

The World of Work

How to help your teen plan their future





Introduction

When you're parenting a teen, it's often hard to find the time to plan long-term. When you can make the headspace though, helping them come up with a career plan (even if it ends up changing) can work to motivate them day-to-day - and help them make better decisions.

Of course, the world of work looks very different now compared to when you were starting out. And with jobs ever-changing, the challenge is to make a plan that excites them now, and sets them up for later. We've teamed up with leading careers experts to give you helpful information on all the options that are out there. With a bit of help from us and encouragement from you, you can equip your teen with the tools they need to make their mark on the world.

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A plan, and how to make one



From careers educator Ryan Gibson

“Ryan is the National System Leader for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance at Academies Enterprise Trust, one of the largest groups of schools in England. He is a Board member of the National Quality in Careers Standard, an Associate of the International Centre for Guidance Studies and a former UK Careers Educator of the Year.”

What role should you play in your teen’s career?

As parents, we all want the best for our children. We want them to achieve their potential and eventually find the best career for them. We want them to enjoy their job and gain a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction from it. We also know that they will have multiple jobs over their career: estimates suggest that young people will have 8-10 different jobs throughout their career. But what does that mean for you today? We know that for businesses to grow, they need the right people with the right mix of skills and qualifications. Business leaders and economists tell us that the labour market needs more managers, directors and senior officials, more professional occupations such as Civil Engineers and Doctors and more technical occupations such as Graphic Designers, Sports Scientists, Data Analysts and Lab Technicians.

Parents have a crucial role to play. Research suggests that parents are the biggest influencer of children’s career decisions. When you can, make time to research the opportunities that exist, the skills employers are looking for and the roles that are emerging. Discuss with your child the different routes and pathways into job sectors, the grades needed and the different providers out there. Help your child reflect on and decide what’s important to them and help them to make their own plan for their future. And continue to find help and support so that you have access to the most up to date and accurate information.

If Covid-19 has taught us anything, it’s that you have to be prepared for the unexpected - and thinking about your child’s future is exactly the same. Let me ask you a question. What connects the following?

- + Blogger, Vlogger
- + Carbon solutions manager
- + Digital Marketing Manager
- + Head of Pay Per Click
- + App designer

They were all jobs that didn’t exist 10 or 20 years ago. How about this next list?

- + Driverless vehicle technician
- + Artificial intelligence officer
- + Space tourism lead
- + Agri-tech scientist
- + Virtual habitat designer

Well, they are jobs that have recently come into existence or will emerge very soon. The World Economic Forum estimates that 65% of children entering primary school today will end up working in new job types that don’t yet exist.

[pie chart - 65% of children entering primary school today will end up working in new job types that don’t yet exist]

So how do we prepare our children for the ever-evolving world of work and help them to make the best choices they can now for a future that does not yet exist? Try starting with these 8 steps:

8 steps to help your teen plan their future

- 01 Sit down with them and discuss their skills and interests.** What do they enjoy? What are they good at? What are their favourite subjects at school? What things do they really dislike?
- 02 Encourage them to explore different job sectors and job roles.** Get them to note down any that interest them. Ask them to talk you through the different job roles and types and explain to you why they like them and what appeals.
- 03 Help them start to link their skills, interests and strengths with particular job types roles.** See if you can find some that make them excited.
- 04 Explore the different progression routes into these jobs and the skills and qualifications needed.** Make sure they understand the different university, apprenticeship and degree apprenticeship pathways and together work out which pathway is the most appropriate.



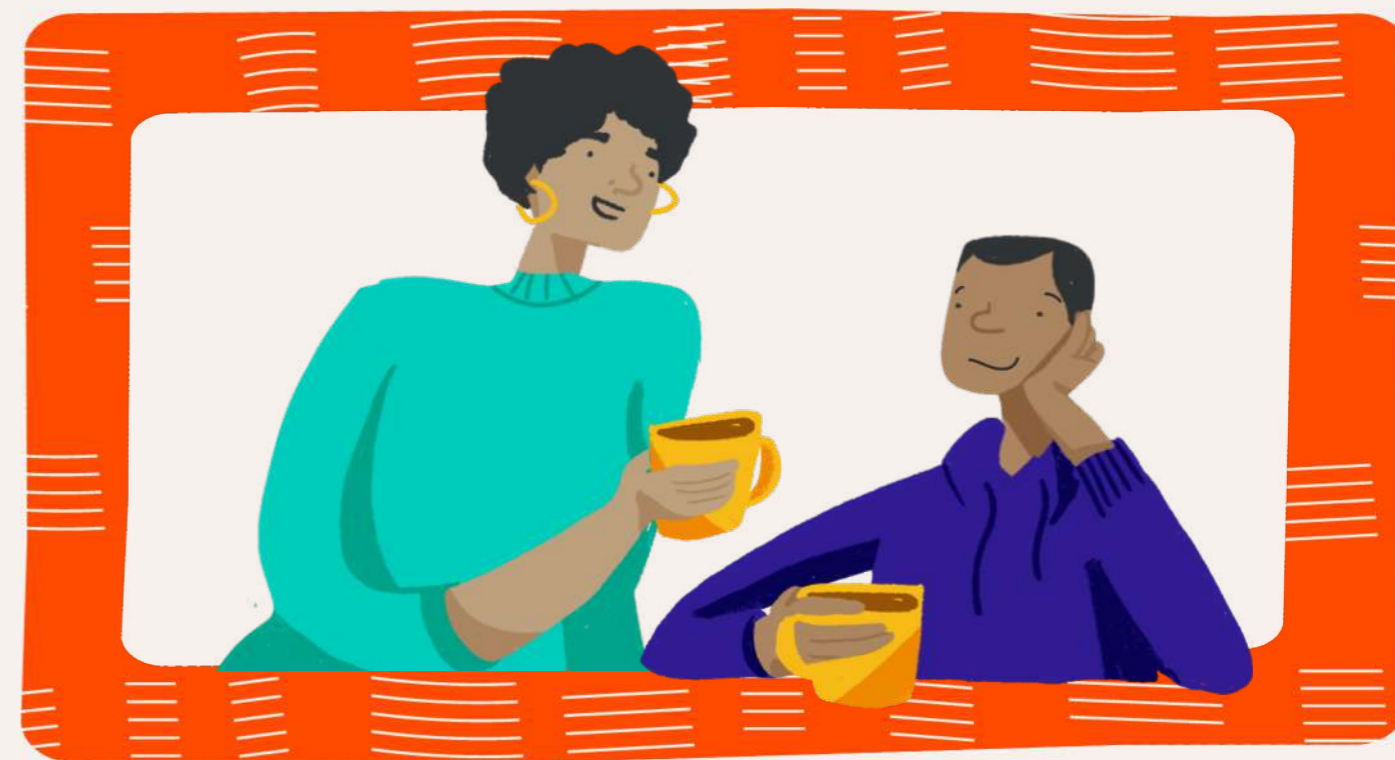
- 05 See if they can talk to the Careers Adviser linked to their school.** If you're not sure who this is, the contact details of every Careers Leader for a school is published on the school website. As a parent, you can also ask for a chat with the qualified careers adviser.
- 06 Plan their next steps.** Include researching the most appropriate provider and putting in place a clear progression plan of what your child will do to turn aspiration into reality.
- 07 Help them gather experience.** When possible, visit colleges, sixth forms, training providers, universities and employers to get a sense of whether they could thrive in that particular learning or work environment. Often the impression some children have of a particular thing can be very different to the reality.
- 08 Make a 'plan B'.** If one plan doesn't work out, make sure you've got a clear back-up plan (or two) in place.

The following chapters in this ebook are designed to help you with each of these steps, so keep reading for more activities, information and resources to help your teen get on the right path.

