

[Home \(/\)](#) / [Your Guide to College Planning \(/plan-for-college/get-started\)](#) /

College: What It's All About and Why It Matters

College: What It's All About and Why It Matters

You might think that college is just high school continued, but it's not. College opens doors for you that high school doesn't. And college can change you and shape you in ways that you might not imagine.

Unlock Opportunities

Thanks to all the knowledge, skills and experience you'll gain in college, you'll be able to adapt to a greater variety of jobs and careers. Statistics show that a college diploma can help you:

- Get a job
- Keep a job
- Make more money



**Find
the
right
college
for you.**

Start a
College
Search

Related Articles

Become More Independent

College work will challenge and inspire you. In college, you will:

- Explore subjects in greater depth than you did in high school
- Choose your own courses and class schedule
- Decide which extracurricular activities you'll focus on – and how much time you'll give them

College helps students develop into mature, responsible and independent adults. But you're not entirely on your own: colleges offer students many kinds of help making this transition, such as [tutoring and academic advising \(/plan-for-college/get-started/academic-advising-for-college-course-help\)](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/plan-for-college/get-started/academic-advising-for-college-course-help), as well as [counseling and other support \(/plan-for-college/get-started/campus-services-there-is-support-when-you-need-it\)](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/plan-for-college/get-started/campus-services-there-is-support-when-you-need-it).

| | |
|---|---|
| Does College Matter? | (https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/for-college/get-started/why-college-is-important) |
| Campus Services Are Available When You Need Help | (https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/for-college/get-started/campus-services-there-is-support-when-you-need-it) |
| Benefits of Investing in a College Degree | (https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/for-college/get-started/benefits-of-investing-in-college-degree) |
| Specialized Colleges Offering Unique Studies | (https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/for-college/find-your-fit/types-of-colleges/specialized-colleges-unique-studies) |
| Special College Programs | (https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/for-college/find-your-fit/types-of-colleges/special-college-programs) |
| National and Regional Accreditations for Colleges | (https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/for-college/find-your-fit/types-of-colleges/colleges-by-regional-accreditations) |



Explore Your Options

One of the great things about being able to choose your own courses is that you get the opportunity to explore. You can try classes in a lot of different subjects, or you can dive right into a favorite subject. You may choose to begin training for a career right away. Or you may pick a major after taking some time to check out your options. Colleges offer classes and majors in subjects you've studied in high school — plus many more that you haven't.

Explore Outside the Classroom

College is about much more than just course work. A campus is its own world, and students have the chance

to experience a wide range of activities. For example, college students may be able to:

- Publish newspapers
- Create TV and radio broadcasts
- Run their own government
- Stage performances
- Play sports
- Volunteer to improve their communities

The list goes on. And you don't have to live on campus to experience campus life.

Invest in Yourself

As you take on college work and participate in college life, you'll encounter new ideas and challenges. Along the way, you'll:

- Build knowledge, skills and brainpower
- Discover new passions
- Follow and satisfy your curiosity
- Learn more about yourself
- Bond with new friends
- Prepare for a future in which you're better equipped to give back

Whatever your destination, college can help you get there — even if you don't know where “there” is yet. Whether

you've mapped out a long-term plan or
you see new possibilities every day,
college can help you become your
future self.

Was this page helpful?

☐ Yes ☐ No

© 2025 College Board | PSAT/NMSQT is a registered trademark of the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation.