

# PENNSYLVANIA CAREER GUIDE

*High School Edition*

2014 - 2015



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY



# Introduction

The *Pennsylvania Career Guide* has helped students and job seekers explore their career options for nearly 25 years. For the first time, the 2014-15 publication will be comprised of a series of three publications targeted to specific audiences – Intermediate School students, High School students and Adult Job Seekers. This customization allows the guides to better serve each audience by addressing their specific needs.

You are holding the very first Pennsylvania Career Guide: High School Edition. This guide is designed to introduce high school students to the wide variety of careers that await them in the future. Information in the publication will help students prepare for continuing education or the workforce.

To start, a quick interest assessment will examine the student's interests and hobbies and match them to jobs that best fit their personalities. Students can learn more about those jobs in the Occupational Data Bank, which contains employment, wage, and job outlook information on more than 100 occupations in Pennsylvania.

There are also several articles that explore a variety of career options while giving students a realistic picture of the job market and dispelling some career myths. Jobs in the Natural Gas, Transportation and Manufacturing sectors are also highlighted to help students discover in-demand occupations that they may have not previously considered.

Activities are provided in the final section that allow the student to navigate through the articles and data provided in the guide. Overall, this publication provides the first steps toward helping young students make informed career decisions.



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# *Manufacturing Careers*

## **Manufacturing Your Future**

Today's careers in manufacturing are clean, filled with high technology, automation and robots. Manufacturing offers excellent process-improvement strategies to lead the country out of its economic downturn, employing a highly skilled, highly motivated workforce. The industry is filled with high-demand and rewarding occupations. Whether your interests lie in improving the layout and efficiency of a company through industrial engineering, or in designing custom tools that enable a company to produce its product as a tool and die maker, the manufacturing sector has something for you.

According to the "Blue Green Alliance Clean Energy Assembly Line Report 2009," more than 42,000 existing manufacturers could experience growth based on increased demand for component parts needed to produce clean energy, with Pennsylvania ranking among the top six states with the potential to create such jobs. Manufacturing industries in Pennsylvania are also very important to the natural gas sector. Machinery and replacement parts are necessary to maintain rigs, and an industry already prevalent in the state (plastics) can grow stronger as a number of chemicals required to make them are by-products of the Marcellus Shale drilling.

Faced with an aging workforce, and not enough skilled and adaptable workers to replace them as they retire in the coming years, manufacturing companies are eager to hire and train highly motivated individuals in key occupations: industrial maintenance (IM), CNC operations (CNC), machining (M) and welding (W). Industrial maintenance focuses on the careers that install, repair and perform maintenance on industrial machinery. CNC operators manufacture products by using computer-controlled machines and robots. Machining occupations require individuals to operate or program machine tools to produce a variety of products. Welding workers weld, braze and solder to manufacture products. The graphic on page 6 highlights 12 specific occupations across the four occupational groups.

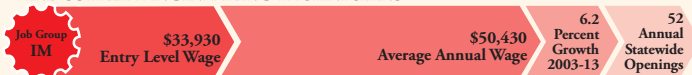
Over 180,000 people work in these demand occupations throughout Pennsylvania. Projections indicate that there will be nearly 5,400 openings each year across these occupations. They require some postsecondary



education and training, ranging from a year of on-the-job training to an associate degree. For many of these occupations, training is acquired through an apprenticeship, which often transfers to college credit. Industry-recognized credentials, such as those offered by the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS), are growing in popularity and often provide a benchmark by which an employer can qualify an individual with prior experience, and by which a postsecondary institution can justify the awarding of advanced-placement credit. With the right education and training, you can start on a career path that offers good pay, opportunities for growth and skills that are in high demand. Additionally, the knowledge you gain may lead to college credit, opening new doors for your manufacturing career.



## INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS



## SUPERVISORS - MECHANICS, INSTALLERS & REPAIRERS



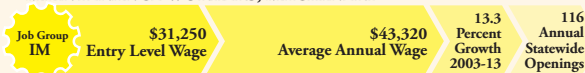
## INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY MECHANICS



## MAINTENANCE & REPAIR WORKERS, GENERAL



## MAINTENANCE WORKERS, MACHINERY



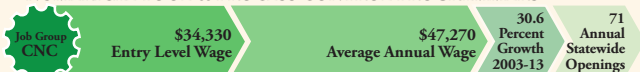
## SUPERVISORS - PRODUCTION & OPERATING WORKERS



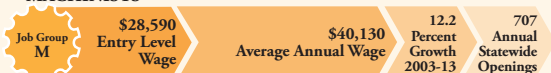
## COMPUTER - CONTROLLED MACHINE TOOL OPERATORS



## NUMERICAL TOOL & PROCESS CONTROL PROGRAMMERS



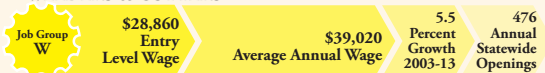
## MACHINISTS



## TOOL & DIE MAKERS



## WELDERS & CUTTERS



## WELDING MACHINE OPERATORS



Source: CWIA, 2012-22 Pennsylvania Occupational Employment Projections & Occupational Employment Statistics Survey (May 2013, Pennsylvania)



# *Natural Gas Careers*

## **Why should I consider a natural gas occupation?**

Natural gas has been one of the most rapidly growing sectors in Pennsylvania recently. Nearly 29,000 employees are currently working in occupations related to natural gas and more than 1,000 job openings are expected every year. The majority of these jobs are located in the Marcellus Shale region (northern and western parts of Pennsylvania). Advances in extraction technology have made the recovery of shale gas deposits buried 9,000 feet below ground both possible and economically viable. As a result, Pennsylvania has seen an increase in good-paying jobs and can expect decades of residual workforce and economic benefits.

## **What can I expect in natural gas careers?**

The drilling of a single well requires about 400 people working in nearly 150 different occupations. Most entry-level positions require little more than a high school diploma. New employees gain knowledge and learn job skills by working alongside more experienced workers through a significant period of on-the-job training. Once training has been completed, these occupations typically pay well, making natural gas careers an attractive option for students whose plans do not include postsecondary education or college.

Since oil and gas drilling rigs usually operate 24 hours a day/7 days a week, employees may work daytime, evening or overnight hours, and in some cases, rotating shifts. While an 8-hour shift is the standard, it's not uncommon for employees to work as many as 12 hours in a shift. Part-time work is rare and overtime is abundant. Many natural gas employees work in remote locations outdoors and around heavy machinery.

In this field, employers are looking for mechanically-inclined candidates with strong knowledge in mathematics, public safety & security and production & processing. Many natural gas occupations can be labor-intensive, so candidates should be in very good physical condition. Candidates that possess higher-level skills in equipment maintenance, critical thinking, operation & control, quality control & analysis and troubleshooting are more desirable to prospective employers.



## What are some of the occupations and what do they do?

### **DERRICK OPERATORS, OIL & GAS**

Rig derrick equipment and operate pumps to circulate mud through drill hole.

### **EARTH DRILLERS**

Operate a variety of drills such as rotary, churn and pneumatic to tap sub-surface water and salt deposits, to remove core samples during mineral exploration or soil testing and to facilitate the use of explosives in mining or construction. May use explosives.

### **EXPLOSIVES WORKERS, ORDNANCE HANDLING EXPERTS & BLASTERS**

Place and detonate explosives to demolish structures or to loosen, remove or displace earth, rock or other materials. May perform specialized handling, storage and accounting procedures.

### **GAS COMPRESSOR OPERATORS**

Operate steam, gas, electric motor or internal combustion engine driven compressors. Transmit, compress, or recover gases, such as butane, nitrogen, hydrogen and natural gas.

### **GAS PLANT OPERATORS**

Distribute or process gas for utility companies and others by controlling compressors to maintain specified pressures on main pipelines.

### **PUMP OPERATORS**

Operate or control petroleum refining or processing units. May specialize in controlling manifold and pumping systems, gauging or testing oil in storage tanks or regulating the flow of oil into pipelines.





### **REFINERY OPERATORS**

Tend, control or operate power-driven, stationary or portable pumps and manifold systems to transfer gases, oil, other liquids, slurries or powdered materials to and from various vessels and processes.

### **ROTARY DRILL OPERATORS, OIL & GAS**

Set up or operate a variety of drills to remove underground oil and gas, or remove core samples for testing during oil and gas exploration.

### **ROUSTABOUTS, OIL & GAS**

Assemble or repair oil field equipment using hand and power tools.

### **SERVICE UNIT OPERATORS, OIL, GAS & MINING**

Operate equipment to increase oil flow from producing wells or to remove stuck pipe, casing, tools or other obstructions from drilling wells. May also perform similar services in mining exploration operations.

### **WELDERS, CUTTERS, SOLDERERS & BRAZERS**

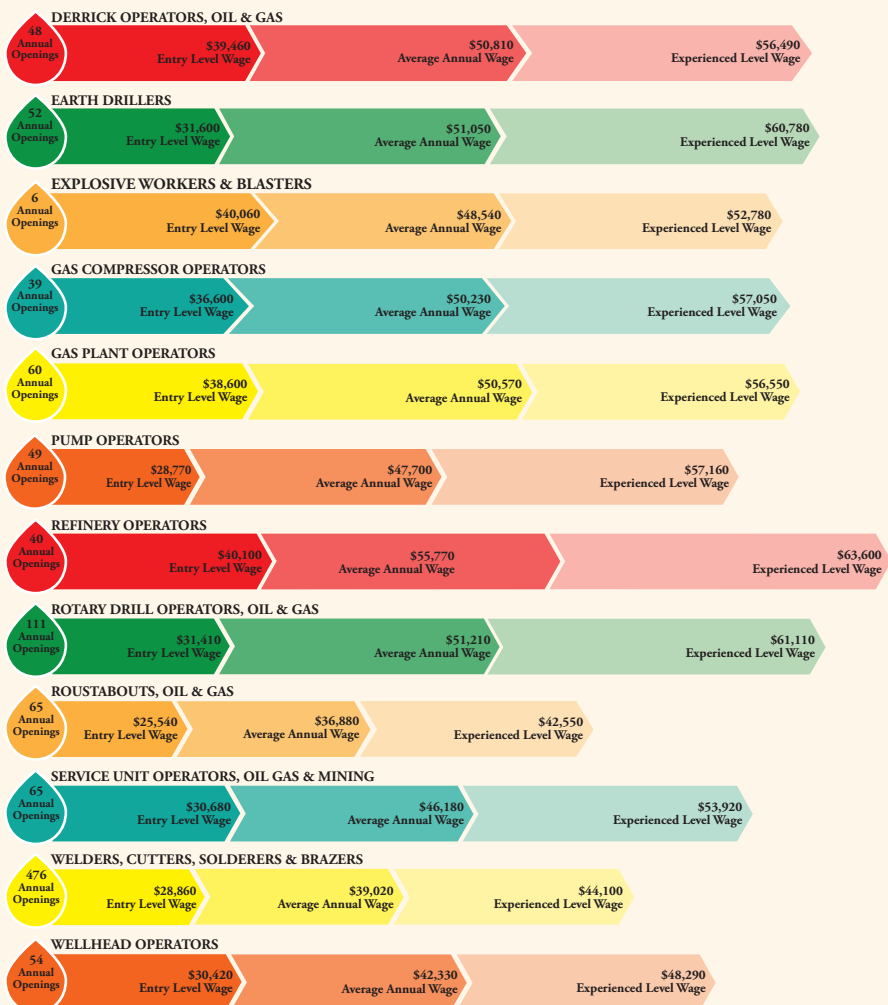
Use hand-welding, flame-cutting, hand soldering or brazing equipment to weld or join metal components or to fill holes, indentations or seams of fabricated metal products.

