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Grade Timeline

MONTH	CHAPTER(S)	WHAT YOU'LL LEARN ABOUT
September	2	<u>All About High School</u> Learn about what you need to do to graduate and how to be successful in high school.
October	1	<u>Options For Education And Training After High School</u> Explore the benefits of going to college or obtaining a certificate degree to pursue your career goals.
	4	<u>Passport to Careers: All About It</u> Learn about Passport to Careers and the requirements to receive it.
November	1	<u>Types Of Colleges / All About Apprenticeships</u> Discover the different types of colleges, vocational and trade program options that you can choose from.
	4	<u>Washington College Grant (WA Grant): What About Apprenticeships?</u> Learn about WA Grant and the requirements to receive it.
December	2	<u>Building Your Academic Profile And Resume</u> Focus on doing well in high school, staying organized, and getting involved in activities.
January	2	<u>Choosing Your High School Classes</u> Talk to your counselor, family and friends about your post-high school plans.
February	4	<u>College Bound Scholarship: All About It / The Pledge</u> Learn about the College Bound Scholarship and the requirements to receive it.
March	1	<u>College And Career Connection</u> Learn how your college studies can get you the job of your dreams.
April	3	<u>Ways To Pay For College</u> Learn about different types of aid that can help you pay for education after high school.
	4	<u>Washington College Grant (WA Grant): All About It</u> Learn about WA Grant and the requirements to receive it.



All About High School

High school is like an adventure where you build skills and explore your interests. To graduate, you need to meet certain requirements. Use your **High School and Beyond Plan** to track your progress, document your interests, and set goals for your future.

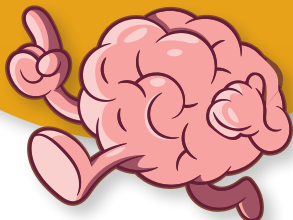
What do I need to graduate from High School?

- 1 Earn required credits** – Students in Washington State must complete a minimum of 24 **credits** to graduate from high school - your high school may have slightly different credit requirements.
- 2 Complete a graduation pathway** – You must show your preparation for a meaningful first step after high school by fulfilling a graduation pathway. Pathways include exam-, course- and performance-based options for English language arts and math, completing at least 2 Career and Technology Education (CTE) courses in a sequence, or meeting the minimum required score on the ASVAB exam for military enlistment.
- 3 Complete your High School and Beyond Plan** – Starting in 7th grade, you will create and regularly update a plan to help you think about the future and choose classes and activities that can prepare you for your **postsecondary** goals.

Good to Know

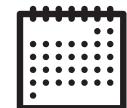
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You should check with your school counselor to find out what graduation pathways are available and best suited to help you prepare for your postsecondary goals.



Make sure the classes you take in high school count towards graduation AND help you explore and prepare for your postsecondary goals. Talk with your school counselor to get a list of course requirements.





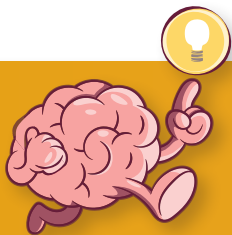
Tip

- Pay attention in class and keep track of your grades
- A planner or your phone calendar can help you stay organized. Set reminders for due dates, and plan your week out in advance.
- Ask for support from your school counselor, teachers, family, friends, and mentors.



Some schools have additional graduation requirements

Credits	Check with your school counselor so you know what credits are required to graduate.
Service learning	You may need to do service learning hours, where you give back to the community and reflect on your experience.
Senior project	Some high schools give seniors a chance to give a presentation in spring of senior year where they share their high school experience and future goals.



Remember

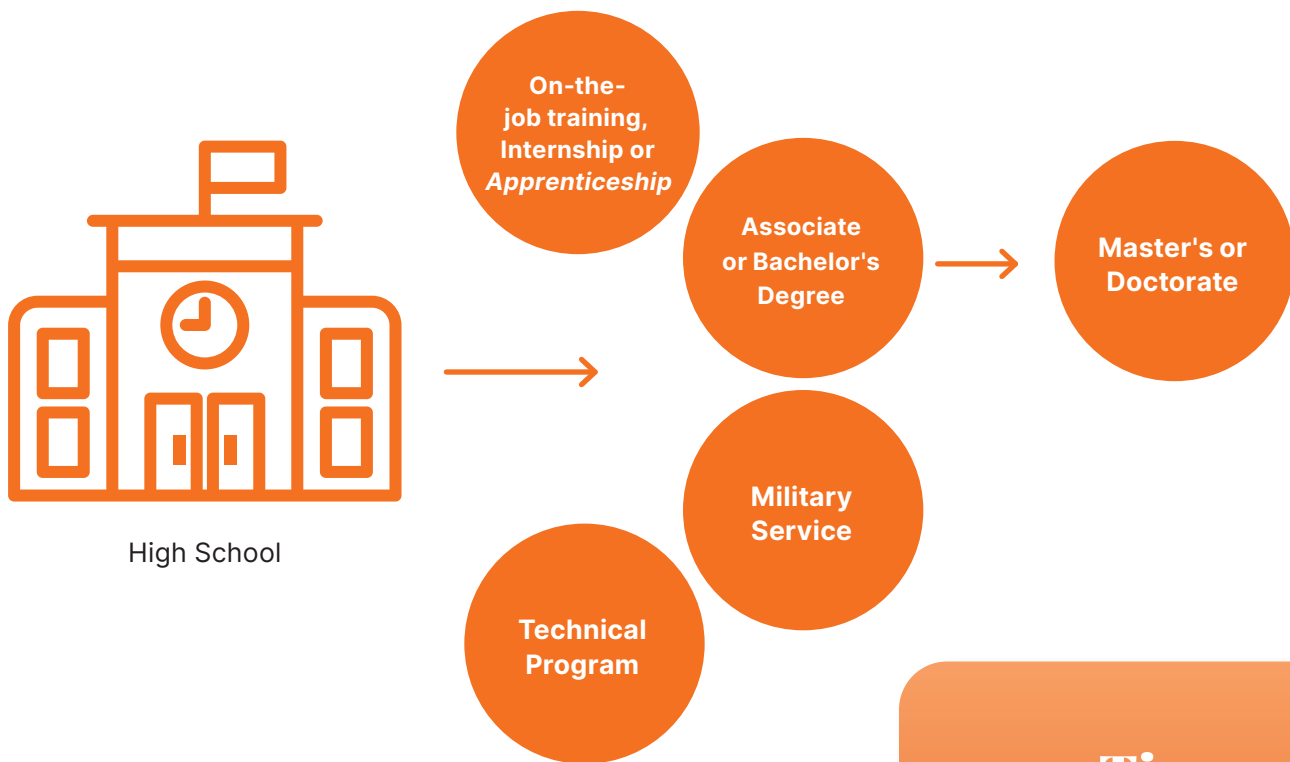
What you do in high school can influence your choices for what you do after high school.



