

Begin Your Career Exploration Early

As you prepare for the transition into high school, you need to start thinking about the question, “*What am I going to do after graduation?*”

Sounds like a lot all at once, right? Don’t panic. There’s plenty of time to consider your future. However, it’s a good idea to begin exploring your future career options so that you can make informed decisions along the way.

Career means something different to everyone. For some, it’s a series of jobs. For others, it’s what they will do for the rest of their lives. In this Grad Planner, career is defined as follows:

Career—the sum of your experiences, including work, learning, and leisure activities.

At this stage of your life, your career is a reflection of what you have accomplished until now, at home, at school, and in your community.

While your career may be very similar to that of your friends and classmates right now, it will soon include a variety of experiences that will make it unique. This Grad Planner will give you some ideas on how you can make this happen.



Get to Know Yourself

Getting to know yourself is one of the major steps in beginning to plan for your future. Knowing what you like or don't like, what is important to you, and what kinds of things you are good at helps you to understand who you are. When you know how you learn, get along with others, and deal with problems, you have an even clearer picture of yourself. There is so much about you that is truly special!

What you know about yourself today, though, is only the beginning, the foundation upon which to build the future. You and the world around you are constantly changing. High school allows you to discover new things about yourself. Be open to opportunities that broaden your mind and uncover your talents. Get involved in student council and other activities. Volunteer in your school or in your community. Stay fit. Meet new people. Seek to maintain a healthy balance in your school and personal life. These experiences, among many others, will allow you to become more fully who you really want to be.

"Feel free to try a few things out and see where you fit in. You never know when something might come up that will change your outlook and open the doors to many more worthwhile experiences."

- Jillian Nichols, Student



Skills and You

Skills are abilities or capabilities that can be developed and improved with experience, practice, and training. Employers constantly stress that the skills they look for in their employees are those that are learned in daily life. These skills come from taking courses at school, working part-time, doing chores at home, participating in extra-curricular activities, and getting along with family and friends. Reliability, ability to communicate and to work with others, and problem solving are skills that will definitely be transferable to the workplace.

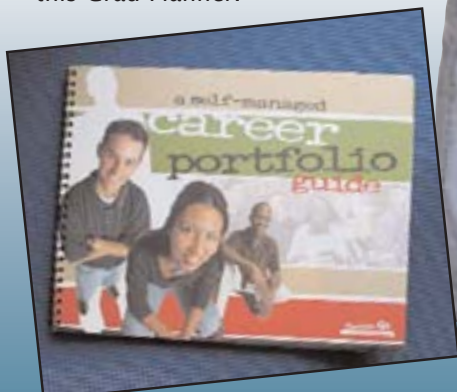
While in high school, you can work at developing a strong set of skills that will be yours for a lifetime!

Portfolios

A good way to help you keep track of your personal growth is to create a scrapbook or portfolio. In it, you can store your certificates, report cards, and reference letters, keep track of skills and achievements, and record other personal information. Your portfolio will be useful as you seek part-time work, apply for scholarships, and develop your future plans.

See your school counsellor if you are interested in developing a portfolio. Your school may be using a document called *A Self-Managed Career Portfolio Guide*. For more information, check the Resources section at the back of this Grad Planner.

By the time you leave high school, you'll have hundreds of skills that you can use in all areas of life.



Understand the World of Work

The world of work is a fascinating place with thousands of jobs to choose from. Right now, you are not expected to know what kind of work you want to do in the future. However, it's a good idea to begin exploring those occupations that appeal to you and that best suit your needs.



Learn where you can obtain reliable and up-to-date information about these job opportunities. Your family has access to a guide called *Focus on the Future: Career Planning Begins at Home*. Together, you can discover what is available in the world of work and what you can do to make satisfying career choices.



Ways to Learn about the World of Work

Here are some suggested activities to help you understand what is involved in the world of work.

- ✓ Talk to your parents/guardians and other adults about their work.
- ✓ Participate in your school's *Take Our Kids to Work*[™] program held in November of each year. This Senior 1 job-shadowing activity reveals the many sides of an occupation.
- ✓ Play *The Be Real Game*, a role-playing activity that lets you experience the life of an adult worker.
- ✓ Volunteer. You could discover the kind of work that appeals to you while developing many new skills.
- ✓ Sign up for a career-education course at your school to acquire work experience and to explore areas of interest.
- ✓ Consider summer employment.
- ✓ Explore occupations available in your area by visiting local businesses and industries.
- ✓ Read daily and weekly newspapers to learn more about job opportunities and trends in the labour market.
- ✓ Attend the Career Symposium in Winnipeg or in Brandon and participate in career fairs at your school and in your community.
- ✓ Read some of the resources that should be available at your school: *Canada Prospects, Manitoba Prospects, Careers in Apprenticeship Trades, Destination 2020, SAY Magazine*, and many more.
- ✓ Spend time visiting career-planning websites that are free to all Manitoba schools and youth-serving agencies. Explore the online resources suggested at the back of this Grad Planner. Speak to your school counsellor for additional information.

