youth employment programs. These programs may help you find work experience, training, or internship opportunities.

Prepare to apply.

Some applications require a résumé, a short statement of interest, recommendations, or an interview. You can include school projects, volunteering, clubs, community activities, and family responsibilities on your résumé. These experiences can demonstrate teamwork, dependability, communication, and problem-solving.

Ask your counselor or a teacher to review your application. You do not need extensive work experience to explain your interests and willingness to learn.

Check whether the opportunity is a good fit.

Before accepting, ask:

- What will I learn, and what tasks will I do?
- Who will supervise me and provide feedback?
- What are the dates, hours, location, and transportation needs?
- Is it paid, unpaid, or supported by a stipend?
- Are there age restrictions, required forms, or school approval requirements?
- Can I receive school credit, and how will my learning be evaluated?
- What training, equipment, or accessibility support is available?
- For a remote internship, how will supervision, communication, and technology access work?

Ask your counselor and a parent, guardian, or trusted adult to help review the opportunity. If transportation, scheduling, equipment, or unpaid work would make participation difficult, tell us so we can explore alternatives.

What if you are too young or cannot find an internship?

Many formal internships are designed for older high school or college students. If you are in middle school—or an internship is not currently available—you can begin with job shadowing, career interviews, workplace visits, supervised volunteering, or a school project with a community partner.

These experiences can help you explore careers and prepare for future opportunities.

Make the most of your experience.

Set a few learning goals with your supervisor. Be dependable, ask questions, accept feedback, and keep notes about what you learn. At the end, reflect on the work you enjoyed, the skills you developed, and what you want to explore next.

An internship can strengthen your résumé and help you make more informed education and career choices. Discovering that a field is not a good fit can be valuable, too.

Please make an appointment with the counseling office. Bring a few interests you would like to explore and your possible availability. Together, we can identify a useful next step.

Sincerely,

Your Counselor