Options for Education and Training After High School

Did you know that many jobs that earn good money need more education and training than just high school?

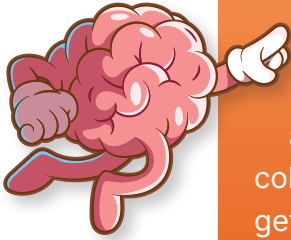
You can dive into **on-the-job training (internships)**, join the military, or become an apprentice and earn money while you learn. **Technical** and **certificate** programs, **community college**, or **university** can also pave the way to success.



Tip

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Apprenticeships, known as “the original 4-year college” are a great option to get post-high school training in high-demand career areas. More education typically boosts wages and reduces unemployment.²

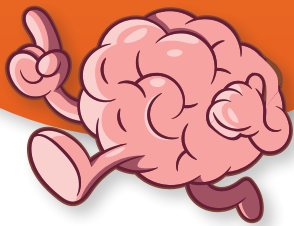


See job openings by education level

Want to know which jobs are hot? Check out the **US Bureau of Labor Statistics** website: bls.gov/careeroutlook/2020/article/education-level-and-openings.htm! They'll give you perspective on job openings based on your education level.¹

Good to Know

There are different ways to make college affordable. You can get help from the government, like federal and state funding. There are also private sources of money available. Don't let money hold you back from pursuing your college dreams!



How can continuing my education prepare me for my future career?

Having a college degree means earning \$5,000 more per year than just a high school *diploma*.³

Associate Degree

Earns \$5000 more per year

Bachelor's Degree

3X more likely to be employed

Other ways to make *college* more affordable

- If you need help in class, ask for it and aim for top grades -you'll have a better shot at *scholarships*.
- Get a part-time job while in high school to earn and save some cash.
- Taking courses that can earn college *credit* while in high school can shorten the time needed to earn a credential or *degree*. Less time in college = more time doing what you love.

With any college degree you're more likely to:

- Have health insurance
- Volunteer your time
- Be healthier
- Promote a stronger community⁴
- Find employment





Passport To Careers: All About It

The Passport to Careers program helps **former foster youth** and **unaccompanied homeless youth** prepare for and succeed in *college, apprenticeships*, or *pre-apprenticeship* programs. **Passport to Careers includes two sub-programs:**

1

Passport to College

Through Passport to College, students get a *scholarship* and support services from college staff. Funds can be used for *tuition, fees*, books, housing, transportation, and some personal expenses. For more information visit:

wsac.wa.gov/passport/guide

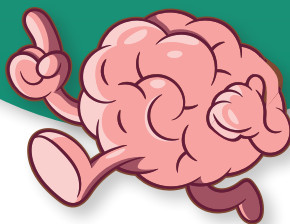
2

Passport to Apprenticeship Opportunities

Passport to Apprenticeship Opportunities supports people in registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs. Funds can cover tuition and fees for classes and occupational costs like work clothes and tools.

Good To Know

You CAN apply for and receive *financial aid* as a foster care student, as an independent under 24 year-old student, as a student experiencing homelessness, or an unaccompanied minor. There may be additional steps and documentation, but it is possible, and financial aid staff are there to help you!

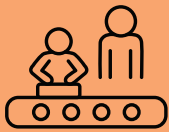




Types of Colleges

College is more than just big **universities**. It includes **community colleges**, **trade schools**, and even military academies. There's a perfect fit for everyone out there, so explore your options to find out what's right for you!

Where Should I Go For College?



Private **Vocational /Trade / Specialty Schools**

Want quick training for careers like chef, massage therapist, heavy equipment operator, auto body technician, paralegal, and more? You can graduate in less than a year with a professional certification for a high-demand job in the skilled trades!



Community and Technical Colleges (CTC)

Washington state has 34 public CTCs. Get a professional **certificate** or **associate degrees** for specific trades, such as nursing, automotive repair, cyber security, etc. CTCs offer associate degrees that help students **transfer** to 4-year colleges or universities for further education. Check sbctc.edu/.



Public and Private 4-year College/ University

These are schools where you can earn a **bachelor's degree** in about 4 years. Some are high-end private schools with higher **tuition**, but they do have **scholarships**. Graduation can help you become a robotics engineer, business analyst, nutritionist, etc.



Military Academies

There are 5 highly selective Military Service Academies that provide a top-tier college education and real-world training to become an officer in the military. Search "Military Service Academies US Department of Defense" to get a list of websites for further exploration of this option.

Comparing 2- and 4-year colleges

- Least **selective** (all Washington CTCs have open enrollment)
- **Campus size:** 5,000-30,000 **undergraduate** students
- Low Tuition (around \$4,500)
- Professional certificates and associate degrees; some bachelor's degrees

Community and Technical Colleges

- Moderate to highly selective
- Campus size: Over 10,000 undergraduate students
- Medium Tuition (\$9,000-\$15,000)
- Bachelor's degrees (Arts or Science)

Public 4-year Colleges

- Moderate to highly selective
- Campus size: Less than 5,000 undergraduate students
- High Tuition (over \$30,000)
- Bachelor's degrees (Arts or Science)

Private 4-year Colleges

Military Academies

All colleges require an *application*. The more highly selective a school is, the more requirements needed to apply - you might need to submit essays, grades, test scores, and other important stuff.