Explore Your Future Educational and Training Opportunities

Whether you consider working, travelling, or continuing your schooling right after graduation, keep in mind that by the time you graduate, two-thirds of the jobs created in Canada will require some form of education beyond high school. In considering your plans, remember that the best possible option is the one that most suits your skills, needs, and goals, now, and in the future. It is important to stay open to the many possibilities that exist in the rapidly changing and exciting world of work.

Work

Some of you may want to experience full-time employment immediately upon leaving high school. Employers seek young people who are motivated to learn new skills and who will become an asset to their company. While on-the-job training is provided, you can still further your education through part-time studies. To prepare yourself for work, you will want to develop your job-search skills and learn about the variety of opportunities that suit your interests and abilities.

“What are my options after high school?”



Focus on the Future



Apprenticeship Training

Apprenticeship is a way to train for a career in one of the many designated trades available in Manitoba. It combines paid on-the-job learning with sponsored technical training. In other words, you get paid while you learn. When you finish your apprenticeship training, you receive a Manitoba Certificate of Qualification and become a certified journeyman. If your certificate has a Red Seal, you can work anywhere in Canada where the trade is designated. Journeymen often start their own businesses, teach, or continue to study in other areas of interest. In high school, you can get an early start in a trade through the Senior Years Apprenticeship Option.

The areas of skilled trades and technology hold a promising future for young Canadians.



→
ege
hip

Your Grad Planner

University

You may decide to attend a university. A university education provides you with the theory and the practical training required for professions in areas such as teaching, medicine, law, and many more. You also may attend a university to broaden your knowledge and to develop necessary skills for the workplace. Attendance at university is usually three to four years—or longer, for more specialized studies.

College

Much like university, a college education provides you with theoretical learning, along with plenty of hands-on training. Programs of study include business administration, culinary arts, child and youth care, computer programming, technology, and many more. Training for apprenticeship takes place at a college. The length of training at a college is usually one to two years, or more, depending on what field you are studying.



You may choose to take your studies at a university or college on a full-time or a part-time basis. Deciding which school is right for you will depend on a number of factors, including the type of learning you want to pursue, the skills that you hope to develop, how long you want to be in school, and what you plan to do after graduation.

It's important to understand what you must take in high school in order to be accepted into university and college programs.

University and college admission information is readily available online or in print form from the individual colleges and universities. For more information, visit the websites listed at the back of this Grad Planner, and speak to your school counsellor as soon as possible.

Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment

You may eventually decide to start your own business or to become involved in one that is already established. In high school, you can join clubs and organizations that promote these interests, such as Junior Achievement of Manitoba. There are many different ways in which you can develop the skills to manage a business, including taking college and university courses, business seminars, and workshops. Check the websites listed at the back of this Grad Planner for more information about these opportunities.

Other Types of Training

Once you leave high school, you can still consider programs of study that are offered through high schools or through technical schools.

Examples of such courses are aviation mechanics, hairstyling, microcomputer repair, and production art, to name a few.

You could also take your training through a number of private vocational schools, through part-time evening and weekend study, and through distance learning courses.

Opportunities also exist with the Canadian Forces Reserves program while you attend high school and after graduation.



Travel

Some young people choose to travel across Canada or abroad after graduation. You could decide to work for a while and then take time off for travel. You could volunteer with organizations such as Katimavik and Canada World Youth, among others.

While the idea of travelling may appeal to you, explore your options as if you were going to continue your schooling right after graduation. In this way, you will stay focused on your future choices and you will have an idea about the steps to take when you return. If things change, you'll have a plan. Remember that many colleges and universities offer interesting exchange programs to other parts of Canada and the world.



Focus on the Future



Develop Your Decision-Making and Goal-Setting Skills

The need for decision making and goal setting is a fact of life. The decision-making process involves examining all your options. Once you have selected a suitable option, you set a goal and an appropriate course of action to ensure that you meet your desired outcomes.

On any given day, you make many decisions, some more important than others. Think about some of the goals that you have achieved. What steps did you follow and how did you stay on track? How did you know that you had achieved your goals? Was someone there to provide support?

No matter what decisions you make, whether as simple as buying something for yourself or as important as planning what to do with your life, you can follow the same basic steps in the decision-making process.

As you work through the process of career exploration, you will be faced with many decisions. Your plans may change along the way. Be patient and be willing to take the necessary steps to meet your desired outcomes.

Remember to discuss your plans and decisions with your family, teachers, and school counsellor. Many useful activities can be found in the guide *Focus on the Future: Career Planning Begins at Home*. Try out these activities with your family.

Steps in Decision Making

- 1 Identify the decision that you need to make.
- 2 List all your possible options.
- 3 Keep in mind your values, interests, and abilities when choosing an option.
- 4 Think about the pros and cons of each option.
- 5 Choose the option that best suits you.
- 6 Put together a plan of action to help you achieve what you want.
- 7 Follow your action plan and keep track of your progress.
- 8 Modify your plan, if necessary.