WHAT ARE YOUR DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE?
AN EXCITING CAREER? A NICE HOME AND CAR? YOUR OWN BUSINESS?

HOW WILL YOU MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE?
College can open the door to a successful and fulfilling future. You’ve got what it takes to get there! We’ll tell you how to get started.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE COLLEGE HAPPEN?
Start by thinking of an adult you can ask to help guide you to college. This might be a parent, mentor, coach, youth group leader, or someone else who knows you well.

Next, get to know your school counselor. Nobody knows better what you need to do to make college a reality!

LIST A FEW ADULTS YOU CAN ASK TO HELP GUIDE YOU THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE:

A CARING ADULT CAN HELP YOU...

FIND THE RIGHT FIT.
Explore career and college options.

PUSH YOURSELF.
Take tough classes and get involved.

PUT YOUR HANDS ON SOME CASH.
Learn about ways to save and pay for college.
FIND THE RIGHT FIT

Did you know there are over 45 colleges in Nebraska? Follow the steps below to determine the type of college that might be the right fit for you:

1. **USE COLLEGE PROFILES AT EDUCATIONQUEST.ORG.**
   Learn about colleges in Nebraska and across the country. Another good resource is bigfuture.collegeboard.org.

2. **ATTEND EVENTS AND CAMPS AT AREA COLLEGES.**
   Get an up-close look at life on campus.

**WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COLLEGE?**

**COMMUNITY COLLEGES**
(2-year)
These schools offer certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees. They also have programs for those planning to transfer to a four-year school.

**COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES**
(4-year)
These institutions offer bachelor's degrees. Many also award master's and doctorate degrees.

**CAREER SCHOOLS**
(trade schools)
These schools award diplomas and certificates for specific trades. A few offer associate and bachelor's degrees.

**OTHER OPTIONS CAN INCLUDE APPRENTICESHIPS AND THE MILITARY.**
IDENTIFY YOUR INTERESTS AND SKILLS.

Another part of finding the right fit for college is thinking about your career interests. Put a check next to the things you LIKE TO DO and/or are GOOD AT. (You can check both.) They are color-coded by career field, which you’ll learn more about on page 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIKE TO DO</th>
<th>GOOD AT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Speaking in front of others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Being active outdoors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Building things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Arguing your point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Learning new technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Helping others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Being in charge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Caring for animals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Repairing bikes or cars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Caring for children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Playing video games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Volunteering in a hospital or nursing home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Cooking or baking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Taking care of plants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Taking things apart to see how they work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Being creative with hairstyles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Participating in the arts (music, art, dance, drama)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Playing sports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What else do you LIKE TO DO or are GOOD AT?

19. 
20. 
21. 
**Match Your Interests and Skills with Potential Careers.**

This career diagram shows six career fields. To determine fields you may want to pursue, match the colors of the activities you selected to the same colors on the diagram.

### Here's an Example of One Career from Each Field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Farm Equipment Mechanic</th>
<th>Computer Programmer</th>
<th>Welder</th>
<th>Physical Therapist</th>
<th>Firefighter</th>
<th>Accountant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Required</td>
<td>2-year associate's degree</td>
<td>4-year bachelor's degree</td>
<td>2-year certificate</td>
<td>4-year bachelor's + 2-year master's degree</td>
<td>2-year associate's degree</td>
<td>4-year bachelor's degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry-Level Salary</td>
<td>$13/hour or $27,205/year</td>
<td>$23/hour or $47,792/year</td>
<td>$14/hour or $28,551/year</td>
<td>$28/hour or $57,600/year</td>
<td>$20/hour or $40,710/year</td>
<td>$21/hour or $42,734/year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visit [https://eqf.org/explore_careers](https://eqf.org/explore_careers) for links to career-related sites and tools including:

- **MyNextMove.org** - Search a variety of careers, learn about annual wages for each job, and be matched with career options.
- **Reality Check** - This is a fun way to find out how much it will cost to support yourself after college – and if the career you want will pay enough to cover your expenses.