- Highly selective (separate application required - start in junior year of high school!)
- Campus size: Varies by military branch
- No Tuition (cadets must pledge to serve for at least 4-5 years after graduation)
- Bachelor's degrees (Arts or Science)



All About Apprenticeships

Would you like to earn money and learn at the same time? Then check out **apprenticeships**! They're a combination of hands-on training and academic classes. Apprenticeships prepare you for what are often high-demand, high-skilled careers.

Apprenticeships

Employers (such as Boeing), **trade unions** (for careers like electricians or roofers,) and independent programs offer apprenticeships. Programs last 2-5 years and lead to high-demand jobs. Plus, you can earn **certifications**, licenses, or even college **degrees**.



What jobs can I get as an apprentice?

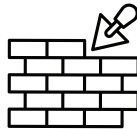
Apprenticeships are available in a variety of industries, such as aerospace, advanced manufacturing, construction, energy and marine technology.

Career-specific certification and preparation

Focus on developing particular skills and knowledge for specific careers, such as:



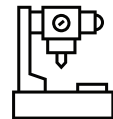
Automotive/Aircraft Mechanic



Bricklayer



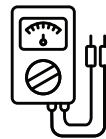
Carpenter



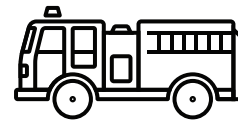
CNC Programmer



Cosmetologist



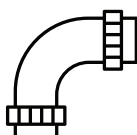
Electrician



Fire Fighter



Medical Assistant



Plumber



Truck Driver



Welder

How much will I get paid?

Earn while you learn - as you progress, the pay increases. After you graduate, you become a skilled professional with a credential that opens doors nationwide.



Starting apprentice	minimum \$18/hr + benefits (e.g. medical, dental and vision)	For example, Seattle City Light apprentices earn at least \$30/hr to start.
Journey-level worker (apprenticeship graduate)	minimum \$30/hr + benefits (e.g. medical, dental, vision and retirement)	For example, King County plumbers and pipe fitters earn around \$89/hr while cement masons in Yakima earn \$45/hr.

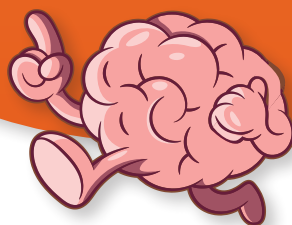
Good to Know

How do I become an apprentice? Make sure you meet the requirements! Generally, these include:

- High school **diploma**
- Specified abilities (may require math)
- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation
- Find a program and apply.

Each program has unique procedures for applying. To learn more about the process, talk to your high school counselor or visit lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/apprenticeship/become-an-apprentice¹

Source: 1. Information adapted from: Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. (2012). Become an Apprentice.





Washington College Grant (WA Grant): What About Apprenticeships?

An **apprenticeship** combines **on-the-job training** with job-related instruction from experienced workers who teach you the skills of their craft. Apprentices learn job skills, gain experience, and ultimately earn a credential. Start by searching apprenticeships to find the right occupation for you. Then research program options, and apply directly with the employer or the program sponsor.

Washington College Grant (WA Grant) and WCG for Apprenticeships (WG-A)

There are two main categories of WA Grant: Washington College Grant (WA Grant) and Washington College Grant for Apprenticeship (WG-A). Both help **income**-eligible apprentices pay for **tuition, fees**, and materials at approved apprenticeship sites.

1

Washington College Grant: Apprenticeships on a college campus

For apprenticeships that are part of an **eligible** program of study at an eligible institution, such as a **community or technical college**, apprentices should complete the FAFSA or the WASFA. Learn more at: wsac.wa.gov/wcg-apprentices

2

Washington College Grant for Apprenticeships: Apprenticeships sponsored by employers

Apprentices in non-campus-based programs are encouraged to check with their program sponsor to ensure they participate in WG-A.



Building Your Academic Profile and Resume

Colleges care about more than just your classes and grades. They value students who contribute to their **campus** and community. Participating in specific activities can make you a stronger applicant and build your work experience. Don't forget to document these activities in your required **High School and Beyond Plan!**

What is an activities log/resume?

Use your High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) to keep an activities log/resume. This list of **extracurricular activities** is required by some colleges and shows how involved you are in and outside of school. Note your high school activities (include a short description of each activity) to help build your resume and complete college **applications**.

Start to keep track

Robotics Club	President	Sept 2023 - present	2 hrs/month
Mechanic Internship	Participant	Jan - Mar, 2024	5 hrs/week (60 total)
JV Basketball	Participant	2022-2023	15 hrs/week (480 total)

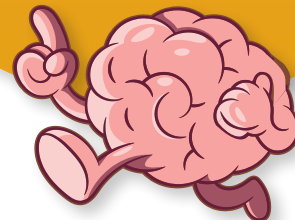


Tip

Your activities log/resumé can also be useful when you apply for jobs.

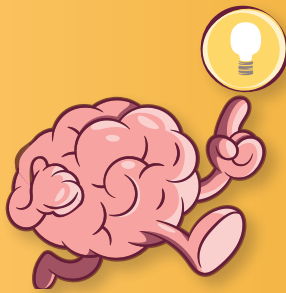
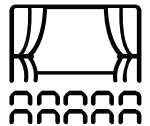
Good to Know

Being dedicated and taking on leadership roles in activities can be more valuable than being involved in many activities briefly. If you have a job during high school, especially if you've had it for a while or received promotions, make sure to mention it.



What kind of activities could help me prepare for life after high school?

