



Checklists and worksheets

Finding a career that’s right for you — Choices Explorer

After completing the Career Finder quiz (see instructions for VT Guidance Central in box on page 11), choose two careers that interest you and then answer the questions below.

	Career 1	Career 2
Define this career (include tasks associated with it).		
Why is this occupation needed?		
What is the average annual salary for this career?		
What is the expected growth rate for this field?		
What level of education is needed for this career?		
Name two majors that are related to this career. Why and how are they related?		
What classes in high school do you think will best prepare you for this career? Check out the “Getting Started” tab for ideas.		
Complete the real-life math problem. What did you have to solve and how does it relate to daily work in this career?		
Complete the real-life communication problem. What kinds of communication skills will you need for this career?		
Complete the real-life decision-making problem. What was difficult about making this decision? What was easy?		
Follow the link for “Associations.” List one fact you read that is important to you.		
What would you like doing in this career?		
What would you dislike doing in this career?		

Career interest checklist — Identify your interests

To find a career that interests you, you need to know what you like to do and how to categorize your interests. Dr. John Holland created a system of placing people’s interests into groups. He believed that every person’s interests fit into at least one group and that most fit into two or three groups.

Your personal combination of Holland groups will result in your Holland Code. To begin discovering careers that match your interests, find your Holland Code by completing this career interest checklist.

1. Circle the subjects, activities, or people that are the most appealing to you.

Auto mechanics Building things Carpentry Driving a truck Farming Fixing electrical things Typesetting a printed piece Wildlife biology TOTAL “R” = _____	Advanced math Astronomy Being in a science fair Building rocket models Doing puzzles Physics Using a chemistry set Working in a science lab TOTAL “I” = _____	Being in a play Creating fashion designs Creative writing Drawing or painting Going to concerts Learning foreign languages Playing with musicians Reading about art or music TOTAL “A” = _____
Attending sports events Belonging to a club Doing volunteer work Helping people Making new friends Studying foreign cultures Teaching children Working with elderly people TOTAL “S” = _____	Being elected class president Being with leaders Buying materials for a store Giving speeches Selling a product Talking to salespeople Talking with people at a party Working on a sales campaign TOTAL “E” = _____	Filing letters and reports Following a budget Keeping detailed reports Typing reports Using a cash register Using business machines Word processing on computer Working 9:00 to 5:00 TOTAL “C” = _____

2. Count the number of items you circled in each section. Write this number at the end of the section.

3. In the spaces below, write the letters from the three sections containing the highest numbers, from greatest to smallest. This is your career code and may be used in the same manner as a Holland Code.

My career code: _____

4. Read about your career code on the next page.

Career codes

R = Realistic

Realistic people have athletic or mechanical ability. They usually like to work outdoors with objects, machines, tools, plants, or animals.

- Auto body repairer
- Cabinet maker
- Chef
- Commercial driver
- Electrician
- Farmer
- Mechanic
- Surveyor

I = Investigative

Investigative people like to observe, learn, investigate, analyze, evaluate, or solve problems.

- Biologist
- Chemist
- Doctor
- Engineer
- Fire investigator
- Meteorologist
- Pharmacist
- Veterinarian

A = Artistic

Artistic people have innovative or intuitive abilities. They usually like to work in unstructured situations, using their imagination or creativity.

- Actor/actress
- Architect
- Composer
- Dancer
- Interior decorator
- Musician
- Stage director
- Writer

S = Social

Social people like to work with others. They like to inform, enlighten, help, train, develop, or cure people. They may also be skilled with words.

- Athletic trainer
- Counselor
- Dental hygienist
- Physical therapist
- Probation officer
- Psychologist
- Speech therapist
- Teacher

E = Enterprising

Enterprising people like to work with people, mainly to influence, persuade, or perform. They like to lead or manage to achieve goals or make money.

- Buyer
- Cosmetologist
- Flight attendant
- Insurance agent
- Lawyer
- Manager
- Salesperson
- Travel agent

C = Conventional

Conventional people have clerical or numerical ability, like to work with data, and like to attend to detail.