When you’re done with all of this research, you should have a pretty good idea of what you want your future career to be – and the type of college that will be a good fit.
1) REGISTER FOR TOUGH CLASSES.

Taking tough courses will help you:

- Earn scholarships
- Get higher scores on college admission exams (like the ACT or SAT)
- Qualify for college admission
- Prepare for college coursework

When you're in high school, take Dual-Credit and/or Advanced Placement courses, if available. These types of classes will allow you to earn college credit!

2) STAY ON COURSE TO COLLEGE.

Most colleges require that you take certain coursework during high school to qualify for admission.

How many years of these courses should you take to gain admission to any college in Nebraska?

_____Years of English and Math
_____Years of Social Sciences and Natural Sciences
_____Years of World Language

Interested in playing college sports? Learn National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) course requirements at ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/core-courses.

3) LEARN HOW TO STUDY.

Doing well in your classes will also help ensure admission into college because colleges will look at your GPA (Grade Point Average).

To get the best GPA possible, learn how to study and stay organized. Here are tips to follow. Check those you're already doing.

- [ ] Go to school and class on time.
- [ ] Turn off distractions while studying.
- [ ] Use a planner or app to track assignments.
- [ ] Organize paper or electronic folders for each subject.
- [ ] Ask the teacher questions if there's something you don't understand.
- [ ] What else do you do? ____________________________

If some boxes are unchecked, try adding them to your routine.
WHAT IS “GPA” AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
The measure of success at school is your GPA. Each grade that you get is assigned a point value:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fill in the blank fields on this sample report card and calculate this student’s GPA.

Total points _____ divided by total number of classes _______

= _______ GPA.

Many scholarships require a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Would you qualify?

If yes, how did you achieve this accomplishment? If no, how can you make your GPA higher?

GET INVOLVED.
Preparing for college isn’t all about grades! Get involved in your school and community, too. This will help you:

- **Explore** your career interests
- **Work** with adults who can help enrich your life
- **Qualify** for more scholarships
- **Show** colleges that you’re a well-rounded student

Activities might include school clubs, student council, band or choir, sports, scouting, volunteer work, or youth groups.

If you take tough classes, earn good grades, and get involved, you’ll set yourself up for scholarships in the future.
PUT YOUR HANDS ON SOME CASH.

Now that you know how to prepare for college, it’s time to discover how much college will cost and how to pay for it.

COLLEGES BREAK DOWN THEIR COSTS INTO THESE CATEGORIES:

- **Tuition & Fees** – this is the amount of money a college charges for the courses you take and for services like computer labs, fitness centers, and career services.
- **Books & Supplies** – you’ll be required to purchase or rent textbooks and/or supplies for your classes.
- **Room & Board** – if you live on campus, the college will charge you to live in a residence hall and for the meals you eat in the cafeteria.

### AVERAGE COSTS TO ATTEND COLLEGE IN NEBRASKA FOR ONE YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Two-year community college</th>
<th>Four-year public college</th>
<th>Four-year private college</th>
<th>Career school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition &amp; Fees</td>
<td>$3,150 - $3,600</td>
<td>$7,500 - $9,200</td>
<td>$21,000 - $39,500</td>
<td>$17,000 - $18,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books &amp; Supplies</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,000 - $2,800</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room &amp; Board</td>
<td></td>
<td>$6,500 - $11,800</td>
<td></td>
<td>No campus housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: To reduce room & board costs, consider living at home. Don’t rule out a private college because of cost — financial aid may offset much of the cost.
WAYS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE

Yes...college does cost a lot of money, but there are things you can do to make it affordable. Follow these steps:

1) START SAVING!

- **When you receive money for birthdays and holidays, save a portion for college.**
  Put the money into your college savings account.

- **Find ways to earn money and save half for college.** List 3 ways you can earn money.
  (Hint: dog walking, lawn mowing...) ______________________________________________

- **Ask your parents about setting up a college savings account.**
  A good option is the Nebraska Educational Savings Trust. This 529 Plan will provide tax benefits
  for your parents and others who invest in your education. Find details at NEST529.com.