### **WELLHEAD PUMPERS**

Operate power pumps and auxiliary equipment to produce flow of oil or gas from wells in oil field.



## What are the wages and job outlook in Pennsylvania?



Source: CWIA, 2012-22 Pennsylvania Occupational Employment Projections; Occupational Employment Statistics Survey (May 2013, Pennsylvania)



# *Transportation Careers*

Pennsylvania is the transportation corridor of the Northeast. Our ports, rail systems and highways make us highly competitive in the warehousing and shipment of goods. As these services become increasingly mechanized, a qualified workforce is vital to development efforts. More than one out of every three occupations in the transportation cluster is that of a truck driver, including both heavy and light-truck drivers.

As the natural gas industry grows in Pennsylvania, the transportation cluster will also benefit. Heavy equipment and supplies such as cement, sand, water and wastewater are required for pipeline drilling and construction. Since natural gas drilling sites are often in undeveloped areas, the equipment and supplies must be transported to drilling sites by way of trucks and rail cars. This increased emphasis on transportation not only affects drivers and locomotive engineers, but also related occupations such as packers, laborers, mechanics, stock clerks and dispatchers. Currently, there are nearly 480,000 workers employed in the 12 occupations listed on pages 12-14 and it is estimated that there will be more than 16,400 annual job openings.

The educational requirements for many entry-level transportation occupations is a high school diploma. Upon hire, workers gain job knowledge through a considerable amount of on-the-job training. Transportation occupations that focus on driving vehicles weighing more than 26,000 pounds and/or transport large quantities of hazardous materials require a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). In many cases, the hiring company offers training to assist new employees in obtaining their CDL.

Employers look for mechanically-inclined candidates with strong knowledge in transportation, public safety & security and production & processing. Many occupations in the transportation industry include loading/unloading freight, so candidates should be in good physical condition. Occupations that focus on driving require candidates to meet vision and hearing requirements, and possess good hand-eye coordination. Drivers must maintain a clean driving record, and CDL drivers are subject to random drug & alcohol testing while on the job, as per Federal regulations.



## **What are some of the occupations and what do they do?**

### **BUS & TRUCK MECHANICS & DIESEL ENGINE SPECIALISTS**

Diagnose, adjust, repair or overhaul buses and trucks, or maintain and repair any type of diesel engines.

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES**

Interact with customers to provide information in response to inquiries about products and services and to handle and resolve complaints.

### **DISPATCHERS**

Interact with customers to provide information in response to inquiries about products and services and to handle and resolve complaints.

### **INDUSTRIAL TRUCK & TRACTOR OPERATORS**

Operate industrial equipment to move materials around a warehouse, storage yard, factory, construction site or similar location.

### **LABORERS & MATERIAL MOVERS**

Manually move freight, stock or other materials or perform other general labor.

### **LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS**

Drive electric, diesel-electric, steam or gas-turbine-electric locomotives to transport passengers or freight. Interpret train orders, electronic or manual signals and railroad rules and regulations.

### **PACKERS & PACKAGERS**

Pack or package by hand a wide variety of products and materials.

### **RAILROAD CONDUCTORS & YARDMASTERS**

Coordinate activities of switch-engine crew within railroad yard, industrial plant or similar location. Conductors coordinate activities of train crew on passenger or freight trains. Yardmasters review train schedules and switching orders and coordinate activities of workers engaged in railroad traffic operations, such as the makeup or breakup of trains and yard switching.



### **SHIPPING & RECEIVING CLERKS**

Verify and maintain records on incoming and outgoing shipments. Duties include assembling, addressing, stamping and shipping merchandise or material; receiving, unpacking, verifying and recording incoming merchandise or material; and arranging for the shipment or transportation of products.

### **STOCK CLERKS & ORDER FILLERS**

Receive, store and issue merchandise, materials, equipment and other items from stockroom, warehouse or storage yard to fill shelves, racks, tables or customers' orders.

### **TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISORS**

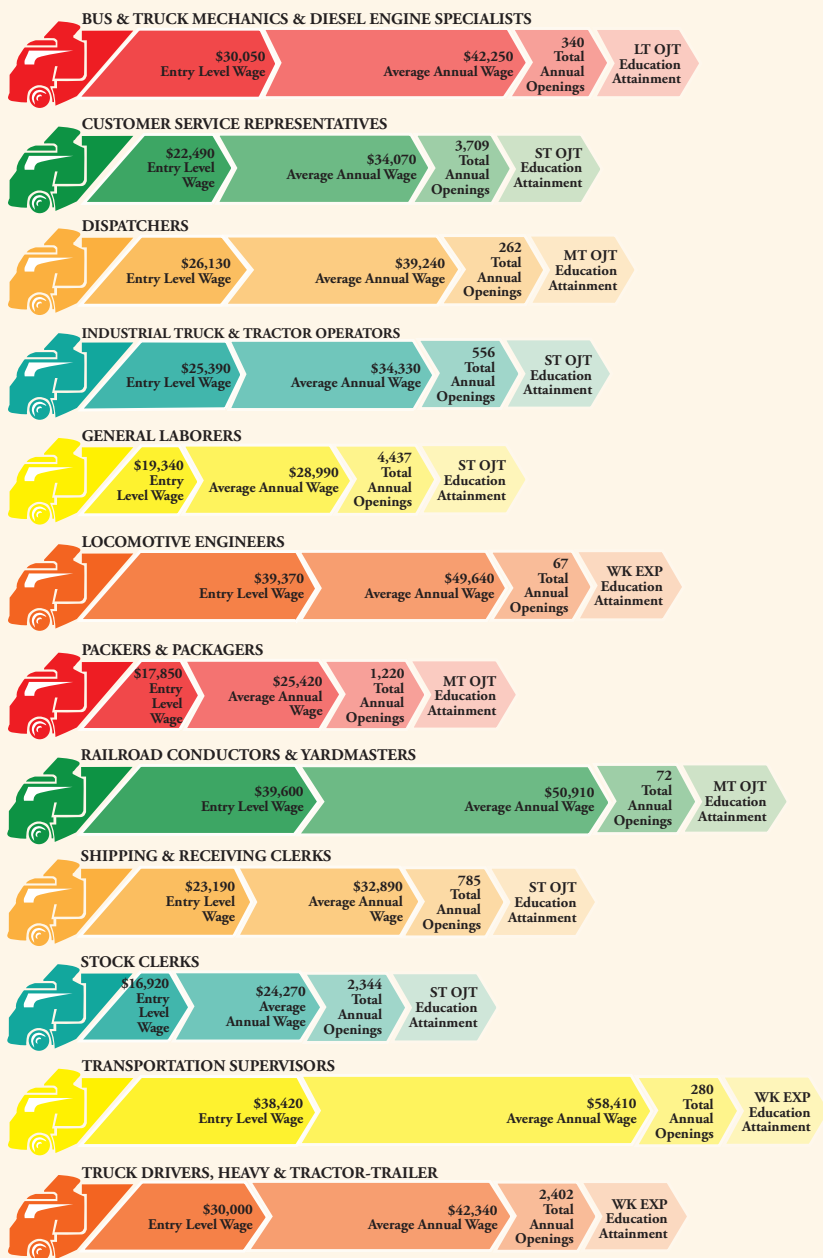
Directly supervise and coordinate activities of transportation and material-moving machine and vehicle operators and helpers.

### **TRUCK DRIVERS, HEAVY & TRACTOR-TRAILER**

Drive a tractor-trailer combination or a truck with a capacity of at least 26,000 pounds Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW). May unload truck. Requires a CDL.



## What are the wages and job outlook in Pennsylvania?



Source: CWIA, 2012-22 Pennsylvania Occupational Employment Projections; Occupational Employment Statistics Survey (May 2013, Pennsylvania)

Educational Attainment Abbreviations: Short-term, Moderate-term and Long-term training (ST OJT, MT OJT and LT OJT) - basic tasks and skills are learned through a period of on-the-job training. Work experience in a related occupation (WK EXP) - training is gained through hands-on work in a similar occupation.



# *A Career in Sports*

Many young people dream of fame in the entertainment or sports world. Yet, the number of people aspiring to these glamorous jobs far outnumbers the actual openings. In the case of sports, experts estimate that only one out of every 1,000 high school senior athletes will make it to the pros. And even if you do get drafted, there's no guarantee you will become rich and famous.

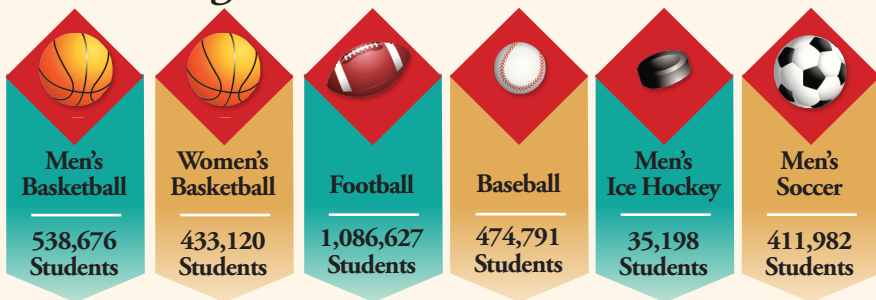
If you are passionate about a sport, don't give up on your dream – but be realistic at the same time. There are still many occupations that allow you to work in professional sports and stay close to the game you love. Here are just a few examples of sports-related careers you may want to consider and prepare for:

- **Broadcaster/Journalist** – Whether they are broadcasting the game live, recording a highlight reel for television or discussing trade deadlines in the newspaper or online, sports reporters and broadcasters are the eyes and ears of the people.
- **Photojournalist** – Uses a still or video camera to catch the action.
- **Coach/Umpire** – Requires a broad knowledge of the sport to teach and motivate players, or to observe and regulate the players' actions.
- **Facilities Manager** – Oversees the day-to-day operations of an arena or sporting venue.
- **Physical Therapist** – Develops exercise programs to help in the recovery from injuries and to prevent future injuries. A license is required to practice this occupation.
- **Sports Statistician** – Collects and analyzes sports data for individual games, seasons and careers. Sports announcers rely on statisticians for information.
- **Sports Turf Specialist** – Tends to grass in stadiums, golf courses and tennis courts.

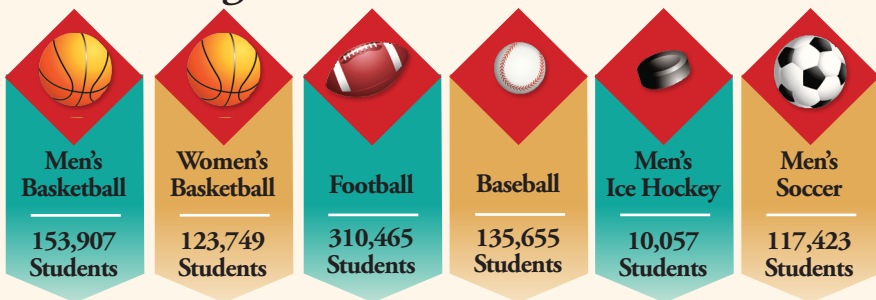
This career guide includes information about hundreds of careers in Pennsylvania – both sports-related and non-sports related. Take a look at our Occupational Data Bank on pages 24 through 29 for more information about many of the occupations that are in demand throughout Pennsylvania.



