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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Auto mechanics</th>
<th>Advanced math</th>
<th>Being in a play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building things</td>
<td>Astronomy</td>
<td>Creating fashion designs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>Being in a science fair</td>
<td>Creative writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving a truck</td>
<td>Building rocket models</td>
<td>Drawing or painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>Doing puzzles</td>
<td>Going to concerts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fixing electrical things</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Learning foreign languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typesetting a printed piece</td>
<td>Using a chemistry set</td>
<td>Playing with musicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife biology</td>
<td>Working in a science lab</td>
<td>Reading about art or music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL “R” = ________**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attending sports events</th>
<th>Being elected class president</th>
<th>Filing letters and reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belonging to a club</td>
<td>Being with leaders</td>
<td>Following a budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing volunteer work</td>
<td>Buying materials for a store</td>
<td>Keeping detailed reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping people</td>
<td>Giving speeches</td>
<td>Typing reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making new friends</td>
<td>Selling a product</td>
<td>Using a cash register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying foreign cultures</td>
<td>Talking to salespeople</td>
<td>Using business machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching children</td>
<td>Talking with people at a party</td>
<td>Word processing on computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with elderly people</td>
<td>Working on a sales campaign</td>
<td>Working 9:00 to 5:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL “S” = ________**

**TOTAL “A” = ________**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being in a play</th>
<th>Creating fashion designs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative writing</td>
<td>Drawing or painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to concerts</td>
<td>Learning foreign languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing with musicians</td>
<td>Reading about art or music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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

• 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.vsat.org](http://www.vsat.org) to find out when a VSAC Paying for College presentation will be held at your high school.
- Start exploring financial aid at [www.vsat.org](http://www.vsat.org). Then go to [www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov](http://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@vsat.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](http://www.pin.ed.gov) and plan to fill out the FAFSA at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://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.vsat.org](http://www.vsat.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](http://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.vsat.org](http://www.vsat.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?  
(not available at all colleges; depends on your financial situation) | Transcript request from high school counseling office  
(parent signature may be required if student is under 18) | Number of recommendations needed, and from whom | Test scores required?  
(\textit{ACT, SAT, or SAT subject tests}) | Interview required/recommended? | Interviewer | Campus visit date | Contact person | Date application was sent |
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# Financial aid checklist

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

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

44
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors to consider</th>
<th>College name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major/academic program</td>
<td>My wish list</td>
<td>Major/academic program</td>
<td>My wish list</td>
<td>Major/academic program</td>
<td>My wish list</td>
<td>Major/academic program</td>
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<td>Selectivity</td>
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<td>Academic atmosphere</td>
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<td>Faculty/class size</td>
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<td>Size of school</td>
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<td>Diversity of student body</td>
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<td>Location (setting/surroundings)</td>
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<td>Student life/activities</td>
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<td>Cost (college budget) and affordability</td>
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<td>Housing</td>
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<td>Facilities (library, cafeteria, theater, sports)</td>
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