$50/MONTH \times SIX YEARS = $3,600

If you save $50 a month for the next six years, you’ll have $3,600 (plus interest) when it’s time to go to college!

IF YOU THINK YOU’LL GET SCHOLARSHIPS, SHOULD YOU STILL SAVE FOR COLLEGE?

YES! It’s unlikely that scholarships will cover the full cost of college, so it’s important to save and

to apply for financial aid.

DO THE MATH.
SEE HOW DAILY SNACKS ADD UP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candy Bar</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chips</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sodas</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DAILY

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAILY TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

\times7DAYS

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEEKLY TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

\times4WEEKS

<p>| | |</p>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONTHLY TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

\times12MONTHS

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YEARLY TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

\times4YEARS

<p>| | |</p>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IT ALL ADDS UP!

Limit what you spend on snacks.
POSITION YOURSELF TO EARN SCHOLARSHIPS.
There are several reasons why you might be eligible for scholarships...good grades, involvement in school activities, volunteer work, your racial or ethnic background...the list goes on and on.

LEARN ABOUT FINANCIAL AID.
When you’re a senior, you and your parent(s) will apply for federal financial aid to help you pay for college.

SCHOLARSHIPS – Money awarded by private donors or your college that you don’t repay. Some are based on financial need while others are based on criteria such as academics, leadership, athletics, or other talents.

GRANTS – Money awarded to students who show financial need. Grants are not repaid.

WORK-STUDY – Also based on financial need, this is money you earn from a college-based job to help pay expenses.

STUDENT LOANS – Money you borrow and must repay after you’re done with college. Loans are also available for parents.

If you qualify for free or reduced price lunch, you may qualify for need-based financial aid such as grants, work-study, and some scholarships.

THESE IMAGES SHOW REASONS WHY YOU MIGHT GET SCHOLARSHIPS.
PUT AN X THROUGH THOSE THAT DON’T APPLY TO YOU.

ATHLETICS, LEADERSHIP, INTERESTS IN TECHNOLOGY, GOOD GRADES, MUSIC, RACE/ETHNIC BACKGROUND, ART, DRAMA/THEATER, COMMUNITY SERVICE, MILITARY PARENTS.
WHAT IF YOU’RE A GOOD ATHLETE AND WANT TO PLAY SPORTS IN COLLEGE?
Some students do get athletic scholarships, but keep in mind that

only 6% of high school athletes go on to compete in college.

only 2% are offered an athletic scholarship.

Some colleges don’t offer athletic scholarships at all.

Source: NCAA

TAKING CHALLENGING COURSES
+ EARNING GOOD GRADES
+ GETTING INVOLVED
= SCHOLARSHIPS

4 DISCOVER OTHER WAYS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE.

• Start at a less expensive community college.
  If you’re striving for a bachelor’s degree, you can transfer to a four-year college to finish your degree program.

• Live at home.
  Living on campus during college can cost as much as $11,000 per year or more!

• Join the military.
  All branches of the military offer educational benefits for college.
EDUCATIONQUEST CAN HELP YOU START YOUR JOURNEY TO COLLEGE.

We’re a nonprofit organization that provides FREE services and programs for Nebraska students and families including:

- College-prep information and tools at EducationQuest.org
- One-on-one help at college planning offices in Omaha, Lincoln, Kearney, and Scottsbluff
- Outreach services for community agency clients
- Statewide efforts such as college fairs, financial aid programs, and Apply2College campaign
- Look2College, KnowHow2GO, and Exploring College programs for younger students

We also provide need-based scholarships for students referred by colleges or community agencies, and award College Access Grants to Nebraska high schools.

FOR FREE HELP WITH COLLEGE PLANNING, CONTACT THE LOCATION NEAREST YOU.

OMAHA
Rockbrook Village
11031 Elm St.
402.391.4033
888.357.6300

LINCOLN
1300 O St.
402.475.5222
800.303.3745

KEARNEY
2706 Second Ave.
308.234.6310
800.666.3721

SCOTTSBLUFF
1601 E 27th St.
800.303.3745,
ext. 6654

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