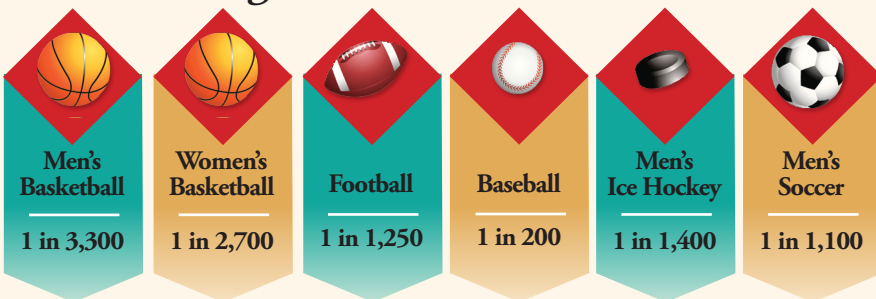
## *High School Student Athletes*



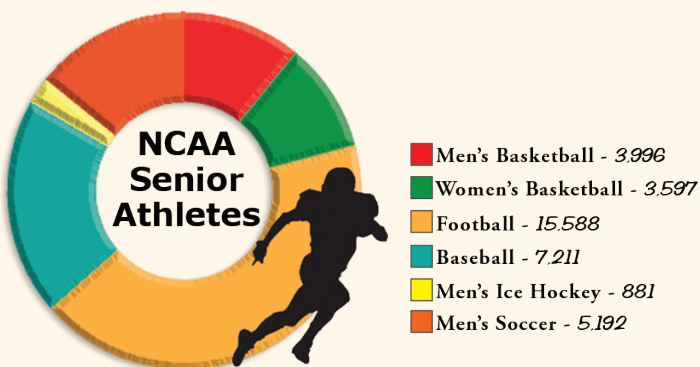
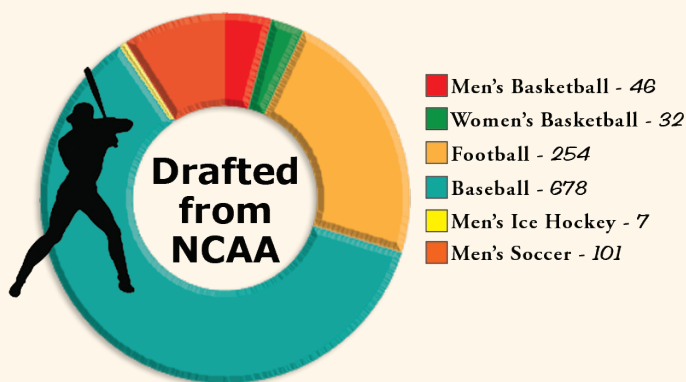
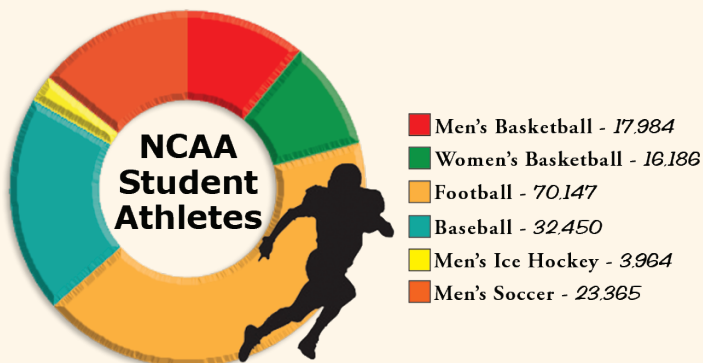
## *High School Senior Athletes*



## *Odds High School Seniors to the Pros*







Source: Estimated Probability of Competing in Athletics beyond the High School Interscholastic Level, NCAA September 2012



# How Entertainment Portrays Careers

Think for a moment about how the media affects your everyday life. What you do and how you think is influenced by print, television, radio and even social media. This phenomenon is the central philosophy behind advertising, and is the reason commercials, ads, and pop-ups exist. It should be no surprise then that the entertainment media also affects the sorts of careers you may find interesting and worthwhile.

It is perfectly normal for the careers you see depicted on television to have caused you to consider pursuing them. However, you don't always see the details surrounding the career, just the parts of the job that are entertaining to watch on television. Shows like *NCIS*, *Law & Order*, and *Grey's Anatomy* portray their characters with action, suspense, and drama. All these things you may find enjoyable, but all may be lacking if you decide to follow the career yourself. Lawyers spend countless hours doing reading and research prior to the few hours a month they may stand in a courtroom. Police officers have to fill out paperwork and document events and evidence, something typically passed over for a more dramatic car chase on TV. These are not bad jobs, but the nature of work is portrayed inaccurately, and we wouldn't want you to pursue your future career with unrealistic expectations.

"Reality television" perpetuates these issues as well. Channels like A&E with shows *Duck Dynasty* and *Storage Wars*, or Food Network with all of their cooking shows, gives a false sense that all you have to do is cook or make duck calls or bid on storage units and you can become rich and successful overnight. They don't show the amount of work people have to go to sell all the junk they acquired in the storage lockers. They also gloss over the years chefs put into learning their craft and honing their skill prior to going on TV.

On the next page is a list of careers that you might have seen on TV or in a movie. They are all good careers with promising outcomes for those who work hard at them. All of these occupations have a few things in common: only the highlights or most glamorized parts of the jobs are shown on TV and movies, and the amount of new people hired in these jobs tends to be small, making them very difficult and competitive to break into.



## Average Incomes & Total Annual Openings

Chefs	Detectives	Psychologists <i>(clinical, counseling &amp; school)</i>	Psychiatrists	Fashion Designers	Kindergarten Teachers	Agents <i>(performers, artists &amp; athletes)</i>
\$25,290	\$32,710	\$43,040	\$101,780	\$35,170	\$36,620	\$28,240
104	99	251	46	7	198	N/A
Related work experience required.	Postsecondary degree plus work experience	Doctoral degree required.	Doctoral degree required.	Long-term on-the-job	Bachelor's degree required	Bachelor's degree plus work experience required

Source: CWIA, 2012-22 Pennsylvania Occupational Employment Projections & Occupational Employment Statistics Survey (May 2013, Pennsylvania)



# Getting To Know Yourself

## What do you want to be when you grow up?

Starting a new career or changing jobs can be an adventure – a journey that leads you to new and rewarding work opportunities. It can also be confusing and frustrating if you aren't sure where you want to go.

That's why we've provided a self-assessment tool to help you determine which careers are a good fit for you. The goal is to find a rewarding job or career that uses your unique set of skills, talents and abilities. People who choose careers that match their interests are more likely to achieve job satisfaction and success. However, self-assessments are just one part of the entire career puzzle. You should consider your results in combination with information from career counselors and other sources.

Let's get started.

### Step 1:

In each group, check the items that describe you. Then count up the number of checkmarks and fill in the total. Be as honest as you can. Remember: There are no wrong answers!



### Step 2:

Using your totals, identify the three letters that have the highest scores. Record them in the spaces below:

**My Interest Code**

### Step 3:

Descriptions for each of the six interest codes are found on page 22. Take a minute to read the descriptions for the areas that match your interest code from Step 2.

	-R-	-I-	-A-	-S-	-E-	-C-
Are You:	<input type="checkbox"/> Practical	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Imaginative	<input type="checkbox"/> Helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> Sociable	<input type="checkbox"/> Orderly
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mechanically inclined	<input type="checkbox"/> Precise	<input type="checkbox"/> Intuitive	<input type="checkbox"/> Idealistic	<input type="checkbox"/> Ambitious	<input type="checkbox"/> Accurate
	<input type="checkbox"/> Shy or modest	<input type="checkbox"/> Observant	<input type="checkbox"/> Romantic	<input type="checkbox"/> Generous	<input type="checkbox"/> Witty	<input type="checkbox"/> Conscientious
	<input type="checkbox"/> Reliable	<input type="checkbox"/> Curious	<input type="checkbox"/> Creative	<input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative	<input type="checkbox"/> Argumentative	<input type="checkbox"/> Efficient
	<input type="checkbox"/> A nature lover	<input type="checkbox"/> Analytical	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly or cheerful	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive	<input type="checkbox"/> Methodical
	<input type="checkbox"/> Athletic	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-motivated	<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive or emotional	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsible	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-confident	<input type="checkbox"/> Careful
Can You:	<input type="checkbox"/> Work on cars	<input type="checkbox"/> Solve math problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Play a musical instrument	<input type="checkbox"/> Teach others	<input type="checkbox"/> Convince others to see things your way	<input type="checkbox"/> Keep accurate records
	<input type="checkbox"/> Solve mechanical problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct research	<input type="checkbox"/> Act or perform	<input type="checkbox"/> Mediate disputes	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead a group	<input type="checkbox"/> Write a business report
	<input type="checkbox"/> Start a campfire	<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze data	<input type="checkbox"/> Write stories or poems	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead a group discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Sell things or promote ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> Make charts and graphs
	<input type="checkbox"/> Read a blueprint	<input type="checkbox"/> Think abstractly	<input type="checkbox"/> Dance	<input type="checkbox"/> Work with others	<input type="checkbox"/> Entertain guests	<input type="checkbox"/> Operate office machines
	<input type="checkbox"/> Fix electronic equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> Perform laboratory work	<input type="checkbox"/> Sketch, draw or paint	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan or supervise an activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Manage people or products	<input type="checkbox"/> Work well within a system
	<input type="checkbox"/> Play a sport	<input type="checkbox"/> Do complex calculations	<input type="checkbox"/> Work independently	<input type="checkbox"/> Offer others guidance	<input type="checkbox"/> Give talks or speeches	<input type="checkbox"/> Use a computer
Do You Like To:	<input type="checkbox"/> Hunt or fish	<input type="checkbox"/> Use computers	<input type="checkbox"/> Decorate	<input type="checkbox"/> Do volunteer work	<input type="checkbox"/> Belong to clubs	<input type="checkbox"/> Play board games
	<input type="checkbox"/> Build or repair things	<input type="checkbox"/> Read scientific magazines	<input type="checkbox"/> Take photographs	<input type="checkbox"/> Organize parties	<input type="checkbox"/> Start or lead a social organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect items
	<input type="checkbox"/> Operate tools and machinery	<input type="checkbox"/> Use a telescope	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend concerts or plays	<input type="checkbox"/> Play team sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Meet important people	<input type="checkbox"/> Work on home improvement projects
	<input type="checkbox"/> Be physically active	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiment or observe events	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect artwork	<input type="checkbox"/> Babysit or work with children	<input type="checkbox"/> Make decisions affecting others	<input type="checkbox"/> Build models
	<input type="checkbox"/> Work outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/> Play chess	<input type="checkbox"/> Read fiction, plays and poetry	<input type="checkbox"/> Be the center of attention	<input type="checkbox"/> Win awards	<input type="checkbox"/> Work with numbers
	<input type="checkbox"/> Use your hands	<input type="checkbox"/> Work independently	<input type="checkbox"/> Work on crafts	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Run a political campaign	<input type="checkbox"/> Be responsible for details
	Total for "R" =	Total for "I" =	Total for "A" =	Total for "S" =	Total for "E" =	Total for "C" =

<sup>1</sup> Dr. John Holland's RIASEC model of occupations is the basis of most contemporary career inventories. It classifies an individual's personality as Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, or Conventional, and it matches those classifications to fitting vocations.

### **R = Realistic**

Is skilled at working with tools, mechanical or electrical drawings, machines or plants and animals. Generally avoids social activities like teaching, healing and informing others. Sees self as practical, mechanical and realistic.

#### **Possible occupations include:**

- Welders (pg. 29)
- Electricians (pg. 26)
- Truck Drivers (pg. 29)
- Mechanical Engineers (pg. 31)

### **I = Investigative**

Is good at understanding and solving science and math problems. Generally avoids leading, selling or persuading people. Sees self as precise, scientific and intellectual.

