

Why Go to College?

(How about ... to get a good job!)

Can't I get a good job now?

Yes, maybe you could, but a college degree will make your chances even better. Check out the earnings and unemployment rates below for people 25 years and older with different levels of education.

Unemployment rate in 2014	Level of education completed	Mean (average) earnings in 2014
9.0%	Less than a high school diploma	\$30,108
6.0%	High school graduate, no college	\$43,056
6.0%	Some college, no degree	\$48,984
4.3%	Occupational program (career school)	\$48,152
4.6%	Associate degree (academic program)	\$52,364
3.5%	Bachelor's degree	\$74,308
2.8%	Master's degree	\$88,036
2.1%	Doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D.)	\$105,456
1.9%	Professional degree (e.g., M.D., J.D.)	\$124,904

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, unpublished tables, 2015

Sometimes it's hard to stay in school if you think you need to be working to earn money. But if you get an education beyond high school, you'll have a wider variety of jobs to choose from, and you'll earn more—especially in the long run.

But I don't know what career to go into!

If you can't decide what to do, talk to your school counselor or visit StudentAid.gov/prepare to find out how to prepare for college and explore your career options.

Doesn't college cost a lot of money?

Think of college as an investment: You spend money now so you can earn more later. The U.S. Department of Education may help you pay for your education. Take a look at StudentAid.gov for information about our federal student aid programs. The site also links to a free scholarship search at StudentAid.gov/scholarships.

Still have questions? Call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

Download this fact sheet at StudentAid.gov/resources.