- Athletics
- Volunteering
- Community service
- Faith-based programs
- Jobs or internships
- Leadership/
student government
- Music, drama, and the arts
- School clubs



Remember

Colleges understand that many students have work, family and other responsibilities. Write about yourself and your circumstances in college applications. Your family responsibilities are a valuable part of your story! They can also be considered as work experience, service and/or leadership in your resume or activity log.



Choosing Your High School Classes

What classes should I take?

High school classes prepare you for your future plans. Make sure you know the admissions requirements for **apprenticeships**, first responder training, **technical/specialty schools**, 2-year or 4-year colleges/**universities**, and military academies. Work with your high school's teachers and counselors to figure out what classes will help you toward your **postsecondary** goals.

Things to know:

- Earning a **diploma** will meet minimum admissions requirements for **almost all colleges**. Work with your school counselor to choose the classes that will prepare you for the path you're interested in.
- 4-year colleges and military academies look for the most challenging classes on your transcript.
- Technical/specialty and 2-year colleges have less selective requirements, or even **open enrollment** for any student who wants to attend.



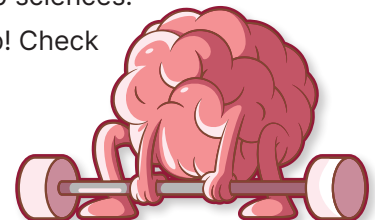
Math is important:

- Most postsecondary options require you to take math. Taking more math in high school may mean taking less math in college and create more choices for what to do after high school.
- Take math classes that will challenge you and prepare you for your post high school plans.
- Taking four years of high school math will help you get ready for education after high school and can help you save on **tuition** costs!



What are colleges looking for?

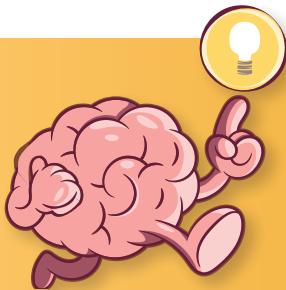
- A challenging class schedule, including courses where you can earn college credit.
 - Examples include, **Advanced Placement (AP)** (although recommended, taking AP classes is not a requirement to take the test), **International Baccalaureate (IB)**, **Cambridge International**, College in the High School, **Running Start** or CTE Dual Credit (formerly Tech Prep).
- Taking a world language class is required for 4-year college admissions, and a skill needed for working in a global economy. Most 4-year colleges require two **credits** of the same world language, or demonstration of your dual language skills by passing an exam.
- Choose elective classes that match your career and college interests or career and technical education programs. Consider taking additional world language and/or lab sciences.
- Most WA colleges don't require the **ACT** or **SAT**, but good scores can help! Check with your school counselor or the college for admissions requirements.



Recommended Academic Plan

Classes	9th	10th	11th	12th
English Language Arts	✓	✓	✓	✓
Math	✓	✓	✓	✓
Science	✓	✓		✓
History/Civics	✓	✓	✓	
Health & P.E.		✓	✓	
World Language	✓		✓	
Career and Technical Education			✓	✓
Art			✓	
Electives	✓	✓	✓	✓

This chart reflects courses needed for graduation and entering more education and training after high school. Check with your school counselor about which courses can best prepare you for specific career and college preparation options.



Remember

Make sure to research the academic and class requirements for the colleges (2-year, 4-year, or technical) you are interested in attending.



College Bound Scholarship: All About It

Through the generous Washington College Grant (WA Grant), **eligible** College Bound students who fulfill the pledge get free public college **tuition** and **fees** plus a small book allowance, or an equivalent amount, for an approved **public** or **private** college or career school.

You must enroll in **college** within one year of graduating from high school to keep your **scholarship** active. It is a 4-year scholarship (12 quarters/8 semesters) that must be used within the first five years after high school.

Income-eligible public school students are now **auto-enrolled in 7th or 8th grade**.

What makes a 9th grader newly eligible?

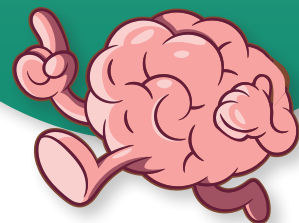
- Be enrolled in a Washington school in 7th or 8th grade.
- Not eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL) in 7th or 8th grade.
- Newly eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL) in 9th grade.

Where Can I Use It? (College Bound Scholarship and WA Grant)

The College Bound Scholarship and WA Grant can be used at over 65 2- and 4- year public and private colleges, **universities**, and technical programs in Washington State.

Good To Know

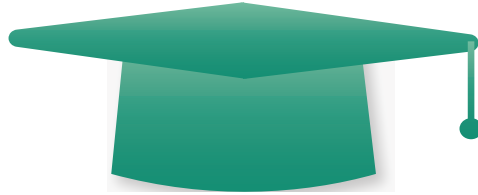
Other financial aid, **grants**, or scholarships can help with with expenses College Bound and WA Grant do not cover!





College Bound Scholarship: The Pledge

How do I **get it**? After being enrolled in middle school, **eligible** students must fulfill the College Bound Pledge.

**1**

Graduate from a Washington state high school or homeschool program with a cumulative 2.0 **GPA** if you plan to attend a 4-year **public or private college** directly after high school.*

*Beginning in the fall of 2023, there are no GPA requirements to get CBS for students who plan to attend a community college or **technical school**. Confirm with your high school if your district requires a certain GPA to graduate.

Get accepted to, and go to, one of the over 65 participating **colleges** or **universities** or programs within one year of graduating high school. Visit: wsac.wa.gov/sfa-institutions for a complete list of eligible schools.

2**3**

Have no **felony convictions**.