#### **Possible occupations include:**

- Pharmacy Technicians (pg. 28)
- Financial Analysts (pg. 31)
- Clinical & School Psychologists (pg. 30)
- Medical Scientists (pg. 31)

### **A = Artistic**

Is strong in areas such as creative writing, drama, crafts, music or art. Generally avoids highly ordered or repetitive activities. Sees self as expressive, original and independent.

#### **Possible occupations include:**

- Architects (pg. 30)
- Graphic Designers (pg. 31)
- Hairstylists (pg. 29)
- Kindergarten Teachers (pg. 31)

### **S = Social**

Is good at teaching, counseling, nursing or giving information. Generally avoids using machines, tools or animals to achieve a goal. Sees self as helpful, friendly and trustworthy.

#### **Possible occupations include:**

- Child Care Workers (pg. 25)
- Dental Hygienists (pg. 29)
- Residential Advisors (pg. 30)
- Elementary School Teachers (pg. 31)

### **E = Enterprising**

Is good at leading people and selling things or ideas. Generally avoids activities that require careful observation and scientific, analytical thinking. Sees self as energetic, ambitious and sociable.

#### **Possible occupations include:**

- Telemarketers (pg. 29)
- Real Estate Agents (pg. 28)
- Gaming Dealers (pg. 26)
- Public Relations Specialists (pg. 31)

### **C = Conventional**

Is good at working with written records and numbers in a systematic, orderly way. Generally avoids ambiguous, unstructured activities. Sees self as orderly and good at following a set plan.

#### **Possible occupations include:**

- Billing Clerks (pg. 25)
- Library Assistants (pg. 27)
- Legal Secretaries (pg. 27)
- Cost Estimators (pg.30)



# *Have A Career In Mind, Try It Out First*

**Find something you enjoy doing, then find a way to get paid for doing it.**

That was the simple, yet profound, advice a mentor once offered his young student. Too often, however, students decide on a high-paying or high-prestige job first, then try to make themselves “like” the job or the education they need to do it. Or they choose an occupation based on what sounds good, what is popular, or what someone else wants them to pursue, rather than a career that’s actually something they’d enjoy doing.

The key is to learn more about various occupations and determine which ones you would enjoy. But if you’re still in school how do you do that? Luckily, there are several ways to learn about fields you might find interesting.

## **School Clubs**

Many schools have clubs that focus on specific careers and cater to students interested in those fields. Student clubs often host guest speakers, arrange workplace tours and sponsor trips to conferences and competitions – all of which are excellent opportunities for asking questions about a specific field, résumé building and networking. If your high school doesn’t have the club you are looking for, talk to a teacher or guidance counselor about starting one.

## **Volunteer Work**

While it doesn’t provide a paycheck, volunteering is another way to learn about a field before deciding to pursue it as a career. Many employers welcome enthusiastic volunteers who offer their time in exchange for work experience. Charities and community organizations are a great way to gain experience, learn new skills and build your résumé, all while helping your local community.

## **Job Shadowing**

Job shadowing allows you to directly observe someone at work. You can observe first-hand the day-to-day activities you would be performing in a



particular job and learn what skills you would need to obtain it. Job shadowing also gives you a chance to ask any questions you might have about the job and how to prepare for it.

### **Internships**

Internships are temporary working arrangements – usually offered to students – made with a company or organization. An internship may last a few weeks or a few months, and can be paid or unpaid. Often, they are done for college credit, depending on the circumstances. Completing an internship will give you valuable work experience, a résumé credit, a good reference and personal contacts.

### **Temporary Help Firms**

As its name implies, a temporary help firm places career seekers in temporary positions within a company looking for help. The main advantage of this arrangement is that you're not making a long-term commitment to the job, since the employer knows it's temporary. It's a great opportunity to test your skills and to see if you like the type of work the company does. Plus, you can get a feel for several different jobs and fields in a fairly short period of time.

### **Part-time Employment**

A part-time job offers many advantages beyond earning some extra money. It's also a way to gain valuable experience in a particular field – experience that will allow you to judge whether you'd like to make the job your career. As a bonus, performing well at your job will earn you good references and transferable skills for future employment. In Pennsylvania, your job choices will be limited until you reach age 16 and in some cases, age 18.





# Using the Occupational Data Bank

As you consider your future occupation, many questions will arise. Does the job fit my interests and abilities? What does the job pay? How much competition will there be for openings? What kind of training will I need?

Our Occupational Data Bank (ODB) answers many of these questions. Information is provided for nearly 240 occupations, which employ a large portion of Pennsylvania's workforce. To access similar data for other occupations or a specific area, please contact the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA) at 877-4WF-DATA or by email at [workforceinfo@pa.gov](mailto:workforceinfo@pa.gov).

The ODB provides a closer look at occupations requiring a diverse range of education and experience. If you are unable to locate a specific occupation, or would like more comprehensive information, check out the O\*Net website at [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org).

Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
Career Path Icon W: Requiring Short, Moderate, or Long-Term On-the-Job Training				
Advertising Sales Agents	ECS	200	\$25,820	\$55,150
Amusement & Recreation Attendants	RCE	878	\$16,790	\$19,780
Automotive Body Repairers	R	192	\$28,210	\$40,430
Automotive Mechanics	R	1,178	\$23,210	\$37,260
Bakers	R	268	\$18,190	\$25,980
Bank Tellers	CE	1,160	\$20,320	\$25,490
Bartenders	ESR	1,416	\$16,750	\$20,770
Bill & Account Collectors	CE	553	\$24,140	\$35,070
Billing Clerks	C	827	\$25,640	\$33,910
Bookkeeping, Accounting Clerks	C	1,276	\$24,130	\$36,380
Brick- & Blockmasons	R	126	\$34,290	\$49,520
Bus & Truck Mechanics	R	340	\$30,050	\$42,250
Bus Drivers	RSC	163	\$21,600	\$35,460
Butchers	R	228	\$22,640	\$32,090
Cargo & Flight Agents	CRE	127	\$25,750	\$39,820
Carpenters	R	1,498	\$28,870	\$44,370
Cashiers	CER	6,747	\$16,890	\$19,570
Cement Masons	R	168	\$30,670	\$44,260
Chemical Equipment Operators	R	138	\$28,380	\$44,650
Child Care Workers	S	2,303	\$16,810	\$20,470
Claims Adjusters	EC	352	\$41,550	\$61,830



Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
<b>Career Path Icon W: Requiring Short, Moderate, or Long-Term On-the-Job Training</b>				
CNC Machine Operators	R	308	\$28,020	\$38,790
Coaches & Scouts	ERS	355	\$16,930	\$33,300
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers	R	6,494	\$16,800	\$18,930
Construction Laborers	R	1,547	\$22,420	\$35,130
Cooks & Food Preparation Workers	R	1,225	\$16,790	\$21,410
Cooks, Fast Food	R	199	\$16,770	\$18,400
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	RCS	602	\$19,060	\$25,920
Cooks, Restaurant	REA	1,100	\$18,200	\$24,940
Cooks, Short Order	REC	122	\$16,740	\$20,560
Correctional Officers	RS	500	\$36,680	\$48,430
Counter & Rental Clerks	CER	536	\$17,770	\$29,130
Counter Attendants	RSE	733	\$16,770	\$18,950
Customer Service Representatives	CES	3,709	\$22,490	\$34,070
Data Entry Keyers	CR	124	\$21,310	\$29,440
Derrick Operators, Oil & Gas	R	48	\$39,460	\$50,810
Dining Room & Cafeteria Attendants & Bartender Helpers	RSE	771	\$16,790	\$18,700
Dishwashers	R	1,188	\$16,810	\$18,710
Dispatchers	CR	262	\$26,130	\$39,240
Earth Drillers	R	52	\$31,600	\$51,050
Electronic Equipment Assemblers	R	121	\$21,240	\$31,990
Electrical Power-Line Installers	R	190	\$50,640	\$67,200
Electricians	R	683	\$34,750	\$53,990
Executive Secretaries & Executive Administrative Assistants	CES	631	\$37,140	\$52,420
Explosives Workers & Blasters	R	6	\$40,060	\$48,540
Farmworkers	R	1,068	\$16,760	\$24,680
Farmworkers, Farm & Ranch Animals	RCI	163	\$19,610	\$26,660
Fashion Designers	AER	7	\$35,170	\$55,930
File Clerks	C	144	\$19,450	\$27,800
Fitness Trainers	SRE	271	\$17,400	\$28,710
Food & Beverage Servers	SRE	724	\$16,800	\$20,430
Food Batchmakers	R	187	\$19,980	\$31,470
Gaming Dealers	EC	135	\$16,650	\$27,210
Gas Compressor Operators	R	39	\$36,600	\$50,230
Gas Plant Operators	R	60	\$38,600	\$50,570
General Laborers	R	4,437	\$19,340	\$28,990



Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
<b>Career Path Icon W: Requiring Short, Moderate, or Long-Term On-the-Job Training</b>				
General Office Clerks	CRE	3,274	\$19,650	\$30,610
Highway Maintenance Workers	R	206	\$24,690	\$37,170
Home Health Aides	SRC	3,184	\$16,770	\$20,750
Hosts & Hostesses	ESR	1,159	\$16,780	21,520
Hotel Desk Clerks	CES	460	\$16,880	\$21,350
Human Resources Clerks	CES	194	\$25,770	\$36,770
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	R	921	\$34,410	\$46,680
Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	R	556	\$25,390	\$34,330
Inspectors & Testers	RC	640	\$26,620	\$39,690
Insurance Claims Clerks	CES	373	\$29,400	\$39,920
Insurance Sales Agents	ESC	577	\$32,450	\$71,320
Interviewers	CSE	179	\$25,240	\$33,550
Janitors & Cleaners	R	2,541	\$17,970	\$26,280
Landscapers & Groundskeepers	R	1,479	\$19,390	\$27,900
Laundry Workers	R	280	\$16,890	\$22,630
Legal Secretaries	CE	132	\$31,140	\$43,890
Library Assistants	CR	236	\$16,950	\$24,060
Loan Officers	ESC	203	\$39,570	\$70,980
Locomotive Engineers	RC	67	\$39,370	\$49,640
Machinery Maintenance Workers	R	116	\$31,250	\$43,320
Machinists	R	707	\$28,590	\$40,130
Maids & Housekeepers	R	1,652	\$16,790	\$21,240
Maintenance Helpers	R	182	\$18,800	\$26,390
Medical Assistants	SCR	819	\$23,360	\$29,990
Medical Secretaries	CE	792	\$24,170	\$31,490
Messengers	CR	162	\$19,930	\$28,570
Mixing Machine Operators	R	139	\$26,550	\$38,660
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics	R	166	\$36,780	\$48,360
Multiple Machine Tool Operators	R	110	\$24,910	\$36,440
Non-farm Animal Caretakers	RS	183	\$16,780	\$20,680
Numerical Tool Programmers	RI	71	\$34,330	\$47,270
Operating Engineers	R	784	\$32,620	\$47,220
Opticians	ECR	121	\$23,310	\$36,480
Order Clerks	CES	287	\$18,990	\$29,250
Packaging Machine Operators	R	440	\$21,980	\$33,150
Packers & Packagers	R	1,220	\$17,850	\$25,420
Painters	R	259	\$28,080	\$40,970



Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
<b>Career Path Icon W: Requiring Short, Moderate, or Long-Term On-the-Job Training</b>				
Parking Lot Attendants	REC	255	\$16,910	\$21,370
Payroll & Timekeeping Clerks	CER	271	\$28,490	\$38,360
Personal Care Aides	SRE	2,120	\$16,990	\$21,580
Pharmacy Technicians	CRI	317	\$21,240	\$29,320
Physical Therapist Aides	SR	140	\$18,510	\$26,860
Plumbers & Pipe-fitters	R	481	\$35,330	\$53,460
Police Officers	RES	957	\$39,580	\$60,130
Police, Fire & Ambulance Dispatchers	SC	109	\$26,180	\$36,680
Postal Mail Carriers	CR	458	\$39,080	\$50,580
Production Clerks	CE	427	\$31,980	\$48,730
Production Helpers	R	577	\$20,110	\$27,740
Pump Operators	R	49	\$28,770	\$47,700
Purchasing Agents	EC	336	\$41,700	\$63,330
Railroad Conductors & Yardmasters	REC	72	\$39,600	\$50,910
Real Estate Agents	ERI	192	\$32,220	\$57,750
Receptionists	CES	1,584	\$19,300	\$26,590
Recreational Protective Service Workers	RSE	401	\$16,780	\$18,210
Refuse Collectors	R	205	\$18,630	\$32,110
Retail Salespersons	ES	7,036	\$16,910	\$25,950
Roofers	R	120	\$27,560	\$39,130
Rotary Drill Operators	R	111	\$31,410	\$51,210
Roustabouts, Oil & Gas	R	65	\$25,540	\$36,880
Sales Representatives	ERS	1,949	\$34,210	\$63,690
Sales Route Drivers	ERS	422	\$16,780	\$26,990
School Bus Drivers	RSC	643	\$18,760	\$28,560
Secretaries	CES	2,256	\$22,400	\$32,720
Security & Firm Alarm Systemss Installers	R	111	\$32,550	\$46,870
Security Guards	SEC	1,167	\$18,220	\$25,400
Service Unit Operators, Oil, Gas & Mining	R	65	\$30,680	\$46,180
Sheet Metal Workers	R	148	\$31,150	\$50,560
Shipping & Receiving Clerks	CR	785	\$23,190	\$32,890
Social & Human Service Assistants	SC	915	\$20,660	\$28,150
Stock Clerks	CRE	2,344	\$16,920	\$24,270
Structural Metal Fabrications	R	245	\$30,140	\$40,080
Substance Abuse Counselors	S	366	\$27,290	\$39,450
Switchboard Operators	CRS	109	\$20,180	\$27,730
Taxi Drivers & Chauffeurs	R	283	\$17,350	\$23,520



Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
<b>Career Path Icon W: Requiring Short, Moderate, or Long-Term On-the-Job Training</b>				
Team Assistants	SC	1,134	\$17,900	\$24,720
Team Assemblers	RC	843	\$21,020	\$30,740
Telecommunications Line Installers & Repairs	R	169	\$34,060	\$54,920
Telemarketers	ECS	204	\$17,340	\$26,920
Tool & Die Makers	R	29	\$33,580	\$44,440
Truck Driver's Light	R	758	\$18,960	\$33,080
Ushers & Lobby Attendants	SCE	257	\$16,780	\$21,560
Waiters & Waitresses	SE	4,756	\$16,770	\$20,520
Water Treatment Plant Operators	RC	236	\$32,180	\$45,500
Welders	R	476	\$28,860	\$39,020
Welding Machine Operators	R	86	\$23,840	\$35,190
Wellhead Pumpers	RC	54	\$30,420	\$42,330

Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
<b>Career Path Icon T: Requiring Postsecondary Training through a Technical School or Associate Degree</b>				
Aircraft Mechanics	RIC	131	\$37,120	\$53,370
Cardiovascular Technologists	IRS	117	\$36,500	\$55,610
Chemical Technicians	RIC	119	\$30,510	\$44,360
Construction Managers	ERC	257	\$66,110	\$109,810
Dental Assistants	SRE	357	\$24,350	\$33,420
Dental Hygienists	SCR	350	\$46,560	\$60,940
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	IR	133	\$44,870	\$59,620
Electrical Engineering Technicians	RIC	119	\$36,170	\$54,070
Eligibility Interviewers	CS	243	\$37,180	\$46,440
Emergency Medical Technicians	SRI	683	\$22,330	\$32,150
Fire Fighters	RS	142	\$35,390	\$50,080
General Managers	EC	1,678	\$54,620	\$118,710
Hairstylists	EAS	1,310	\$17,700	\$25,910
HVAC Mechanics	R	455	\$31,300	\$45,270
Industrial Engineering Technicians	IC	52	\$33,930	\$50,430
Library Technicians	CS	209	\$18,530	\$29,760
Licensed Practical Nurses	SRI	1,615	\$33,010	\$42,880
Manicurists & Pedicurists	ESR	112	\$16,800	\$20,070
Medical Equipment Repairers	R	136	\$29,870	\$45,750



Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
<b>Career Path Icon T: Requiring Postsecondary Training through a Technical School or Associate Degree</b>				
Medical Laboratory Technicians	RIC	303	\$28,060	\$38,650
Medical Records Technicians	CR	337	\$25,700	\$35,350
Occupational Therapy Assistants	SR	123	\$35,910	\$47,280
Paralegals	ECS	314	\$35,550	\$54,530
Physical Therapist Assistants	SR	209	\$29,880	\$43,980
Preschool Teachers	SA	586	\$19,680	\$27,800
Production Supervisors	ERC	407	\$38,840	\$58,980
Radiological Technicians	RIC	295	\$38,450	\$53,640
Residential Advisors	S	346	\$19,550	\$26,130
Respiratory Therapists	IRS	177	\$44,120	\$56,190
Surgical Technologists	RSC	118	\$31,640	\$40,540
Veterinary Technicians	RI	105	\$25,510	\$34,570

Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
<b>Career Path Icon C: Jobs Requiring at least Four Years of Education in College</b>				
Accountants & Auditors	CE	2,294	\$43,180	\$70,380
Agents	ES	N/A	\$28,240	\$69,700
Architects	ARI	124	\$50,610	\$83,840
Biological Technicians	RIC	170	\$30,520	\$45,940
Budget Analysts	CE	104	\$48,280	\$68,470
Chemists	IR	177	\$48,730	\$80,000
Chief Executives	ECS	358	\$96,520	\$186,130
Child, Family & School Social Workers	S	552	\$27,960	\$41,510
Civil Engineers	RIC	589	\$55,090	\$81,600
Clergy	S	349	\$26,180	\$43,960
Clinical & School Psychologists	ISA	251	\$43,040	\$73,670
Compliance Officers	CE	236	\$42,140	\$66,410
Computer Managers	ECI	263	\$86,380	\$133,480
Cost Estimators	CE	536	\$41,420	\$61,120
Dentists	IRS	122	\$92,110	\$164,890
Editors	AES	100	\$32,230	\$56,080
Education Administrators	SEI	202	\$72,830	\$98,150
Electrical Engineers	IRC	176	\$61,980	\$88,890
Electronics Engineers	IRC	148	\$60,860	\$92,470
Elementary School Teachers	S	1,474	\$40,990	\$60,000



Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
<b>Career Path Icon C: Jobs Requiring at least Four Years of Education in College</b>				
Engineering Managers	EIR	192	\$92,190	\$141,180
Environmental Engineers	IRC	106	\$53,460	\$86,150
Environmental Scientists	RC	114	\$42,730	\$72,470
Financial Analysts	ICE	418	\$46,540	\$76,120
Financial Managers	EC	420	\$73,380	\$132,360
General Practitioners	IES	195	\$102,020	\$187,470
Graphic Designers	AER	329	\$29,540	\$46,360
Health Educators	SEI	126	\$35,740	\$56,110
Health Services Managers	ESI	618	\$55,570	\$92,870
Industrial Engineers	EIR	438	\$57,200	\$81,520
Industrial Production Managers	EC	143	\$63,070	\$102,990
Insurance Underwriters	CEI	126	\$45,570	\$73,110
Kindergarten Teachers	SA	198	\$36,620	\$55,500
Lawyers	E	844	\$64,480	\$134,250
Librarians	ACI	144	\$33,970	\$55,970
Logisticians	EC	188	\$47,770	\$71,260
Management Analysts	CEI	691	\$52,980	\$88,390
Marketing Managers	EC	196	\$85,390	\$154,060
Mechanical Engineers	RI	478	\$56,050	\$83,010
Medical Laboratory Technologists	IR	260	\$39,100	\$55,290
Medical Scientists	IRS	150	\$55,630	\$95,920
Mental Health Counselors	S	610	\$29,720	\$43,110
Middle School Teachers	S	570	\$43,320	\$58,950
Occupational Therapists	SRI	190	\$53,000	\$72,180
Operations Research Analysts	ICR	103	\$45,230	\$71,720
Personal Financial Advisors	SEC	337	\$45,000	\$102,990
Pharmacists	IC	423	\$84,570	\$107,420
Physical Therapists	SRI	450	\$58,560	\$79,010
Physician Assistants	ISA	145	\$58,250	\$82,030
Physicians & Surgeons	IES	574	\$106,020	\$194,690
Placement Specialists	ESC	457	\$40,150	\$63,780
Probation Officers	SC	107	\$38,590	\$51,280
Producers & Directors	AES	117	\$33,030	\$73,740
Public Health Social Workers	S	347	\$33,650	\$47,650
Public Relations Specialists	EAS	244	\$33,620	\$61,760
Recreation Workers	SAR	290	\$17,070	\$25,970
Rehabilitation Counselors	S	254	\$24,290	\$38,360



Occupation Title	Interest Code	Openings per Year	Entry-Level Wage	Average Wage
Career Path Icon C: Jobs Requiring at least Four Years of Education in College				
Sales Managers	EC	293	\$65,150	\$127,430
Secondary School Teachers	S	1,329	\$44,650	\$61,470
Securities Sales Representatives	ECS	391	\$36,280	\$95,550
Social Service Managers	SEA	205	\$39,670	\$63,140
Special Education Teachers	S	158	\$43,120	\$61,070
Speech-Language Pathologists	SIR	150	\$53,790	\$76,250
Substance Abuse Social Workers	S	370	\$25,970	\$39,240
Tax Examiners & Collectors	CE	149	\$26,680	\$48,340
Veterinarians	IR	109	\$69,530	\$114,640
Vocational & School Counselors	S	296	\$34,090	\$54,040
Vocational Education Teachers	S	125	\$48,590	\$64,310





# OCCUPATIONS THAT INTEREST ME

Please take the time to write down some occupations that you would like to learn more about.

Career Path Icon W		
Occupation	Interest Code	Average Wage

Career Path Icon T		
Occupation	Interest Code	Average Wage

Career Path Icon C		
Occupation	Interest Code	Average Wage



# To-Do List for High School Students

What am I going to do after graduation?  
Am I headed for college, vocational training  
or right into the workforce?  
How am I going to navigate the path  
I choose?



When you're in high school you have a lot to think about, especially during your junior and senior years.

This section of the *Career Guide* offers you some help by giving you a general to-do list to follow. When dealing with specific matters, such as application or financial aid deadlines, pay particular attention to the school's requirements, rather than these suggestions. Consider this list more of a guide than actual rules.

## The to-do list is divided into two sections:

- A brief overview of what you should be doing prior to your senior year to prepare for life after high school.
- A month-by-month planner that is divided into three categories: for college-bound students, for students seeking other postsecondary school training and for students seeking to immediately enter the workforce.