Self-understanding, and how to develop it

Each of us are unique as individuals and we all have different sets of interests, skills and abilities. Ultimately, your teen has to make decisions based on what they enjoy and what they're good at and what they care about. These are shaped by how your teen sees themselves and where their passions lie.

If we were all the same, life would be very boring. To help your teen start to get an idea of what they might be good at in the future, the first step is developing some self-knowledge. Are they more introvert or extrovert? Loud or quiet? Do they prefer working in a team, or on their own? Are they more creative or more logical? Do they like starting a project, or do they prefer finishing it? To start getting your teen thinking about what makes them unique, and how this can translate into their career, try this fun and quick challenge!



Parent & teen 2-minute challenge

You will need:

- ★ Your teen
- ★ Yourself
- ★ A pen and paper

You have 2 minutes. Can you each write down...

- ★ List all of the skills you think you have
- ★ Think of three subjects you enjoy/enjoyed studying most at school/college
- ★ Describe, in one sentence, the type of person you are

Then compare your lists and descriptions. What do you have in common? What makes you different? Having an open discussion like this helps your teen build self-awareness, which will help them think about the future more clearly (and you might learn something about yourself too!). If they found it tricky to think of answers to these questions, try [The Buzz Quiz](#) on careers education site iCould. This will help them find ways to describe their personality, and it'll suggest types of jobs that might be right for them as a result.

Skills, and what you can do with them

8 key skills that employers look for

These are a set of skills that might come naturally to your teen, and some which they can work on. Use this guide to have a think with your teen about the sorts of skills they have. For tips on how to improve on any of them, go to the [Skillsbuilder](#) site for their step-by-step guide.


Can think of new ideas and innovative solutions to different sorts of problems

Good at using their imagination



Creative thinkers are often artistic, but you can be creative in science, business and almost any other field

The ability to solve problems in groups of people or find their way around an emotional challenge



Problem solving

This could be a Mathematical or Scientific problem

Good at working out logical solutions to complex problems

Can rephrase things if someone doesn't understand

This could apply to public speaking, but also one-to-one or in small groups



The ability to express yourself well when talking to others

Communicates ideas and information in a way that makes sense to the person or people you're with

Helps and encourages others to achieve a shared goal

Can help others resolve problems and disagreements



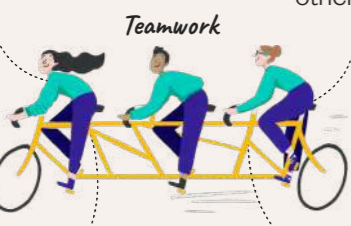
Leadership

Strong empathy skills

Good at dividing up tasks and recognising talent in others

Can work well with other people towards a shared goal

Takes responsibility and is reliable to others




Teamwork

Embraces different people's varied skills, talents and personalities

Can resolve differences with others

Great at understanding what people try to communicate with you

Shows that they're listening using body language and facial expression



Listening

Lets people finish - doesn't interrupt

Can take in complex ideas and information and take action as necessary

Can be objective and work out where people are coming from

Uses strategies and tactics to to overcome challenges and achieve goals



Staying positive

Sees opportunities in difficult situations

Helps others do the same by supporting and encouraging them

Good at setting clear goals and building plans to achieve them

Takes pride in doing well



Aiming high

Can plan both short-term and long-term

Doesn't get intimidated by new challenges

Worksheet for teens – what are my skills?

To help your teen work out which of these skills they might already have and which they could work on more, try filling out this handy table:

	Example of when you have demonstrated this skill in School	Example of when you have demonstrated this skill outside of School	What could you do to develop this skill? (Either in school or outside of school)
Listening			
Problem solving			
Creativity			
Leadership			
Teamwork			
Speaking			
Staying positive			
Aiming high			

Jobs, and how to pick them

Once your teen has had a think about their personality and skills, they can begin to explore jobs, industries and paths that excite them. Here are 19 jobs that are likely to have long-term security as the industries change and grow. Have a look and see if there are any that fit your teen's skills or find solutions to problems that they're passionate about.