GET UPDATES:

Sign up to get updates on the College Bound Scholarship and other ways to get college ready by visiting: <https://wsac.wa.gov/college-bound>

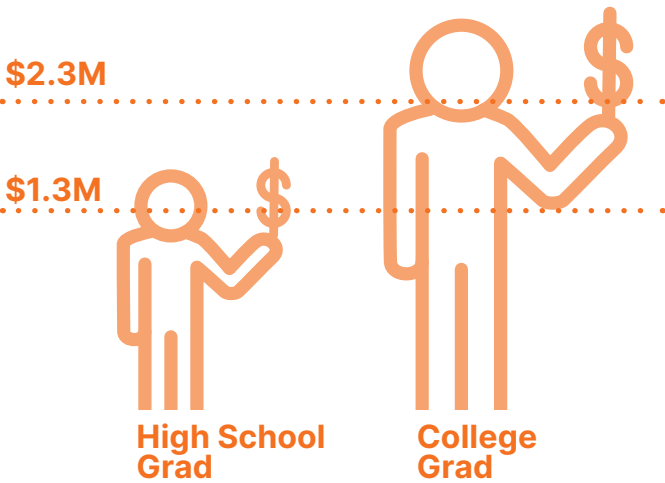
Be **income** eligible, as determined by your college using the information from your **FAFSA** or **WASFA**. You can view current income requirements for the CBS by visiting wsac.wa.gov/college-bound

4



College and Career Connection

Guess what? Having a college **degree** means you can earn **\$1 million** more in your lifetime compared to only having a high school **diploma**.¹



What education or training is needed for the job i want?

You can choose from hundreds of **majors** and **certificates** to prepare you for a new job!

Major: Group of courses required by a **college** in order to receive a degree (e.g. chemistry, accounting).

Certificate: Issued in a specific career area (e.g. Certified Nurse Assistant or Information Technology Support.)

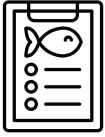
If you don't know what you want to do yet - do research:



1. Khan Academy, 2014

Career-oriented majors, or certificates

Earning a **technical program** certificate or applied degree is like leveling up in a video game, but in real life. You'll develop skills and gain knowledge in areas like:



Marine Biology



Culinary Arts



Paralegal Studies



Engineering



Dental Hygiene

Liberal arts majors

Get ready for some “major” fun with literature, philosophy, history, and languages. They can open doors to all kinds of good jobs in different industries, though some jobs might need more schooling.



English

editor, marketing executive, writer



World Language

foreign service officer, translator, teacher



Political Science

community organizer or activist, lawyer, policy analyst

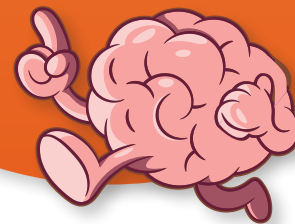


Psychology

market researcher, social worker, mental health counselor

Good to Know

Find the perfect college for you! Use tools like your **High School and Beyond Plan** platform to explore different programs. Remember, this choice can affect how much money you make and your job security in the future.





Ways to Pay for College

How much does college cost?

College costs vary at each school. Each college estimates the **Cost of Attendance (COA)** by adding together some or all of the following **college expenses**:

Tuition
Fees
Room and board
Transportation
Books and supplies
+ Other living expenses

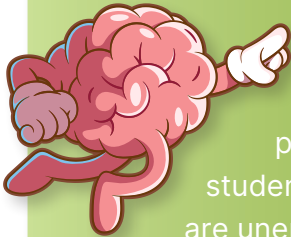
COST OF ATTENDANCE (COA)

How do I Pay for it?

There are many ways to get help with the cost of college. You can get **financial aid** from **grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study** programs. These resources help cover the cost and add to any savings or earnings you have.



Tip



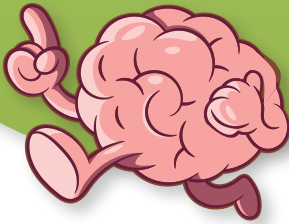
Most **Technical colleges** have financial aid programs to help students. Students who are unemployed, receive TANF, basic food assistance (aka Food Stamps), or are low-**income** and pursuing a short-term **certificate** in a high-wage, high-demand career, may qualify. Learn more at: sbctc.edu/paying-for-college/financial-aid-programs

Types of financial aid:

- **Scholarships** – Money awarded based on academic or other achievements to help pay for education expenses. Scholarships generally do not have to be repaid.
- **Grants** – A form of gift aid, usually given based on **financial need**. A grant does not need to be repaid, unless, for example, you withdraw from a school and owe a refund. The Pell Grant is a common federal grant.
- **Work-Study** – A financial aid program (federal or state) that allows a student to work on-**campus** or with approved off-campus employers to earn money to pay for college expenses.
 - Some student jobs, like being a Resident Advisor (RA) or Campus Security Officer, can help cover housing or room and board expenses. Job opportunities differ among campuses, so check with your college's Career Center for more details.
- **Loans** – Money you can borrow and repay over time, with interest added in most cases.

Good To Know

Knowing the different types of financial aid is only the first step. You may not need to take out a *loan* to cover the *full cost of attendance*.



How do I qualify?

Financial Aid



In order to be considered for financial aid at 2- and 4-year colleges and many technical/specialty colleges, you need to complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** or **Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA)** your senior year and every year while in college.



Each college determines financial aid **eligibility** for federal, state, and institutional types of aid based on **awarding** policies at that campus.

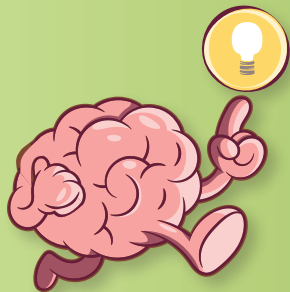
Scholarships



There are thousands of scholarships, and each one has its own unique requirements, although many will want the same basic information.

Other ways to make college more affordable

- If you need help in class, ask for it and aim for top grades -you'll have a better shot at scholarships.
- Get a part-time job while in high school to earn and save some cash.
- Take College in the High School, **Running Start**, or CTE Dual Credit courses to earn college **credit**.



Remember

Applying for Financial Aid is the first step. The next step is to wait and check for any communications from the **Financial Aid Offices** from the campuses you listed on your financial aid application. Some might require further documentation (Verification letters, Non-Filer letter, etc).



