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## Other Educational Choices

Most careers require education or training beyond a general high school education. To prepare for your career, you can go to a two or four-year college, or you can choose one of the educational options listed below.



### Specialty colleges

Specialty colleges have a very limited number of programs. Examples of specialty colleges include art, nursing, and business schools. The costs for these colleges and the lengths of their programs vary, depending on the school and the program.



### Career and trade schools

These schools offer short-term training programs in a wide variety of career fields (photography, auto body technology, dental assisting, welding, etc.). While some programs last only a few weeks, others can take two or more years to complete.

Career and trade schools can be expensive, and not all of them are reputable. Credits from these schools generally cannot be transferred to another college.



### Apprenticeships

Students who prefer a hands-on approach to learning may want to consider an apprenticeship program. Apprentices learn their trade through a combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job training. Apprenticeship programs are an excellent way to receive training in the skilled trades (e.g., electrician, carpenter, welder). These programs are, however, often difficult to get into.



### Military

The U.S. military offers free job training in over 2,000 job specialties (mechanic, computer technician, paramedic, etc.). Enlistees can also take college classes while they are in the military.



# How Do You Decide Where to Go?

*Deciding where to go to college is really about finding a college that's a good match for you.*

Choosing a college is much easier if you know what you're looking for. Here are some things you should consider when you're choosing a college.

## **Location**

Where do you want to go to college? Do you want to attend a college close to home, or would you rather go away to school? Do you want to be where it's warm, where there's snow, or by the ocean? Would you rather go to a college in a small town or a big city?

Most students go to a public college in the state where they live. This is because it usually costs less to go to a public college in your home state. For example, it costs a student living in Texas more to go to Ohio State University than it costs a student living in Ohio. Going to college in your home state also makes it easier to get home for holidays and vacations.

In order to save money, some students go to a college that's close enough for them to commute (drive back and forth). Students who live at home and commute can save a lot of money on living expenses.

## **College size**

While some small colleges have just a few hundred students, large universities can have over 25,000 students. When thinking about what size college you'd like to attend, remember that larger colleges have more majors, more courses, and more activities to choose from. Smaller colleges are more personal, the classes usually have fewer students, and they're easier to get around.

## **Majors**

All four-year colleges have a variety of majors. While most colleges have popular majors such as business and education, no college is able to offer every major. If there's a specific subject that you want to study, you need to look for colleges that have that major. For example, if you want to study marine biology, you need to look for colleges with a major in marine biology.

## **Admissions requirements**

Colleges have their own admission requirements. Some colleges accept all high school graduates; other colleges are more selective and much harder to get into. Look for colleges that accept students with academic records similar to yours.

## **Special programs**

If there's a specific program, activity, or sport that's important to you, you need to find the colleges that offer that program or activity. Perhaps you want to go to a college that has an orchestra, or maybe you want to play volleyball in college. Having a program or activity that you definitely want will help you narrow your list of college choices.

## **Costs**



Talk to your parent(s) about how you are going to pay for college. When you're choosing a college, is cost something that you need to take into consideration? *There are many ways to make college affordable. Don't ever think that you can't go to college because you don't have enough money! (See page 22.)*

## **Other criteria**

There may be other things that are important to you in choosing a college. For example, you may want to go to an all girls or all boys college, a historically black college, or a college with a religious affiliation.



## Living in a Dorm

***If you go to a four-year college in a different city or town, you will probably be required to live in a residence hall during your freshman year. (Students call residence halls dorms, so that's the term we'll use here.)***

Living in a dorm is a wonderful way to meet new people and make new friends. Freshman dorms can also be lots of fun. Everything is new, and everyone's excited about starting college. Many lifetime friendships were started in a freshman dorm.

Most freshman dorm rooms are designed for two students. Some dorms also have suites; these rooms are usually big enough for four or more students. As a general rule, each student is provided a single bed, a desk, and a chair. Students bring their own blankets, pillows, curtains, carpet, pictures, etc. Most dorms have community bathrooms, although some suites have their own bathroom.



Some dorms have both male and female students living in them (co-ed dorms), and some dorms are single sex. In co-ed dorms the boys and girls are usually separated. For example, there may be one floor for girls and one for boys.