19 jobs of the future

- + Graphic designer**
Key skills: Creativity, problem solving, teamwork, listening
Graphic designers make visual concepts, using computer software or by hand, to communicate ideas that inspire, inform, and captivate people. They create the visuals for everything from advertisements, brochures, magazines, books and signs.
- + App developer**
Key skills: Problem solving, teamwork
Mobile and computer applications have already dominated the world, and they will probably be playing an even bigger part in lives as technology grows. App developers are the ones who code the software that puts them into existence, working in a tech team to create ones that solve people's problems and make their lives easier
- + Devops Engineer**
Key skills: Problem solving, teamwork, listening
This is a role within a development team in a tech or computer software company. Problem solving is at the core of their job, and they work with the other people on their team to build and maintain the infrastructure of their digital products.

- + Business Analyst**
Key skills: Problem solving, speaking, teamwork, listening
As more and more businesses go digital, the key way that they understand their customers is through data. Analysts are brought in to gather and interpret customer data, and then translate this to the wider business so they can make decisions on what to do next.
- + Digital Marketing Manager**
Key skills: Creativity, speaking, leadership, teamwork
Most people spend a chunk of their day online, and advertising products, businesses, events (you name it) is a really important way that companies communicate and sell to customers. Digital Marketing Managers are in charge of what ads say, who they show ads to, when they show them and more. They'll have a say in the creative stuff, as well as the more analytic side.
- + Data architect**
Key skills: Problem solving, teamwork, listening
Working closely with Business Analysts, Data Architects are in charge of managing how bigger businesses gather and access the information they store. People in this role are great problem solvers, and they know how to communicate complex information in a way that people across a company can understand and use. Nope, nothing to do with building houses!
- + Eco-home architect**
Key skills: Creativity, teamwork, listening, leadership
As the world becomes more eco-friendly, there will be more of a demand for architects (house-building ones!) who can design environmentally sustainable homes. From the sorts of electricity they use to the material they're made of, someone in this role will be creating homes and helping save the planet at the same time.





Operations Manager

Key skills: Teamwork, problem solving, speaking, leadership
Nope, this one has nothing to do with hospitals! Operations is the term used to describe the organisation and day-to-day running of a company. People in leadership roles tend to have amazing people skills and a strong sense of responsibility, as they make sure tasks are divided up well and completed across a team. And here are ten jobs which you probably have heard of (and which aren't going anywhere)...



Sustainable Energy Engineer

Key skills: Problem solving, leadership
As countries move towards sustainable electricity, we'll need lots of skilled people who can help switch the energy sources for households and businesses. They'll be trained experts in the latest technology, with strong logic skills and the ability to lead others.



Teacher

Key skills: Speaking, leadership, staying positive, listening
It's one of the oldest jobs around, and it's not going anywhere. Even as educational technology evolves, the core of kids' and adults' learning will continue to be from person to person. Teachers know how to explain complex topics in a way that makes sense to their students, to listen to their different needs and put things in a different way if they're not understood at first.