Washington College Grant (WA Grant): All About It

Washington College Grant (WA Grant) gives **eligible** people money for more types of education like **certificate** programs, **job training**, **apprenticeships**, or **college**. To apply, complete a **FAFSA** or **WASFA**. WA Grant is one of the most generous **financial aid** programs in the country. The amount you receive depends on family size, **income**, and the cost of your school or program.

You don't have to go to school or attend career training full-time to get the WA Grant. There are many part-time opportunities, so you can work and pursue your career goals at the same time.

Am I eligible?

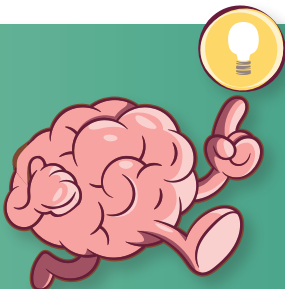
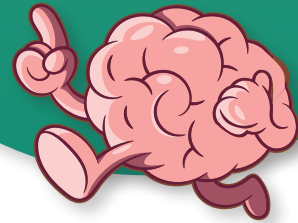
WA Grant is available to the following people:

- Washington residents (including students who are **undocumented**)
- Recent high school graduates or working-age adults
- Low- to middle-income families and individuals
- People who plan to attend an approved certificate program, job training, apprenticeship, or college, part-time or full-time

Good To Know

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The WA Grant can be used for many different college and career pathways, such as apprenticeships. You can visit wsac.wa.gov/wcg for more information.

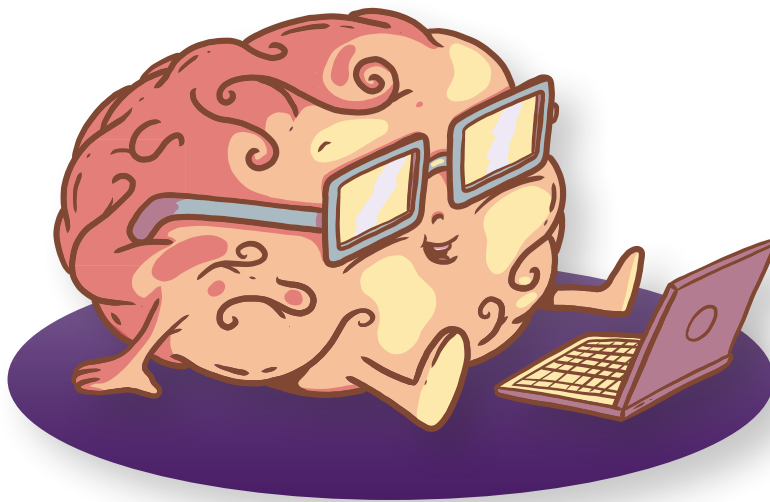


Remember

It's never too early to plan ahead or too late to apply. Completing a FAFSA or WASFA is the only way to know for sure if you qualify to get money for college or career training.

7

Glossary



Take our survey and help us improve!

Glossary

Academic Advising: Helps you understand the college's academic systems, choose and apply to a major, and access campus resources.

Academic Support: Services on campus that support academic success, such as tutoring, advising, etc.

ACT: ACT is an abbreviation of American College Testing. Entrance exams used by many colleges as a part of the admission decision. Most Washington State schools no longer require ACT scores for admissions; however, successful completion of the test(s) could serve as a graduation pathway option. You will need to submit your exam scores online through the testing agency's website.

Admissions Counselors: College representatives (sometimes called admissions advisors) who review student applications and can provide information and guidance about the college.

Advanced Placement (AP): A program that allows students to take challenging college-level courses while still in high school. Students may earn college credit and/or advanced placement into upper-level college courses by successfully passing AP exams. Many colleges and universities recognize AP courses when making admissions decisions.

Application: A form that you must fill out in order to apply for colleges, scholarships, or financial aid.

Apprenticeship: A program that enables participants to gain a license to practice in a regulated occupation. Includes on-the-job training and completion of classroom-based learning in partnership with a college, university, or training provider, while getting paid.

Associate Degree: This kind of degree indicates the completion of a 2-year college program. Many students earn an Associate Degree and then transfer to a 4-year college or university.

Award: An offer from a college or career school that states the type (loans, institutional aid, grants, scholarships, and work-study) and amount of financial aid the school is willing to provide if you accept admission and register to take classes at that school.

Bachelor's Degree: An undergraduate academic degree awarded by colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study lasting three to six years. The most common are the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science.

Benefits: Non-wage payment provided to employees in addition to their base salaries and wages, such as health insurance (medical, dental, and vision), retirement plans, and paid time off..

Cambridge International: A dual-credit program that gives students the opportunity to earn high school and college credit at the same time.

Campus: The entire property of a university, college, or school - including the grounds and buildings.

Campus Size: This is the number of students enrolled in the college.

Certificate: Awarded to a person to indicate knowledge of a certain subject or skill upon completing specific education or passing a test.

College: A smaller institution of higher education that offers undergraduate programs, features small student populations, and more intimate campuses. The term can also refer to schools that offer focused and professional specializations like community, vocational, and technical colleges.

College Budget: The amount of money that you are reasonably able to pay for college expenses.

College Expenses: Costs such as living on campus, food, books, supplies, personal expenses, and transportation.

College Fair: Events where college and university representatives provide information about their school and answer questions. This is a great opportunity to learn about different college options.

Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs): CTCs is the name most commonly used to describe Washington's public 2-year colleges. These schools offer Associate Degrees and certificates, as well as prepare students for specific trades. Many students earn an Associate Degree and then transfer to a 4-year college. Washington state has 34 public CTCs.

Consolidate(d): Combining one or more loans into a single new loan.

Cost of Attendance (COA): The total amount it will cost you to attend your academic program, college, university, or trade school each year. This can include tuition and fees, on-campus room and board (or a housing and food allowance for off-campus students), books, supplies, and transportation.