Almost all dorms have an area for students to watch TV or socialize, along with quiet areas for students to study. Many dorms also have dining halls where students can eat their meals.

If you and a friend are going to the same college, you can request that you be roommates. Most students, however, just sign up for a dorm, and they're assigned a roommate. Colleges try to put students together who have things in common, and roommates often end up being great friends.

*"I was really nervous about meeting my roommate at the beginning of the year, but he's really cool, and we get along great."*

*Marcus Adkins, college freshman*



# A Typical College Day

*While every day is different, “Jennifer’s Wednesday Schedule” will give you an idea of what a typical college day might look like.*

Jennifer - Wednesday Schedule	
7:30 - 8:00	Get up, shower, get dressed
8:00 - 8:45	Eat breakfast in the dorm cafeteria
8:45 - 8:55	Walk to Schaffer Hall for Economics 101
9:00 - 9:50	CLASS - Economics 101
10:00 - 10:45	Hang out at Student Center with Kate
10:45 - 10:55	Go to Rizer Hall for Psychology 125
11:00 - 11:50	CLASS - Psychology 125
12:00 - 1:00	Eat lunch at East Quad cafeteria
1:00 - 3:45	Go to Houck Library and do research for English term paper
3:45 - 3:55	Walk to Lindsay Hall for English 101
4:00 - 4:50	CLASS - English 101
5:00 - 5:50	Go to Rec Center - jog and work out
6:00 - 7:00	Eat dinner in dorm cafeteria
7:00 - 9:45	Go to study room - review class notes for psychology, do outline for English term paper, and study for Biology quiz
9:45 - 11:00	Go to Tamara’s room and watch CSI
11:15	Lights out





# Student Activities

*There's more to college than just taking classes. Being involved in student activities makes college a lot more fun.*

## Student organizations

Colleges offer a variety of student clubs and organizations. In fact, a large university may have hundreds of student groups and organizations (paintball, zoology, photography, Frisbee, nature, chess, history, etc.). Getting involved in a club or organization is a great way to meet other students with similar interests.

*"I joined the bike club my sophomore year. I have made so many friends through this club!" Whitney Jones, college junior*

## Community service programs

On most college campuses, you'll find several community service programs (Habitat for Humanity, Big Brothers and Sisters, etc.). Colleges encourage their students to become involved in community service projects and to make a difference by helping others.

## Intramural and club sports



Many colleges have intramural and club teams for a variety of sports. These sports often include baseball, field hockey, golf, handball, rugby, soccer, and tennis.

Intramural programs are mostly for people who want to play a sport for fun. Club teams are more selective and competitive - they are for athletes who want to play a sport at a higher level.

*"I played soccer in high school, so I was happy when I found out that my freshman dorm had an intramural team. Our games are fun, and a lot of the guys on my team are really good soccer players."*

*James Garfield, college freshman*

## Cultural activities

Colleges and universities are centers for cultural activities. Concerts, theater performances, art shows, and lectures all provide students with wonderful opportunities to broaden their horizons and have new experiences.

## Recreation / Sports centers

Many college campuses have recreation centers where students can swim, lift weights, run, and work out. These centers provide students with a place to go to relieve stress, meet friends, and keep in shape.

## Sporting events

College sporting events are fun and exciting. They also give students an opportunity to get together and show their school spirit. On many college campuses the weekend football and basketball games are a big part of campus life.

## Fraternities and sororities (Greek life)

Many colleges have social groups called fraternities and sororities. (Boys join fraternities and girls join sororities.) Only a small percentage of college students join fraternities and sororities, but these groups are often very visible on campus.



All fraternities and sororities are identified by Greek letters. Sigma Chi (ΣΧ) and Phi Delta Theta (ΦΔΘ) are two examples of national fraternities. Most fraternities and sororities have a house on or close to the college campus. Fraternities and sororities use their houses for meetings, social activities, and as a place to hang out. Many members live in their fraternity or sorority house instead of living in a dorm or apartment.

For the students who “go Greek,” their fraternity or sorority often becomes their main social group during college.