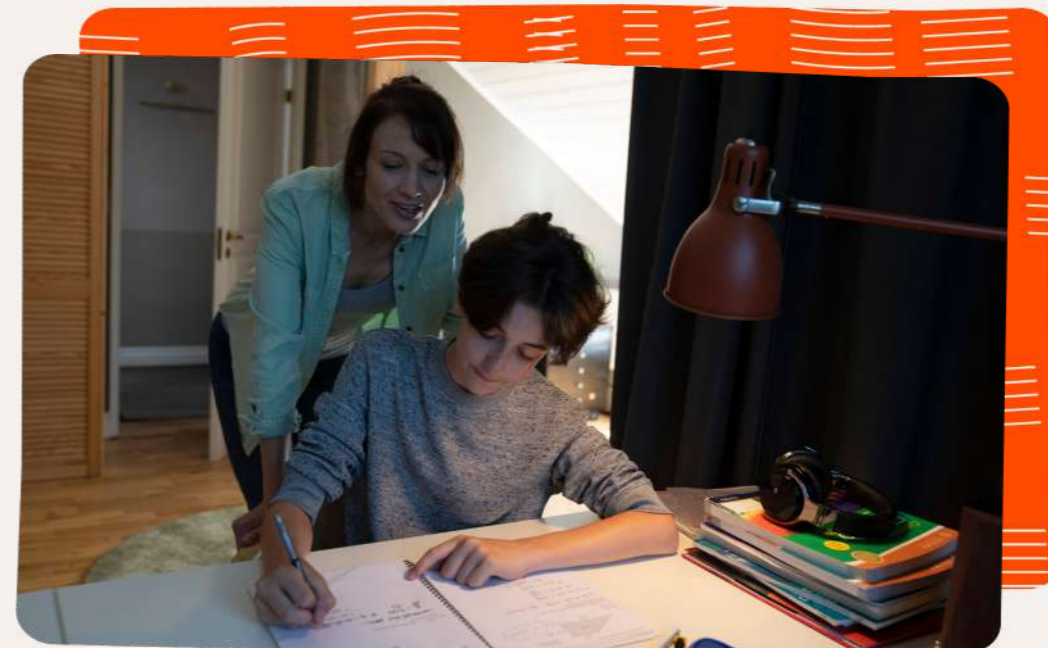
Cinematographer

Key skills: Creativity, teamwork
Some other things that aren't going out of fashion any time soon are TV and Film. Cinematographers are the ones who manage the camerawork for any production, making sure the lighting, composition and movement are all perfect. They work with the Director, Light Artists and Actors to make everything come together.



Research Scientist

Key skills: Problem solving, teamwork
Science is always on to solving the next problem. Whether it's a vaccine or a treatment for a disease, a new way to produce electricity or a new piece of medical technology, research scientists work together to find solutions that will improve people's lives.



Journalist

Key skills: Listening, leadership
If you like writing, researching and getting to the truth behind any story, this could be the job for you. Journalism plays a really important role in any society - making sure people are informed about what's going on in the world (at home and abroad). In the future, even more newspapers and magazines might be based online, but there's still plenty of need for reporters and analysts to tell us what's happening.



Nurse

Key skills: Listening, problem solving, staying positive
Healthcare is another field that will make more use of technology as time goes on, but the need for caring, skilled and expert nurses is one that will stay around. From giving patients the right amount of medicine, to patching up wounds and making sure they're comfortable (to name just a few things they do), nursing is a vital role in society.



Psychotherapist

Key skills: Listening, speaking, staying positive
Society is much more aware of mental health than it used to be, and the need for therapists to help people overcome their problems will stay absolutely crucial. Psychotherapists are experts in listening to their patients, making them feel safe in doing so, and offering the right verbal support to help them long term.

+ Advertising Director
Key skills: Creativity, teamwork, speaking
As long as businesses sell products, there's a need for eye-catching, memorable and effective advertising. People in these roles come up with ideas for ad campaigns, help others have ideas too and lead a creative team to make the final product.

+ Pharmacist
Key skills: Listening, speaking, problem solving
As well as interpreting prescriptions correctly, Pharmacists play an important role in the health of any community. They communicate with people how to take their medicines correctly, in the right amounts and at the right times. They also help people find the right treatments for minor injuries and other health problems day-to-day.

+ TV Producer
Key skills: Creativity, leadership, teamwork, staying positive
Producers are the ones who organise the production of any show. They'll make sure the right actors get cast in the right roles, source the staff for the whole crew, find funding and manage the budget. They'll have amazing people skills and be unphased by things sometimes (or often) going a bit wrong.