Cover Letter: A student cover letter should use specific examples to summarize your strengths and accomplishments. A cover letter is normally included in your school applications or with your resume when applying for jobs.

Credits: You typically earn one credit for the successful completion of a single course in high school. Washington requires students to complete a minimum number of credits to graduate. College credits are represented by the hours you've spent in class per week. Typically, one hour in class per week equals one credit.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Dual Credit: Classes that help students transition from high school into postsecondary professional technical programs and careers.

DACA: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals is a Program announced on June 12, 2012 by President Barack Obama to protect eligible individuals from deportation and access a work permit for two years. The individual must have arrived before the age of 16, have a clean record, etc. Deferred Action does not provide a green card or pathway to citizenship.

Degree: A degree indicates the completion of a 2- or 4-year program at a college or university. The two most common degrees are Associate Degree and bachelor's degrees.

Demographics: Information about a population, including age, gender, race, religion, and highest education level.

Deposit: An enrollment deposit is an amount you put down to secure your spot at a college or university after you receive your acceptance letter. It's almost always non-refundable and is the last step to officially confirm your spot in the school, allowing you to start signing up for your orientation, on-campus housing, and classes. Most colleges will require this deposit to be submitted along with your confirmation of attendance and the amount will be put towards your tuition.

Diploma: A certificate awarded by a high school to show a student has successfully completed high school.

Direct Costs: Expenses that are billed to your student account and paid directly to the school: tuition and fees.

Eligibility: Requirements that must be met to qualify or receive a scholarship. This will vary by scholarship. Some scholarships focus on specific criteria, such as diversity, creativity, and other attributes/skills.

Extracurricular Activities: Any activity that you do outside of the classroom, such as athletics, clubs, community service, etc.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): The standard form students must complete to apply for federal and state need-based assistance and programs and, in some circumstances, campus-based assistance/aid. Learn more at studentaid.gov.

Federal Loan: A loan is money you borrow and must pay back with interest. Loans made by the federal government, called federal student loans, usually offer borrowers lower interest rates and have more flexible repayment options than loans from banks or other private sources. For more information on the federal loan program: studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans

Fees: Money you pay to access school activities, fitness centers, libraries, and student centers. Every college has different fees.

Fee Waiver: If paying an application or testing fee would cause a financial hardship, you can receive a fee waiver to remove payment. There are several methods students can use to get a fee waiver. Many require students to complete a separate application process for each waiver. Most college applications require a fee to help the school where you are applying to pay for the cost of reviewing your application and making an admission decision.

Felony Convictions: More serious crimes. Conviction records are checked, just like all pledge requirements, prior to the awarding of the College Bound Scholarship.

Financial Aid: Any grant, scholarship, loan, or work-study (paid employment) offered to help you meet your college expenses.

Financial Aid Office: Helps you understand your financial aid award, provides information on additional funding resources, and helps you search and apply for scholarships.

Financial Need: The cost of attendance minus your student aid index. This is determined by the information you provide on the FAFSA or WASFA.

Grade Point Average (GPA): A way to transfer letter grades into a numerical scale. The grades received in classes are averaged together to arrive at one cumulative grade. You can find your GPA on your high school transcript.

Grants: A form of gift aid, usually based on financial need. A grant does not need to be repaid, unless, for example, you withdraw from a school and owe a refund.

High School and Beyond Plan: A tool to help guide you through high school. Plans are personalized and designed to help you think about your future and choose coursework that prepares them for goals after high school. This is also a graduation requirement.

Immigration Status: The legal position of people that live in a country permanently without citizenship.

Income: The total amount of money that you earn per year.

Indirect-Costs: Any cost other than tuition and fees, such as books, equipment, transportation, housing, and meals. These typically are not outlined in your cost of attendance, but you may be able to use financial aid for them. Check with your Financial Aid Office for available options.

International Baccalaureate (IB): A rigorous, 2-year program that results in personal and academic development and, upon successful completion, a globally recognized diploma. Students who take IB exams have the chance to earn college credit or advanced placement, or both, within upper-level college courses. Many colleges and universities recognize IB courses as they make admissions decisions.

Internship: An opportunity to work at an organization or corporation to develop work experience. Some internships are unpaid and some are paid.

Letter of Recommendation: Letters that can speak to your qualities, characteristics, and capabilities. These letters typically come from teachers, counselors, community or faith leaders, employers, and other individuals outside your family.

Major: A specific subject that you choose to commit to studying. A large number of classes you take may be related to your major.

Master Promissory Note (MPN): A legal document that contains the Borrower's Rights and Responsibilities and Terms and Conditions for repayment. Direct PLUS and Direct Subsidized/Unsubsidized loans have different MPNs. An MPN can also be good for up to 10 years if certain enrollment requirements are met. Learn more at studentaid.gov/mpn.

Merit (Scholarship): Many scholarships award money based on qualities or activities students are involved in, such as grades, theater, sports, or music.

Money Gap: The difference between the cost of a full-year of college and the grants and scholarship you are provided. This may also be referred to as "out of pocket" expenses, which is money you and your family will be responsible for paying.

Need-Based: A designation that is based on a student's financial need. For example, a need-based program might be awarded based on a student's income-eligibility.

Office Hours: Times when professors are available to answer any questions you might have about class.

Official Transcript: Most colleges require your high school transcript, which is a student's academic record that includes a Registrar's signature and the issue date. An official transcript is delivered in a sealed envelope. If you have earned college credit, you will also need to submit your college transcript.

Online College Portal: Some colleges have their own website, which you can use to check admission decisions, financial aid, grades, etc.

On-The-Job Training (OTJ): Job training that is completed in the actual workplace.

Open Enrollment: This means the college accepts all students at any level and offers classes for all levels of education.

Orientation: Most schools and programs require new students to attend an orientation, where you learn about campus resources, the registration process, and meet your peers. Some school or program orientations are in person and others are online. Attend an in-person orientation if you can! Students may also be invited to attend a summer transition program focused on preparing you for your first quarter.

