

Summer Planning Guide

Get the most out of your summer break, be active and spend your time doing something productive such as working, volunteering or planning for college. This will help you continue to grow intellectually and will give you independence, help you acquire new skills and grow personally and professionally. Use this guide to start planning your summer experience.

Find a job or internship

If possible, find a job that you enjoy and will help you with your long-term career aspirations. For example, if your long-term career goal is to teach, look for jobs that will allow you to work with students in some capacity like a student tutor or camp counselor position.

An internship may be tough to come by on short-notice, but ask around. You may be able to find an unpaid internship with a local company, community organization or through employers of people you know. Internship experience will look good on a college application, help you gain confidence and help you discover your strengths and weaknesses. Visit www.fastweb.com and www.monstercollege.com to find full-time, part-time and internship opportunities in your local area.

Network

Start networking now to find a great summer job, specifically one that will help build your skills and credentials. Ask your parents, career guidance counselors, teachers, neighbors or friends for advice on where and how to look for job openings in your local area. If you are unsure of what you want to do, visit your guidance counselor. Your counselor will be able to help you identify the perfect job that best fits your skills. Your school's counseling office should also have books and other resources available to assist you in finding summer employment, and perfecting your resume. Be sure to check [Fastweb's Career Planning](#) pages for great tools to search for jobs and internships.

Volunteer

Volunteering is a great way to help your community, enhance your skills, improve your resume, and enhance your college and scholarship applications. You can find opportunities in food banks, homeless shelters, hospitals or anywhere else in your community. For example, organizations like Habitat for Humanity give its volunteers the opportunity to build homes for families in need. AmeriCorps enables students to earn an education award of up to \$5,550 to help pay for college.

Take a class

Get a head start on college, fulfill some needed requirements, and improve on a subject where you need help or acquire a new skill. Community colleges or nearby colleges or universities may have summer learning opportunities available for a relatively low cost.

Plan for College

The summer is a good time to research schools and narrow down your options, especially if you are going into your senior year of high school. Search various college and university websites for general information about schools, admissions requirements and tuition costs. Fastweb provides an extensive [College Search](#) tool that allows you to find schools and track apply activity. Keep a portfolio or notes on each school with key admissions and financial aid deadlines will help keep you organized and in good shape once it is time to apply.

Visit college campuses: If possible, visit your top choice schools to learn more about their academics, student and campus life, financial aid options and to get a more intimate experience. If your top-choice schools are too far, or you aren't able to visit due to financial constraints, visit schools in your state (even if you are not interested in staying in state) so that you will get a glimpse into the overall collegiate experience. Speak to local alumni for another to gain their perspective.

Improve your test score

Take an ACT or SAT prep course to help you achieve the best possible score on your standardized exams. Many standardized test prep courses charge fees so seek advice from your guidance counselor, do research at your local library, on the Internet or at local colleges to find the best possible and most affordable prep courses. Reading the newspaper daily can improve your vocabulary and reading comprehension. Opinion and Editorial sections are excellent resources.

Broaden your skills

Summer is a great time to engage in activities which will improve your professional skills and help build a strong foundation for future success. Consider joining a local [Toastmasters](#) to improve your public speaking skills, or a professional association which will enable you to network with others in your chosen field or discipline.