



Journey to  College

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY

TO PLAN FOR COLLEGE AND A CAREER



Where will your journey lead?



Getting an education is more important than ever before. Although you won't apply to college until high school, there are many things you can do to be ready when the time comes. So, when should you start planning for the future? **The answer is now!**



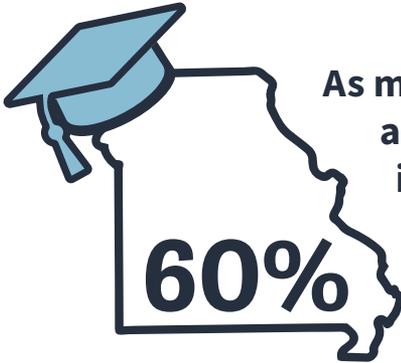
MAKE A PLAN

What is college?

College is taking more classes or training for a specific career after you finish high school. It includes professional certificates, degrees earned at technical schools, two-year community colleges, four-year universities, and online degree programs. It all counts as college!

Why consider college?

Most jobs today require some education beyond high school. College can open the door to more job opportunities and higher pay. It can also be a great experience, opening your eyes to other cultures and meeting new people.



As more jobs require education after high school, Missouri is working toward a goal of 60 percent of adults with a degree or certificate by 2025.

Establish good habits

Choices you make now can help you succeed in high school and prepare for college. It's important to adopt good habits early on.

- 1 **Spend time reading.**
- 2 **Pay attention in class.**
- 3 **Learn how to study.**
- 4 **Practice being on time.**
- 5 **Learn how to budget.**

Discover your interests

Take classes and participate in community activities to help you decide what you like to do most. Once you know your interests, you can explore careers that match up.

Ask yourself questions, like:

- Do you like helping people?
- Do you like working with your hands or designing new things?
- What are some things you're good at?
- What classes or activities have you found especially interesting or inspiring?

Look for summer camps that relate to things you like to do. Try job shadowing or interviewing people who have careers you find interesting. Explore all kinds of jobs to get a good feel for what you like most.

MAKE THE GRADE

Being the best student you can be will help you get into college and succeed once you're there. Take school seriously and learn as much as you can. Getting good grades can create more opportunities for scholarships and give you more choices for where you could attend college. Working hard now will pay off in the end.

College graduates with a bachelor's degree earn \$33,000 more per year (that's 73 percent more!), on average, than people with only a high school diploma.

Source: Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2019.

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

It's okay if you don't know what you want to be when you grow up. There are a lot of careers to choose from. Now is a good time to learn about the types of jobs available. Find some careers you might like and ask to interview a person with that job in your area.

You can ask the following questions:

- Describe a typical day of work.
- How do you use technology in your job?
- What type of education did you have to complete?
- What do you like most about your job?
- What would people be surprised to know about your job?



Complete
all classwork
on time.

**MAKE THE
MOST OF
SCHOOL**



Never give up
and ask for help
when you need it.



Get involved
in activities and
organizations.



Practice
being a
good leader.

PARENTS, THINK ABOUT COLLEGE NOW



It's never too early to start thinking about college. Talk with your children about their hopes and dreams. Help them develop their interests and skills through school work, activities, and hobbies. Once they reach their final year in high school they will be ready to make some important decisions about the kind of education they'll need to achieve their goals.

The benefits of college

As more jobs require education after high school, Missouri is working toward a goal of 60 percent of adults with a degree or certificate by 2025. While not every career requires a college degree, higher education can pave the way for more employment opportunities. Continuing education beyond high school to any level is important. More education is often tied to:

- lower unemployment rates
- higher pay
- better health care benefits

Paying for college

Higher education doesn't have to be out of reach due to cost. Degree and certificate programs come in a range of prices, depending on the type of school students choose and the financial aid they receive.

Missouri has many affordable higher education options. The cost to attend college at a number of Missouri schools can be found at dhewd.mo.gov/data/tuitionandfees.php.

Federal and state grants, scholarships, work-study, and loans are available to a majority of students to help pay for college. The U.S. Department of Education and the state of Missouri offer millions of dollars in financial aid to students each year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
journeytocollege.mo.gov



Kahleigha H.
**Ozarks Technical
 Community College**
Major: Criminal Justice

“Being a first-generation college student was very scary to begin with, but it has made every victory that much more rewarding. I have had to lean on others and trust that as I continue going to school, things will come more naturally.”



Nicole A.
**Missouri University of
 Science & Technology**
**Major: Computer Science
 & Computer Engineering**

“Once you find your passion, your classes will be right in your reach and you’ll see how they relate to your future. Regardless of whether you start at a community college or a university, every field of study is a valid option as long as it fits you!”



Clayton B.
Mineral Area College
**Major: International
 Business**

“My parents encouraged me to go to college. They believe education is one of the keys to success. I worked closely with my parents to create a plan that included supplies, a computer, and the courses I would take.”

STUDENT STORIES

86%

of undergraduate students
 receive some form of
 financial aid.

Source: *The Integrated Postsecondary
 Education Data System (IPEDS)*



Saving for college

Start saving for college as early as possible. You can watch your savings grow while your children grow. Money saved through MOST 529 — a state-sponsored, college savings plan that offers tax advantages — can be used for college tuition, certain housing expenses, books, supplies, and other qualifying higher education expenses. Find out more at Missourimost.org.

It’s never too early to start planning, but it’s also never too late. If you’re interested in continuing your education, there are financial aid options available. Check out MOFastTrack.com to learn about a new grant to help Missouri adults earn their certificate, degree, or industry-recognized credential. It’s never too late to be a role model.



DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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