+ Web Designer
Key skills: Creativity, listening, teamwork
The internet plays a hugely important role in everyone's lives day-to-day, and the need for clear, eye-catching and innovative website designs is here to stay. Web designers work with businesses, schools, universities, government organisations - and just about anyone else, to organise information and create a smooth experience for anyone who visits that site.

For more information about any of these roles, and the qualifications your teen will need to work towards them, visit the [National Careers Service](#) and search for any of these roles (there are hundreds more on there to browse too!).

School's out, forever: picking your teen's next steps

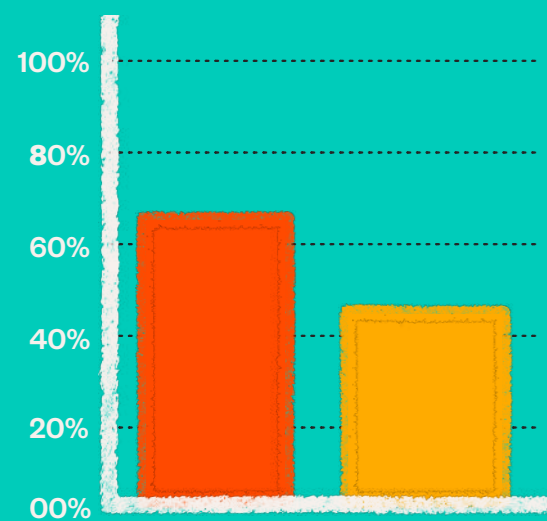


Why university?

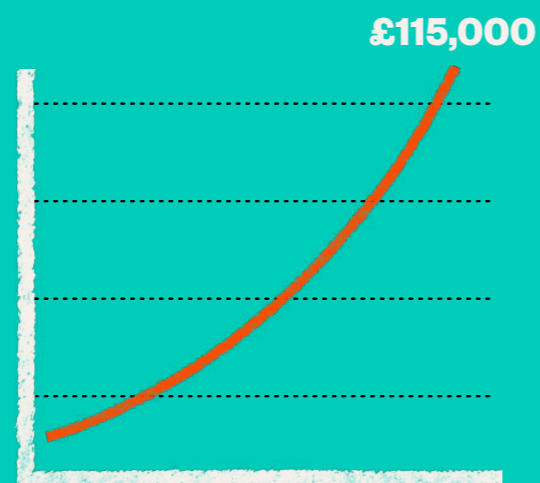
In the past few decades, more people in the UK have gone to university each year than ever before. Studying for a degree can be an amazing experience - you get to learn more about a subject (or subjects) you're passionate about, you get 3-4 years to work out what you'd like to do after, and you make great friends along the way. Uni might be the best option for your teen, but it's not the only exciting and ambitious route out there. So while they're still at school, how can you work out whether going to university is the right choice for them? We've put together some of the pros and the cons to help you have a think:

Why university might be the best path for your teen

- + They can study a subject (or subjects) they're passionate about
- + They can make friends for life
- + They get 3-4 years to try out different career options



In 2019, 66% graduates were employed in high-skilled roles, compared to 24% non-graduates



Over their career, graduates will be, on average, £115,000 better off by going to university after taxes and student loans

Reasons to go to uni [tick box list]



They enjoy academic learning



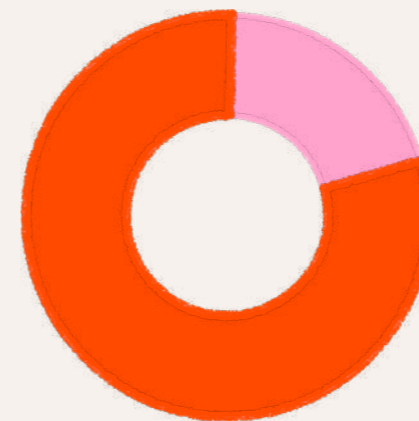
They want a career that requires a degree



They want to become an expert in a subject

Why university might not be for your teen

- + Lots of employers today don't ask for a degree as a must-have
- + They can go straight into work, getting a few years ahead of graduates
- + No student debt! Universities cost £9000 a year for UK and EU students, which grads pay off over several decades.



