

Why Go to College or Career School?

(How about to get a good job!)

Can't I get a good job now?

Yes, maybe you can, but a college degree or career school credential will make your chances even better. Check out the average earnings below for people 25 years of age and older with different levels of education.

Level of education completed	Average earnings in 2017
Less than a high school diploma	\$33,800
High school graduate, no college	\$46,228
Some college, no degree	\$51,324
Associate degree (occupational program)	\$51,168
Associate degree (academic program)	\$53,040
Bachelor's degree	\$82,160
Master's degree	\$94,640
Doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D.)	\$123,084
Professional degree (e.g., M.D., J.D.)	\$135,668

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, unpublished table

Sometimes it's hard to stay in school if 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 money—especially in the long run.

But I don't know what career path to take!

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

Doesn't college or career school cost a lot of money?

Think of college or career school 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/types for information about our federal student aid programs, and learn about applying for federal student aid at StudentAid.gov/fafsa. Also, you can search for scholarships at StudentAid.gov/scholarships.

Still have questions? Call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243; TTY for the deaf or hard of hearing 1-800-730-8913). Download this fact sheet at StudentAid.gov/resources.