### 1. What to do before your senior year begins:

- Take a skills or interest assessment to learn a bit about yourself. What are you good at? What do you enjoy doing?
- When you find a career path that interests you, learn more about it. You might find it's exactly what you want to do or find that the day-to-day work would bore you.
- Talk to your guidance counselor about your options or prospective plans.
- Make sure you take classes that fit your career goals.
- Take the Preliminary SAT (PSAT), which is good practice for the SAT. A good score on the PSAT could qualify you for a National Merit Scholarship.



- Be sure to get involved in part-time or volunteer work and extracurricular activities. These can give you valuable insight about yourself and look good on a résumé.
- Consider taking the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test, especially if you plan to enlist in the military after high school.
- Attend college fairs, career fairs and job fairs held at or near your school. These are great ways to gain information on prospective careers, as well as network with people in the field.
- Near the end of your junior year, review your transcript to make sure you will complete the classes you need to graduate.
- Finally, during the summer between your junior and senior years, if you plan on going to college, begin to narrow down your list of choices. This will keep your application fees to a minimum down the road. Also, if you are considering a school out of the area, the summer might be a good time to make a campus visit.

Accomplishing these things before your senior year will give you a sense of direction and purpose as you complete your high school education. Now, here's a look at what you should do during your senior year, based on your chosen career path.

## 2. Month-by-month planner:

KEY	W	Going right into the workforce
	T	Other postsecondary training
	C	Four-year college bound



## SEPTEMBER

W

Take an interest or skills test (similar to the one we provide in this guide) and talk to a career counselor to get an idea of what kind of work you want to do. Do your interests lie in a career that offers apprenticeships?

T

Figure out where you want to be a year from now, and plan to get training in that field. Learn as much about that field as you can, including getting a part-time job or volunteering in that field.

C

Get your applications and financial aid information from the schools you are interested in attending. Find out whether the schools you're looking at prefer the ACT or SAT. Register for tests and look into taking a practice exam. Now is also the time to begin asking if teachers, bosses or other people will be willing to write letters of recommendation for you. If you plan on applying through an early action or early decision program, you should begin working on these applications now. Additionally, begin working on applications to colleges that conduct rolling admissions. Many colleges determine housing on a first-come, first-served basis, so applying early to these institutions can be advantageous. There are currently 66 colleges and universities in Pennsylvania who offer rolling admissions, including Penn State University, The University of Pittsburgh and Temple University.

W

Figure out and list for yourself your strengths, experiences and accomplishments. Also list any jobs you might have had in the past. Would your interests lead you to starting your own business? If so, look for resources on entrepreneurship.

T

Figure out how post-high school training fits in with your career plans. What kinds of training will you need to do what you want to do, and how long will it take? Are you looking to earn a certification or an associate degree? Will you be able to work while going to school?

C

This is the ideal time for college visits, especially to nearby schools. Many colleges have college fairs, which are a good opportunity to get more information and any forms you might still need. Take the ACT if any schools on your list require it. Many schools only consider the highest of any scores that you receive on these types of standardized tests. It is important to know what the policies are of the schools on your list. If you are unsatisfied with a score that you receive, taking the test again may be a good option.

## OCTOBER



## NOVEMBER

W

Take the list of strengths, experiences and accomplishments on which you've been working on and begin assembling your résumé.

T

Start researching which schools will have the training programs that you'll need to get into your field of choice. You may be looking for degrees provided by a local community college or something more specific, such as studying electronics at a school that specializes in it.

C

Begin working on your college essays or writing samples, and be sure to have someone proofread them for you. If any of the schools you are applying to require the SAT you should take it now, if you haven't done so already. Submit applications for early decision/early action programs. If you plan on entering an ROTC program, the application is due Dec. 1.

## DECEMBER

W

Make sure you've polished your résumé. The holiday break is a good time to put that résumé to use in getting a part-time job, hopefully in a field that interests you.

T

Begin visiting the schools you're interested in attending. Just because a school is nearby or in the same town doesn't mean you shouldn't spend the time to conduct a proper visit of the facilities. Fill out a FAFSA and look for financial aid opportunities if you have not already done so.

C

Sign up for spring administrations of the SAT or ACT. Pick up a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form. You'll also want to check to make sure your SAT or ACT scores have gotten to your schools of choice. If you applied early to any schools, your application responses will arrive this month.

## JANUARY

W

Work on planning a budget for yourself. Figure out what your fixed expenses are likely to be, and don't forget to budget for incidental expenses that crop up from time to time. This is good practice, whatever your future plans may be.

T

Make a list of deadlines. Begin applying to schools and start assembling your writing samples or portfolio, whichever the case may be.

C

Work on your FAFSA forms. FAFSA forms require a good deal of tax-related information, so you'll need your parents to gather that well before April 15. Also begin a serious hunt for outside scholarships. Be aware that some schools consider your first semester grades from your senior year in the form of a mid-year grade report.



## FEBRUARY

W

Work on your résumé again, including your most recent part-time employment. Remember, you're about to step up to full-time employment, so think about what it is you want your resume to say about you, and revise it again.

T

Keeping any deadlines in mind, continue the application process. Follow up with schools to ensure that nothing is missing from your application. This gives you time to provide anything you may have forgotten.

C

If you haven't already done so, complete the FAFSA forms and send them to your schools of choice. Make a list for yourself, ranking your college choices. You should contact all colleges to which you have submitted applications and confirm that they have received all of the necessary application materials.

## MARCH

W

Time to start learning even more about potential employers; research companies that interest you to see what kinds of jobs they offer and how you would fit into the company. This kind of homework isn't just about learning where to apply. Having this knowledge will come in handy when you're interviewing.

T

Time to wait. Watch the mail and look for acceptance letters as well as scholarships for financial aid that you applied for.

C

Watch the mail. You should be hearing back from schools soon. You should also be receiving your Student Aid Report (SAR) in response to any financial aid applications. The SAR can also be emailed if you list an email address on your FAFSA, so watch for it there, too.

## APRIL

W

Talk to the people you want to use as references. Get their permission before listing them! Teachers, coaches, counselors and employers are all good choices. Make sure to get a summertime or home phone number for those who will be on vacation.

T

Continue watching the mail for acceptance letters and financial aid offers from schools.

C

Wait until you've heard from your preferred school before you decline any offers. Also, make sure to meet any other deadlines, such as for housing or more financial aid.



## MAY

# W

Get ready to get a job. Yes, that sounds daunting, but that's what you've been building up to all year long. Prepare some cover letters and practice interviewing, then get out there. A final piece of advice: Don't just jump at the first job that comes along. Be sure to choose the job that fits both your needs and your skills.

# T

Be prepared to begin any training or courses that might start before the usual fall semester begins. Some year-long or two-year programs require you to begin earlier in order to complete them.

# C

Make your final college choice. The enrollment deadline for most schools is May 1, so make sure that you mail the enrollment form and deposit check to the school you have selected. Decline any offers that other colleges have made to you, so the spot being held for you can be given to the next person in line. Take any advanced placement (AP) Exams.





# Online Networking

It was not that long ago when getting tagged in a photo meant that someone took a picture of you getting punched, and writing on someone's wall could get you busted for graffiti. But with the dramatic increase in the number of people signing on to social networking websites, these phrases have taken on whole new meanings.

When these sites started popping up a few years back, they were primarily used by college students and recent graduates as a means of keeping in touch with social acquaintances and friends. However, with millions of accounts on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, there is a good chance that everyone from your boss to your grandmother could be looking at your profile right now.

Thousands of people use these sites when searching for jobs or seeking out potential clients. But despite all of the positive and beneficial applications these tools provide, there are also several ways that improper and careless use can affect your personal and professional life.

In March 2009, an employee of the Philadelphia Eagles was fired from his job of six years for posting a comment on his Facebook page concerning his dissatisfaction with management for releasing one of his favorite players. A few weeks prior to that, two nurses were fired from a hospital in Wisconsin for posting pictures of a patient on their Facebook accounts. This phenomenon has become so common that the term "Facebook fired" now appears in the online Urban Dictionary and is defined as, "being fired for something you post on Facebook."







The simple fact is that social networking sites are tools, and tools have the potential to be dangerous if the proper precautions are not taken while using them. Here are a few suggestions to ensure safe use of social networking:

**Don't post anything on your profile that you wouldn't be comfortable with showing up on the front page of your local newspaper.** While you may post that picture of you out on the town last Saturday for the enjoyment of your friends, keep in mind that if they can see it, so can everybody else.

**Don't use your profile as a way of venting about what's going on in your life.** If you have a bad day at school or work, writing a couple of paragraphs about it may help you to blow off some steam. Keep in mind, though, that we all tend to say things out of frustration that can be quite hurtful if they are taken out of context.

**Keep private information private. Information such as your home phone number or address can provide potentially dangerous people with unwanted access to your personal life.** Additionally, cyber criminals thrive on information regarding your pets or grandparents names, as these are the questions that banks and credit card companies use to verify your identity.

**Remove comments posted by others that can get you in trouble.** You can't always keep your friends or others from posting material that you don't want to be seen online. It is therefore important to remain aware of what is posted and remove information that could be harmful or ask those who posted it to remove it.

**Do not admit to doing anything illegal.** Even if you are joking it is very difficult to undo such an admission. The police are just as capable of using social media sites as anyone else. The best bet is to avoid doing anything illegal in the first place.

If you keep these general rules in mind while using social media networks, there is no reason why these networks can't be a great tool to help you keep in touch with old friends, make some new ones or even land that job you've been looking for.



# *The Job Application*

## **Creating a Positive Image**

In addition to a résumé, many employers require that you complete and sign a job application. The suggestions below will help you complete a job application and make a good impression on a prospective employer.

### **Develop A Personal Fact Sheet Containing:**

- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of your spouse and/or close family members
- Schools attended, addresses and dates attended
- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of references
- Military experience, dates served, branch of military, relevant training and discharge type
- Past employment, dates employed, salary history and reason for leaving
- Any other information you feel is relevant to the application

### **Prepare In Advance**

- Know the deadline for applying and where to deliver your application.
- Read the entire application before starting to write.
- Answer all questions as honestly and accurately as possible. Some companies will terminate individuals on the basis of a dishonest application.
- Use a pen unless a pencil is required.
- Print all information legibly or type the form if possible.
- Be sure all spelling is correct.
- Emphasize your positive education, work and military experience.
- Focus on volunteer work, hobbies or training if they are job related and you have little work experience.
- Answer all questions; if a question does not apply to your background, write “N/A,” or “Not Applicable.”
- Have your résumé available in case you need it for information or to submit with your application.



- Have copies of transcripts, letters of recommendation and other documents ready to attach to your application form.
- Account for all gaps in your work history by stating your major activity during those times such as “job hunting,” or “caring for a parent.”
- When asked for salary desired, write “negotiable,” “open” or give a salary range.
- Use “will discuss” or “will discuss in interview” rather than list potentially negative or damaging factors such as a felony conviction, health problem/disability or involuntary termination from a job.
- Keep a copy of your completed application so you can review it before your interview.



**ABC Manufacturing Company Employment Application**  
**Division of Human Resources, 700 Manufacturing St., Pittsburgh, PA 15222**

PLEASE NOTE: Complete all parts of the application. If your application is incomplete, or does not clearly allow the experience and/or training required, your application may not be accepted. If you have no information to enter in a section, please write N/A.

Position Requested and General Information	
Name (First, MI, Last)	Social Security Number
Mailing Address	
City, State, and Zip Code	
Home Phone	Cell Phone
Position (Job for which you are applying)	Desired Salary

Additional Information	
Have you been an Employee of ABC Manufacturing in the past? [ Yes ] [ No ]	
I certify that I am in compliance with the provisions of the Selective Service Act (Draft Registration.) ** [ Yes ] [ No ]	
I certify that I am a U.S. citizen, permanent resident, or a foreign national with authorization to work in the United States. ** [ Yes ] [ No ]	
Have you ever been convicted [ Yes ] [ No ] If Yes, please explain:	
** These questions must be answered by all applicants.	

