

Deciding Between Trade Schools or Traditional Colleges

Today's high schoolers face mounting pressure with respect to their futures. Even high school graduates who did not immediately go to college after graduating face difficult decisions about their futures.

For many facing such a decision, the process often involves finding the right college. However, options don't have to be limited to colleges and universities. Trade schools can prepare young people, or even professionals looking to make a change, for lucrative and fulfilling careers. When deciding between a trade school and traditional college, there are a few things to consider to ensure whatever decision is made is the right one.

• **Goals:** Career goals differ for everyone. While some pursue a career simply because it can pay well, others seek careers that may reward them in other ways. When deciding between a trade school or traditional university, consider any career goals. If certain goals bear significant importance, determine the best route by which to achieve them, be it through a trade school or college or university.

• **Individual skills:** Individual skills can also play a significant role when determining if a trade school or traditional university is the best choice. Prospective students who are mechanically inclined and love working on automobiles might be better suited to an automotive trade school, while those who excel in cooking arts and don't know an engine from an onion might be more suited for a culinary school. Individuals who honestly assess their strengths and weaknesses will likely find this can lend much to their decision-making process.

• **Educational interests:** Those who would love to learn about a variety of subjects are probably better suited for a traditional college or university. Others with a more specific interest in a given field of study might find it hard to get motivated or stay interested when studying at a four-year college or university.

• **Requirements:** Not all careers require a degree from a four-year college or university. Individuals should research what level of education is necessary to be successful in any fields that may interest them. If a given career does not require a four-year degree, there's no sense spending such a substantial amount of money on a degree that won't help him or her land a job.



Certain careers may not require a degree from a four-year college or university, while others insist on a college degree.

Most Popular College Majors

Thousands of high schoolers will be graduating in a few months and many will be going on to college, a decision that may have been difficult to make.

When pondering their futures, high schoolers may wonder whether college is necessary and a smart choice for success. Although every student is different and there are scenarios that can affect anyone's future, the decision to attend college is generally beneficial. It often opens up doors and opportunities in the workplace that a high school diploma alone cannot. Here are some things to consider:

- Ours is a global economy with many job applicants being pooled from all over the world. A higher education becomes a necessity rather than a luxury.
- College may open up opportunities for internships, which offer hands-on experience in particular fields.
- College can help develop social skills that are a benefit in and out of the workplace.
- Generally college graduates earn higher salaries than those who only have a high school diploma.

When students go on to college, there are some majors that prove more popular than others. But the most popular majors don't always ensure the best-paying or most rewarding jobs. According to CareerBuilder.com, here are the more popular college majors and what they generally pay in salary.

• **Biology:** A biology degree is often the first step in a career in medicine. Biologists may specialize in biochemistry and pharmaceuticals, which may offer careers that pay a little more. Biology majors can expect to earn between \$39,000 to \$45,000.

• **Business Administration:** These graduates are often in the right path for careers in real estate and infrastructure of big companies. These grads often go on to get MBAs and eventually become executives, some even CEOs. Starting salaries are among the more lucrative at around \$57,000.

• **Communications:** These majors are often in competition with English majors for the same jobs, which can include interpreting visual and verbal messages, advertising, journalism, public relations, and speech writing. Salaries may start around \$31,000.

• **Criminal Justice:** These graduates have a number of options at their disposal, but tend to gravitate to law enforcement. Government jobs can be stable and lucra-

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CAREER & EDUCATION 2011

An annual publication of the
Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, the oldest newspaper of the Dakotas.
 Phone: 605-665-7811. FAX 605-665-1721. Web site: www.yankton.net.

Published by Yankton Media, Inc.,
 319 Walnut St., P.O. Box 56, Yankton, SD 57078-0056.

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