- Accountant
- Air traffic controller
- Bank teller
- Computer operator
- Mail carrier
- Receptionist
- Secretary
- Tax preparer

Do you feel that you fit any of these groups?

It's okay if you don't think you fit any of the groups above. Interest inventories can help you explore career ideas that may not have occurred to you. They are not meant to limit your choices. You may want to talk with a school or career counselor about your preferences and career options.

Personality and values worksheet

Pretend that you're an employer about to hire new staff. Look over the following list of personality characteristics and values. Put them in order of importance for you. Mark 1 for the most important, 2 for the second most important, and so on.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambitious (hardworking) | <input type="checkbox"/> Imaginative (daring and creative) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broad-minded (open-minded) | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent (self-reliant) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capable (having the ability to do a job well) | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual (intelligent and reflective) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheerful (lighthearted and joyful) | <input type="checkbox"/> Logical (consistent and rational) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean (neat and tidy) | <input type="checkbox"/> Loving (affectionate and tender) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Courageous (stands up for one's beliefs) | <input type="checkbox"/> Obedient (dutiful and respectful) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forgiving (willing to pardon others) | <input type="checkbox"/> Polite (courteous and well-mannered) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful (considers the welfare of others) | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-controlled (restrained and self-disciplined) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honest (sincere and truthful) | <input type="checkbox"/> Serious (earnest and intent) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humorous (can tell jokes and make others laugh) | |

- Put a check by each trait that you possess.
How do you think the traits you chose will help you in the future?
- Put a star by any trait that you think you need to build.
- What other traits would you add to the list?
- Think about your career interests and goals.
Which traits will be important for your career path?
- List some traits you possess that do not appear above.

Senior year timetable

September

- Meet with your high school counselor to review your transcript and discuss college options/future plans. Set up an October meeting to review college applications.
- Register for the October and/or November SAT or ACT.
- Check with your high school guidance office or go to www.vsoc.org to find out when a VSAC Paying for College presentation will be held at your high school.
- Start exploring financial aid at www.vsoc.org. Then go to www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov to get an estimate of eligibility for federal student aid, learn more about the financial aid process, and obtain student and parent federal personal identification numbers (PINs); both parents and students will need a PIN to submit the FAFSA online.
- Create two files to organize admissions and financial aid information. Become familiar with both processes. Review college catalogs or Web sites for deadlines!
- Attend a college fair.
- Maintain your classwork and grades.

October

- Visit colleges that interest you. Meet with someone in both the admissions office and the financial aid office.
- Determine whether or not you want to apply for early admission to a particular college. Check necessary deadlines. Make sure you understand the school's financial aid policies for early decision.
- Meet with your high school counselor. Review applications to understand what you'll need to do.
- Begin writing college application essays.
- Ask for recommendations required by college applications.

November

- Begin to research scholarships at your high school and local library.
- Review the VSAC scholarships booklet online, request one from your guidance office, or e-mail publications@vsac.org to request a copy. Begin gathering materials; all VSAC-assisted scholarships have a March 4, 2011, application deadline.
- Take the SAT or ACT and have your scores sent to the colleges on your list.
- Be aware of application deadlines.

December

- Pick up financial aid information at your high school guidance office.
- If you haven't visited FAFSA4caster, apply for a Department of Education PIN at www.pin.ed.gov and plan to fill out the FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov after January 1, 2011.
- Gather information needed for financial aid applications.
- Study for exams — your grades are still important!
- Check with colleges to find out what forms (other than the FAFSA) they may require, and by when.

January

- Start preparing scholarship materials and application for VSAC's March 4, 2011, deadline.
- Complete financial aid applications. Use estimated income figures, if necessary, to ensure that application deadlines are met. Keep copies of the forms you submit.
- Begin applying for scholarships. Watch for deadlines!
- Ask your high school counselor to send your first semester transcript of grades to the college(s) to which you applied.
- Apply for a Vermont grant at www.vsoc.org.