Personal Statement: A way to give some background information about yourself and highlight why you are interested in the school during the admissions process.

Placement Test: Some schools and programs will require you to take a placement test to determine some of the classes you can take. Based on this test, you may need to take an entry-level class before you can take another class required by your program.

Portable: Some scholarships are bound to a specific college. Portable scholarships can be used at the college of your choice and follow you to the next school you attend.

Postsecondary: Education and/or training after high school.

Pre-Apprenticeship: A supportive, hands-on training program that helps prepare students for success in the building trades and to improve their basic skills before applying to an apprenticeship program.

Priority Deadlines: A date that you need to file a FAFSA or WASFA in order receive priority consideration in the financial aid awarding process. The deadline determines the type of funding you will be eligible for and when you may be awarded. Each school sets their own deadlines.

Private 2-Year Colleges: These schools tend to focus on specific trades or vocations and are not publicly funded.

Private 4-Year Colleges and Universities: These schools offer bachelor's degrees and may also offer master's degrees but are independent and are not publicly funded. These colleges or universities often have smaller class sizes.

Professor: The common way to address a teacher in college.

Public 2-Year Colleges: These schools offer Associate Degrees and certificates, as well as prepare students for specific trades. Many students earn an Associate Degree and then transfer to a 4-year college.

Public 4-Year Comprehensive Colleges and Universities: These schools tend to be smaller, are more regionally based, and offer bachelor's and master's degrees.

Public 4-Year Research Colleges and Universities: These schools engage in extensive research activities and offer bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees.

Reach: A school that you might not be accepted to, but is still worth applying to because it's your dream school.

Renewable: A scholarship that can be received for more than one year as long as all eligibility requirements are met.

(Washington) Resident: In most cases, a Washington resident is someone who lives in the state for one year immediately prior to starting their college or program. Both U.S. citizens and non-citizens can be Washington residents, including undocumented students. The state has other requirements for how certain groups of people—such as tribal members, military veterans, and service members—can get residency. Learn more at wsac.wa.gov/student-residency.

Room and Board: The costs associated with living on or off campus, including meal plans.

Running Start: A program that provides you the option of attending certain colleges while also earning high school and college/university credit. To learn more about this program and other options that may be available at your school, please visit wsac.wa.gov/college-credit-high-school

Safety: A school where you will definitely get accepted, but is a backup in case the others don't work out.

SAT: The SAT acronym originally stood for "Scholastic Aptitude Test" but as the test evolved the acronym's meaning was dropped. Most Washington State schools no longer require SAT scores for admissions; however, successful completion of the test(s) could serve as a graduation pathway option. You will need to submit your exam scores online through the testing agency's website.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP): The process a school uses to determine if a student is meeting all of their educational requirements and is on target to graduate on time with a degree or certificate. This process may vary across schools. For more information, speak with your financial aid office.

Scholarship: Money awarded to you based on criteria such as academics, athletics, community service, or financial need to help pay for education expenses. Scholarships generally do not have to be repaid and can be awarded through your school (institutional scholarships) or through outside committees (private scholarships.)

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM): These four fields share an emphasis on innovation, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

Selectivity: A measure of how difficult it is for you to be accepted into a school. This is measured by percentage of students accepted annually. The lower the acceptance rate, the more selective the school is.

Service Learning: An opportunity to participate in community service activities and then apply the experience to your academic and personal growth.

Short Answer Responses: Additional questions you may need to answer, focusing on specific topics such as diversity, culture, and examples of persistence/overcoming obstacles.

Solid: A school that you will likely be accepted to because you are a competitive applicant.

State Financial Aid: Financial assistance/aid programs funded and administered by the state to help pay in-state college costs.

Summer Transition Program: Some colleges formulate and offer summer programs to prepare students for college. Schools are creating programs to bring students up to the college level in both knowledge and study skills/habits. These programs aim to increase student success by assuring that students are ready to perform at the college level.

Technical (College/School): This usually refers to a school that offers associate's degrees and certain certifications that are necessary to enter technical job fields. Students who attend tech schools may still need to complete a training program, apprentice program, or an entry-level position before they can work in career positions that allow them to employ the full range of skills they learned.

Theology: Religious studies at a school. State financial aid cannot fund religious education.

Trade: A skilled job, typically one requiring manual skills and special training, such as pipe-fitter, carpenter, mechanic, or electrician.

Trade Unions: A labor union that advocates for members' rights and also offers apprenticeship opportunities.

Transfer: A transfer occurs when you switch to a different school. Typically, community colleges offer 2-year degrees with a path to transfer to a 4-year school.

Tuition: The price colleges or universities charge for credits/classes. This pays for things like the instructor and classroom space. Every college has different tuition costs. Some colleges and universities may charge different amounts for in-state and out-of-state tuition. Students who are out-of-state residents may pay more for tuition at some schools.

Undergraduate: A college student who is working to get an associate or bachelor's degree.

Undocumented: A term that can be applied to any person who lives, works, and/or attends school in the United States without the protections of a citizen or permanent resident.

University: A larger institution of higher education that offers undergraduate and graduate programs

Vocational: Also referred to as a trade school. These colleges offer specialized training, skills, or education for specific fields, such as plumbing, carpentry, etc.

Washington Application for State Financial Aid

(WASFA): The application available to eligible undocumented students for state financial aid such as the Washington College Grant and the College Bound Scholarship. Learn more at wsac.wa.gov/wasfa

Work-Study: A federally and sometimes state-funded financial aid program that helps college students with financial needs get part-time jobs while attending school.

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A collaborative effort
across organizations to
provide comprehensive college
and career readiness information

College and Career Knowledge: For more information and to view the glossary, check out our websites:

wsac.wa.gov | psccn.org | ospi.k12.wa.us/about-ospi | scholarfundwa.org | collegesuccessfoundation.org | roadmapproject.org