1 in 5 graduates would be better off financially if they hadn't gone to university* (from the IFS, 2019)

If your teen is interested in paths other than university, check out the UCAS resource on some other options that are out there. If they are interested in going to university but haven't made their mind up, have a look at the [list of degree subjects](#) on the same site. There are lots of subjects that aren't taught in schools which might spark their passion.

If they'd like to find out more about student life, our tutors are all from UK universities and they double up as mentors. In online tutorials, your teen can ask about different degrees, how to pick a university and what extra-curricular stuff they do on the side. They also help to boost teen's confidence too, helping them believe in themselves and aim high.

Apprenticeships: what, why and how?

For a long time, university and college have been seen as the main two routes for ambitious school-leavers. But in the past few years, the world of apprenticeships has grown, and more school leavers are seeing it as an excellent option - in 2019, over [393,000 teens](#) in England started an apprenticeship.

From Engineering to Finance, and Google to Facebook, apprenticeships are a way to learn on the job, and get paid while they do it. We had a chat with Sarah from WhiteHat, the UK's leading jobs board for apprenticeships, who told us more about what apprenticeships are, and how to know if they're the right choice for your teen.

Sarah is the Curation Manager at WhiteHat



So, what is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a great way to combine education and on-the-job learning. They're normally 15-18 months long, during which time an apprentice works full time for a business. They'll spend 20% of their time training as they work to earn a qualification, while earning a salary and applying what they've learnt to their day-to-day role. They'll also meet people they can learn from and make valuable connections in the industry.

Many people start with a Level 2 or 3 apprenticeship (equivalent to GCSE and A Level), and progress all the way up to Level 6 or 7 (equivalent to a BA or MA degree). They can also start at any time in the year, so you're not tied to the academic year.

Here are some of the benefits of apprenticeships over university degrees:

- + Study a profession rather than a subject, learning practical skills and knowledge you'll use in your career
- + Grow a network of professionals from day one
- + Learn with the support of a community of other apprentices
- + Learn from people at all stages of their career
- + There's no need to relocate - you can find one near home
- + Hands-on learning, rather than going to lectures

How to know if it's the right path for your teen

Like with everything, knowledge is power, and it's important that young people feel empowered to make the right choice for them. They should identify what career interests them, the skills they already have and the ones they want to develop. It's important for your child to speak to someone who knows more about what's on offer. They can start by speaking to a Careers Adviser at their school, an expert from an apprenticeship provider, as well as sounding out ideas with family and friends

First steps if your teen is interested in finding an apprenticeship

While they're still at school, it's important for your teen to gather the knowledge and confidence they'll need to get their applications noticed. Finding work experience, volunteering and upskilling via online courses are great ways to do this.

To see what's out there, the [government apprenticeships site](#) is a great place to start. You can also visit provider job boards like [WhiteHat](#), which has a 1-1 mentoring service. Reading through job specs and seeing what they feel will suit them (and what excites them) will help you work out the best move to make.

5 ways for your teen to find work experience at school and beyond

- + Taster Days
- + Work experience and internships
- + Volunteering
- + Summer schools
- + Mentorship

Resources

Your teen's school - The Careers Leader at their school or college can put them in touch with a Careers Adviser, who is a trained professional equipped to support them in their career journey

- + **The iCould website**
for examples of different professionals talking about their roles
- + **National Careers Service**
for lots of information about different jobs, and skills and qualifications needed to get them
- + **UCAS Careers Website**
for more jobs to browse and advice on making a career plan
- + **Skillsbuilder**
for detailed information about key skills and how to develop them

Further reading and watching

- + **What will the Future Jobs Market look like?**
From Parental Guidance
- + **Top 20 jobs of the future**
From Parental Guidance
- + **Future Skills and Employment**
from NESTA, the government's innovation body
- + **What skills do employers look for?**
From UCAS