February

- Look for your Student Aid Report (SAR) from the federal student aid programs. (The report is generated as a result of your having completed the FAFSA.) Review the SAR for accuracy and follow instructions on the form if you need to make corrections. Corrections can be made at www.fafsa.ed.gov using your Department of Education PIN.
- Respond to requests from colleges and VSAC for additional information. Make and keep copies of all correspondence!
- If possible, visit colleges during vacation.

March

- Look for a letter from the VSAC Grant Program confirming that your Vermont grant application is on file. Return with correction(s), if necessary.
- Go to your "myVSAC" account at www.vsoc.org to check the status of your grant application to see if additional information is required.

April

- Look for financial aid award notifications from colleges; then make comparisons to analyze your college options.
- Look for Vermont grant eligibility notification from VSAC.
- Contact each college to find out how outside aid (such as scholarships) will affect your financial aid award.
- Contact the financial aid office of each college to discuss payment options.
- Many schools require that students respond by May 1 with a deposit and commitment to attend. If you haven't received all of your award letters, call admissions offices to ask for extensions. Then make certain you send your deposit to the college of your choice.

May

- Make certain you understand the process for obtaining federal education loans through your school. Contact the financial aid office to make sure everything is in order.
- Take Advanced Placement (AP) examinations (if applicable).
- Request that your AP scores be sent to the college you will attend.

College admissions checklist

College name				
Application deadline				
Essay(s) completed				
Application fee amount				
Cash or waiver available? <i>(not available at all colleges; depends on your financial situation)</i>				
Transcript request from high school counseling office <i>(parent signature may be required if student is under 18)</i>				
Number of recommendations needed, and from whom				
Test scores required? <i>(ACT, SAT, or SAT subject tests)</i>				
Interview required/ recommended? Interviewer				
Campus visit date Contact person				
Date application was sent				

Financial aid checklist

College name				
College financial aid paperwork deadline				
FAFSA deadline Date FAFSA completed and sent				
Vermont grant application deadline Date application completed and sent				
Separate college financial aid application required?				
CSS Profile required? Deadline Date completed/sent				
VSAC Unified Scholarship Application (USA) completed				
Other scholarship applications completed				
Copy of federal 1040 tax form sent to VSAC (if requested)				
Copy of federal 1040 tax form sent to college (if requested)				
Award letter received? Date returned (if required)				
VSAC award letter received? Date returned (if required)				

Questions to ask admissions staff, campus tour guides, or students

- What are the smallest and largest class sizes?
- What types of transportation are available on or near campus? Are first-year students permitted to have cars on campus?
- What employment and work-study options are available?
- What measures or systems are in place across campus to maintain and ensure safety?
- What day trips or weekend excursions do the students take? Are weekend activities offered on campus?
- What makes this college unique?
- What clubs and student groups exist?
- How are student housing decisions made? Are students required to live on campus? Is housing guaranteed?
- How competitive is the school academically? In sports?
- How many classes are taught by teaching assistants? By professors?
- How does the academic advising process work?
- Does the school have internship programs? How do they work?
- What percentage of graduates find employment within six months of graduation?
- Are tutoring and other support services available?
- How close are the local movie theaters, stores, restaurants, and other services?

Questions the admissions office may want to ask students

- Why are you interested in this particular college?
- What strengths could you add to our campus community?
- What are your career and personal goals?
- If you could read the evaluation your counselor has written about you, what might it say?
- How accurately do your grades and test scores reflect your true abilities?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- What have you read lately?

Questions that you or your student may wish to ask

College comparison chart

As you investigate your colleges, use this worksheet to keep track of the schools in which you're most interested and to compare them to your wish list of ideal characteristics. You can rate each college according to the factors in the left column, as well as your own values. Consider using a ranking system such as 1–5, with 1 being outstanding, 3 being average, and 5 being poor.

Factors to consider	My wish list	College name					
Major/academic program							
Selectivity							
Type (technical, coed, religious)							
Academic atmosphere							
Faculty/class size							
Size of school							
Diversity of student body							
Location (setting/surroundings)							
Student life/activities							
Cost (college budget) and affordability							
Housing							
Facilities (library, cafeteria, theater, sports)							