Name of High School
Address:
Name of College
Address:
Name of Other School
Address:

**ABC Manufacturing Company Employment Application**  
**Division of Human Resources, 700 Manufacturing St., Pittsburgh, PA 15222**

Work History			
Employer	Address	Supervisor	Phone Number
Job Title:	From: To:	Salary	May we contact this employer? [Yes] [No]
Reason for Leaving:			
Employer	Address	Supervisor	Phone Number
Job Title:	From: To:	Salary	May we contact this employer? [Yes] [No]
Reason for Leaving:			
Employer	Address	Supervisor	Phone Number
Job Title:	From: To:	Salary	May we contact this employer? [Yes] [No]
Reason for Leaving:			
References			
Reference:	Relationship to Reference:	Phone Number:	
Reference:	Relationship to Reference:	Phone Number:	
Reference:	Relationship to Reference:	Phone Number:	
Signature:		Date:	
I certify that all answers and statements on this application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that should an investigation disclose untruthful or misleading answers, my application may be rejected, my name removed from consideration, or my employment with ABC Manufacturing Company terminated.			



# *Obtaining and Retaining a Job*

## **Your Résumé**

### **Making a Great First Impression**

Think of your résumé as your personal sales brochure. It establishes a first impression of you and plays a pivotal role in whether or not you will get an interview.

But a résumé is more than a summary of your skills, experience and education; it is an advertisement of your best self. A prospective employer wants to know where you have worked and what skills you can bring to the workplace. So when touting your accomplishments, be specific. Give specific examples of where your skills brought about significant results. Instead of stating “good decision maker,” say “Made decision to streamline and increased profitability by 30 percent.” This could lead to a productive discussion during your interview.

### **Developing Your Résumé**

Résumés can vary in appearance, but most consist of the following components:

**Personal Data:** Your name, telephone number, address and email address.

**Education:** List educational levels in reverse chronological order, most recent first. Include details relevant to the job, such as courses or special projects.

**Work Experience:** Summarize your work experience, focusing on your tasks and accomplishments. Include relevant unpaid work experience.

**Activities:** List those activities most relevant to your occupational goal. Include school, community and professional activities.

Research suggests that your résumé has less than 20 seconds to catch someone’s eye and make the right impression. Take time to make it eye-catching and easy to read.



To create an impressive résumé, it should be:

**Well written:** No spelling or grammatical mistakes. Keep it clear and concise. Have someone proofread your résumé before you give it to an employer.

**Attractive:** It should be typed and professional in appearance. An employer should be able to glance over the résumé and read the main points.

**Concise:** Your résumé should be as long as it has to be, and no longer. For a student, one page is usually sufficient.

**Relevant:** Include only information having to do with the job you are seeking or your career goals.

**Personalized:** Use the style and format that best reflects your needs and accomplishments.

**Appropriate:** Information and format must conform to employer expectations. An artist, for example may appropriately include graphics, while a banker should not.

### **Common Complaints about Résumés**

**Listing objectives or meaningless introductions:** Vague objectives and overly general introductions don't tell the reader anything of value, wasting their time and valuable résumé space. Tell them who you are and what you do by making a single, clear statement.

**Writing in either the first- or third -person:** Using the first- or third-person voice risks turning your résumé into a narrative. It can take it from a short summary of your qualifications into a second, redundant cover letter.

**Important information is too hard to find or absent:** Many employers see hundreds of applications a day and simply skim résumés. If some piece of information about you is important, make sure it is included and easily seen.



**Too long:** A résumé is not a second cover letter. You want to concisely state your qualifications for the job, your work history and accomplishments. But don't over do it. The ability to be concise is looked upon favorably by most employers.

**Personal information not relevant to the job:** There are times, such as when your hobby is related to the job you are seeking, that including personal information can help you. Most times, however, don't include information that can be wrongly interpreted or open the door to some type of prejudice on the part of the résumé reviewer.

**Too duty oriented with accomplishments not highlighted:** A list of duties from a previous job just reads like a job description. Instead, briefly describe some of your accomplishments, which give the resume a personal flavor while highlighting your talents and initiative.

**Unprofessional email addresses:** The résumé is your first contact with the employer in the hiring process, always try to make a good impression. An email address that is the same as your name will do just that. "HotPants021" will not.

**Gaps in employment:** In the interest of brevity, don't explain gaps in your employment in the resume. Leave that for the cover letter, but be ready to again explain the gaps in your interview.

### **Posting Your Résumé Online**

Posting résumés and conducting job searches online is becoming more and more popular. While this makes the process of getting your name out there much easier, it does not increase your chances of getting a job. Companies receive hundreds of applicants for each job listing through online forums. If a résumé does not stand out, it may be immediately discarded. When posting online, you have a much better chance of successfully obtaining a job if you read the job description very carefully and then tailor your résumé to it. Putting hours of effort into a few job postings can be more effective than putting minimal effort into hundreds.

For more information about résumé and cover letters check your local library



or bookstore. The Internet can also be a valuable resource for résumé and cover letter preparation.

You might also find the following sources useful:

“Résumés for Dummies” by Joyce Lain Kennedy

“Résumé Writing Made Easy” by Lola M. Coxfod

“Résumés That Knock ‘Em Dead” by Martin Yate

PA CareerLink® - [www.cdws.pa.gov](http://www.cdws.pa.gov)

The Riley Guide: Résumés & Cover Letters – [www.rileyguide.com](http://www.rileyguide.com)

Rockport Institute – [www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes](http://www.rockportinstitute.com/resumes)

Employment 360 – [www.employment360.com/resume-writing-tip.html](http://www.employment360.com/resume-writing-tip.html)

Here are a few tips and precautions for posting your résumé online:

## BEWARE OF FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

- Convert your résumé to plain text by saving it as a “plain text” or “text only”.
- Carefully proofread after converting; some errors may have occurred in the process.
- Replace bullets with asterisks (\*) or another symbol.
- Do not use tab or try to center the text. Left-justify the entire resume.
- Do not try to control the length of lines by pressing enter/return. It may appear differently on the employer’s computer than it does on yours.

## USE CAUTION WHEN PROVIDING PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Do not list your phone number or your home address; the city name should be enough.
- Do not list your references; say that you can provide them upon request for an interview.
- Remove dates and specific company names. Use a general description of the company. (Instead of “IBM” for example use “a multinational information technology company.”)
- Create a disposable email address that can be discontinued after obtaining the job. This protects you and might be more professional than your current email address.





## DON'T LET YOUR RÉSUMÉ SIT

- Résumés are normally arranged online by date of submission, much like job postings. If your résumé is good, but months old, an employer might think you are no longer available to hire.
- Revise your résumé every two weeks; this keeps you near the top of the list. If the résumé hasn't caught someone's eye, making improvements might be necessary.
- If you have no results after a few months, remove your résumé and try another website.
- Remove all your résumé postings after obtaining a job.



# *The Interview*

OK, you've landed a job interview. Now it's important to make the most of the opportunity. The best way to do that is to be prepared. Here are some suggestions for what to do between the time an interview is scheduled and when it actually occurs.

- **Research the company and industry.** Make sure you know some facts about the company's history, what products or services it offers and the industry it serves.
- **Memorize a one- to two-minute commercial about yourself.** Be ready to sell yourself with a summary of your education, achievements, skills and goals. It should sound natural, not rehearsed.
- **Be prepared for “dangerous” questions.** Know in advance how you will answer questions about lack of experience, job-hopping history and gaps in employment.
- **Practice answers to anticipated questions.**

Almost all questions fall into one of the following seven categories:

1. **Are you trustworthy? Key Words:** personal qualities; “who you are”
2. **Can you do the job? Key Words:** skills, abilities, strengths
3. **Will you really work at the job? Key Words:** initiative, attitude
4. **Will you fit in? Key Words:** relations, co-workers, boss, customers
5. **Will you leave soon? Key Words:** future, plans, goals, objectives
6. **Are you safe? Key Words:** conflict, stress
7. **Can I afford you? Key Words:** benefits, salary, overtime, compensation



## DURING THE INTERVIEW

### DO:

- Go alone.
- Arrive a little early.
- Be clean and well groomed.
- Bring extra copies of your cover letter, résumé, references and a pen.
- Address the interviewer by name.
- Smile and shake hands firmly.
- Listen carefully and be interested.
- Maintain good eye contact.
- Take time to think about your answers to interview questions.
- Speak clearly and use proper grammar.
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand a question.
- Be positive.
- Express your readiness to undertake the job duties.

### DON'T:

- Speak too fast.
- Interrupt the interviewer.
- Fold your arms.
- Sit with your arms or legs far apart.
- Smoke or chew anything, even if invited to do so.
- Say, "I'll take anything."
- Fiddle with pens, paper or desk items.
- Ask about salary.
- Criticize your former employers or teachers.
- Discuss personal or financial problems.
- Beg for the job or hang around after the interview.
- Stress your qualifications for the job.
- Sit down until you are asked.
- Ask when a hiring decision will be made.
- Provide information that is not true.



## AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Thank the interviewer(s) for their time. Remember that you're in competition with others for job openings. What you do after an interview may decide who ultimately gets the job. To separate yourself from other candidates, take the time to write a brief follow-up letter to each person who interviewed you. This is one more chance to get your name in front of the interviewer(s) before a hiring decision is made. Also, don't be afraid to contact the interviewer(s) after some time has passed to check on the availability of the position for which you interviewed. This once again reestablishes your interest in the position.

Tips for writing an effective follow-up letter

- Write and send it within 24 hours of the interview.
- Mention the day of your interview and the position for which you interviewed.
- Thank the interviewer(s) for their time.
- Reaffirm your interest in the position.
- Highlight the skills or accomplishments not discussed during the interview.
- State your availability for future interviews.

**A Note About Criminal Records:** As in most situations, honesty is the best policy. If you have a criminal record, don't lie about it on an application. That will get you fired and, even worse, could be punishable by law. It is much better to tell your prospective employer about your past rather than take the risk.

Before hiring you, an employer must feel that he or she can trust you in his or her place of business. A criminal conviction can be a red flag to them. A good reference from a parole officer, former employer or community leader can go a long way to diminish the sting of a criminal record when seeking employment.

Having a criminal record will have an impact on the kinds of jobs you are able to obtain. So, you have to be realistic in your job expectations. Keep in mind that the seriousness of the offense and the passage of time could make a difference to the prospective employer.



### **A Note on Substance Abuse:**

You have heard this message a countless number of times: Don't use drugs! Not only is engaging in drug or alcohol use illegal, but it also leads to dangerous behavior. Substance abuse can have an adverse effect on your career. More and more employers are conducting drug tests on their employees or prospective employees. The U.S. military has a zero-tolerance drug policy; the federal government allows drug testing at all levels. Drug screenings may take the form of a polygraph (lie detector) and tests of blood, urine or hair. It is important to note that many employers will dismiss employees or reject applicants on the basis of a positive test.

If you are asked to take a drug test, tell your employer about any prescription medications you are taking. Review the company policy on drug testing and understand that if you refuse a test, it may be grounds for disciplinary actions (including dismissal). False positives do occasionally occur, and are sometimes caused by over-the-counter drugs and some foods (poppy seeds are infamous for this). If this happens, discuss the option of retesting with your employer.

Again, substance abuse is not only illegal, but it can ultimately cost you your job. Engaging in drugs and alcohol abuse will affect your physical and mental health, making you less sharp and an overall liability to the company.



## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

How would you answer these questions if asked in an interview?

1. What skills and expertise will you bring to this job and how will you use them?
2. Describe a project in which others with whom you were working disagreed with your ideas, and how you resolved your issues and got the job done.
3. Describe your ideal co-worker.
4. Describe how you would handle an angry or difficult client?
5. Tell me about a time when you overcame a major obstacle.
6. Do you like to juggle several activities at once or do them one at a time?
7. Assume your supervisor directed you to do a task in a way you thought was not the best way to accomplish the task. What would you do?
8. What is good customer service?
9. What are some of the personal qualities that would help you to be successful in this position?



# Registered Apprenticeship

As you explore your career options, you may want to consider a registered apprenticeship. As an apprentice, you'll receive paid, on-the-job training and academic instruction that develops the skills needed to advance in your chosen career. In other words, you will be paid to learn!

## Benefits of enrollment in a registered apprenticeship:

- Learn and earn: You will be paid while you develop your skills.
- Increase in wages: The pay progresses as you do.
- On-the-job training: A mentor will work with you in a real-world setting.
- Related classroom instruction: Class work provides the knowledge to supplement the training experience.
- Completion certificate: Employers everywhere recognize a journey worker's license.

## Facts about apprenticeships:

- In 2006, more than 15,000 individuals participated in Pennsylvania apprenticeship programs.
- The average starting wage for Pennsylvania apprentices was \$12.50 per hour.
- Upon completion, the average wage for an apprentice in Pennsylvania was \$23.75 per hour (\$49,400 per year).
- The construction and manufacturing industries make up almost 50 percent of all apprenticeships.

So, if you want to become a highly paid and valued employee, relish the challenge of learning a new skill and like to earn while you learn, entering a registered apprenticeship training program could be for you.

### Top Apprenticeships for Pennsylvania

Machinist	Maintenance Mechanic
Electrician	Heating & Air Conditioning Mechanic
Tool & Die Maker	Pipe Fitter
Plumber	Sheet Metal Worker
Cook	Corrections Officer

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship



# Standardized Testing

While good grades in high school are important in helping you get into the college of your choice, colleges also strongly consider each applicant's scores on usually one of two standardized entrance tests, the SAT Reasoning Test and the ACT (American College Test). The chart below shows the differences between the two. Check with the colleges to which you are applying to see which test they require for admission. Colleges take these standardized tests very seriously when determining admission, scholarships, financial aid and even enrollment into some specific programs of study. If at all possible, regardless of the exam you take, try to take it twice. Keep in mind that colleges generally place more weight on the higher set of scores.

Being overly anxious could prevent you from performing your best on SATs or ACTs. Here are some tips to ease anxiety and make sure you're prepared:

- Know the instructions and format thoroughly before going in. This helps avoid losing time rereading the instructions when you could be answering the questions or rechecking your answers.
- Take a pretest, either on paper or on a computer, become familiar with both the format and the types of questions that will be asked.
- Take a preparatory course for a fee, or buy or borrow one of the many books focused on SAT or ACT preparation. These test-prep methods are useful in learning tips and techniques for improving your score.
- Get a good night's sleep the night before the test, and have a healthy breakfast the morning of the test.
- Take a snack to eat during test breaks, preferably something that will give you an energy boost.
- Remember that all questions are weighted equally, so if you can, finish answering the easy questions first.
- You have a limited amount of time for the test. If you get hung up on a particular question, mark it so you can come back to it later, and then move on.
- Be extra careful that you don't accidentally skip a question in the test booklet, and thereby inadvertently begin providing "right answers" to wrong questions all the way forward. Throughout the exam, vigilantly monitor that the question number you're working on in the booklet, matches that found on your answer sheet.





- If time permits after answering all the questions, go back and check your work.
- Be sure to erase any stray pencil marks on the test sheet or booklet after completing the test.

## *ACT vs. SAT?*

ACT	QUESTIONS	SAT
The ACT tests your skills in English, math, reading and science, with an optional writing portion.	<b>What do the tests focus on?</b>	The SAT tests your critical reading and mathematical reasoning skills, with a mandatory writing portion.
The ACT composite score is based on an average of the various sections of the test and ranges from 1 to 36. The national average score in 2009 was 21.1. You decide which scores are sent to your schools of choice.	<b>How is scoring handled?</b>	Each section of the SAT has a range from 200 to 800, making the total range 600 to 2400. The national average SAT score in 2009 was 1509. Your entire score history will be sent to your schools of choice.
There is no wrong-answer penalty in the ACT. If you do not know an answer and can't eliminate possibilities, you may as well try your best guess.	<b>Is there a penalty for wrong answers?</b>	The SAT penalizes test-takers for incorrect answers. If you don't know the answer and can't eliminate a few options, it's probably better to leave the answer blank.
\$38 (plus \$16 for writing); 3 hours, 25 minutes (including optional 30-minute writing test)	<b>How much and how long are the tests?</b>	\$52.50; 3 hours, 45 minutes
The ACT is administered six times a year. You should register at least four weeks before the test date.	<b>When should I register?</b>	The SAT is administered seven times a year. You should register at least six weeks before the test date.
<a href="http://www.act.org">www.act.org</a>	<b>websites</b>	<a href="http://www.collegeboard.org">www.collegeboard.org</a>

Source: American College Test ([www.act.org](http://www.act.org)) & College Board ([www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org))



# The Costs of College

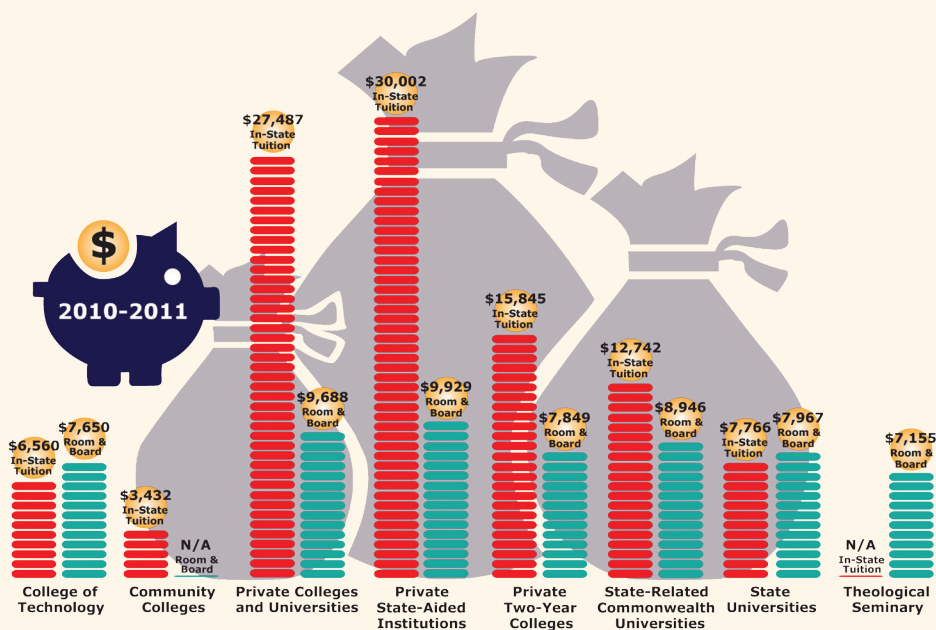
The pursuit of higher education is an increasingly popular decision. For many, it is also an increasingly expensive one. Depending on the institution, tuition combined with room and board charges can total anywhere from \$6,000 to more than \$40,000 a year.

## And don't forget all those additional costs...

While budgeting for a college education, there are many costs that parents and students tend to overlook. Here's a list of some of them:

- Laundry
- Transportation
- Basic toiletries
- Cable TV/internet/phone
- Computer and school supplies
- Social activities such as artistic events,
- athletic tickets and nights out on the town
- Textbooks: According to the Washington Post, books and supplies cost students nationwide an average of nearly \$900 and this continues to rise.

The table shows the average costs of undergraduate education in Pennsylvania at different types of schools. It provides the costs of both in-state tuition & room and board per year (for community colleges, only the cost of tuition is available).



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education



## Financial Aid

Education after high school can be quite expensive. So if you haven't been saving for college since birth, how will you pay for it? You'll be glad to know that there are many financial aid options available for postsecondary education. Essentially, there are five options for financial assistance, each differing in terms of repayment and eligibility:



For more information on how to apply for financial aid, visit the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency website at [www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org). For additional information about the education benefits available to military veterans, visit the U.S. government student website at [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov).



# *Military Training and Careers in the Armed Forces*

In today's world, there are hundreds of occupations from which to choose, and it's important that you spend some time exploring the options available to you. The United States Armed Forces is one alternative you may want to consider.

The U.S. military has changed dramatically over the past several decades. Today's military is more professional, more technologically advanced and offers more benefits and rewards than ever before.

Maintaining a strong national defense includes such diverse activities as commanding a tank, running a hospital, repairing a helicopter and programming a computer. The military provides full-time and part-time training and work experience for more than 4,100 different jobs, 88 percent of which have direct civilian counterparts.

In the military, you can learn marketable job skills, make good friends, and develop a positive, winning attitude. The pay scale is competitive with many starting salaries in the private sector, and many allowances paid out by the military are tax-exempt. If a college education is one of your priorities, tuition support programs are one of the ways that the military can help you with the rising cost of postsecondary education.

If you want to go to college before joining the military, consider a Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program. These college-based, officer-commissioning programs produce 60 percent of all officers serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. If your high school has a Junior ROTC program, it will teach you problem-solving, ethics and leadership skills before you enlist.

Serving in the military is really what you choose to make of it. It can simply be a means to an end – money for college or technical training and the development of life skills – or it can be a lifelong career path, giving you a structured environment, a defined purpose and many opportunities to advance and grow.



In order to join the service, you must be 18 (or 17 with permission from your parent or guardian) and a U.S. citizen or legal immigrant holding permanent resident status. Most enlisted personnel need at least a high school diploma, while officers need a bachelor's or an advanced degree. Enlisting in the military is a major step in a person's life. Before you make a decision to join, gather as much information as possible about the branch of the service that interests you. Each one differs in specific programs, terms of duty and enlistment options.

Explore websites like **[www.myfuture.com](http://www.myfuture.com)** and **[www.todaysmilitary.com](http://www.todaysmilitary.com)** to learn more about military life and careers. Make certain your military commitment is based on sound information and realistic expectations. Do your homework so there won't be any surprises.

For more information, contact your nearest recruiter (listed in the phone book) or call one of the following toll free numbers:

Service	Toll-Free Number	Web site
U.S. Army	800-USA-ARMY	<a href="http://www.goarmy.com">www.goarmy.com</a>
U.S. Navy	800-USA-NAVY	<a href="http://www.navy.com">www.navy.com</a>
U.S. Air Force	800-423-USAF	<a href="http://www.airforce.com">www.airforce.com</a>
U.S. Marine Corps	800-MARINES	<a href="http://www.marines.com">www.marines.com</a>
U.S. Coast Guard	877-NOW-USCG	<a href="http://www.gocoastguard.com">www.gocoastguard.com</a>
Air National Guard	800-TO-GO-ANG	<a href="http://www.ang.af.mil">www.ang.af.mil</a>
Army National Guard	800-GO-GUARD	<a href="http://www.nationalguard.com">www.nationalguard.com</a>



# *Notes*



# Notes



[www.jobgateway.pa.gov](http://www.jobgateway.pa.gov)



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[www.paworkstats.pa.gov](http://www.paworkstats.pa.gov)



[www.pareercoach.org](http://www.pareercoach.org)

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