

How to choose a career that's right for you

Choosing a career is no easy task. With so many options, it can be difficult to know exactly what you want to do. Whether you're just [starting your career](#) or looking to [make a career change](#), it's important to choose a pathway that suits your skills and interests.

Picking the right profession involves matching your [personal strengths](#) and passions with market demand, to land a role that leaves you fulfilled and financially secure. In this article, we cover how to choose a career and how to create a roadmap that will help get you there.

Tips for choosing a career

Deciding on a career path is something that affects every aspect of your life, no matter what stage you're at. Here are a few tips on how to pick a career that matches your [interests](#), skills and personality.

Do a self-evaluation

When it comes to picking a career that will satisfy you in the long run, it helps to evaluate your values, passions and personality traits. This will give a better understanding of your natural abilities and what you enjoy doing, which can help you narrow down your career options. Here are a few questions to help you learn a little more about yourself.

Interest-based questions

- What do I enjoy doing?
- How do I like to spend my time?
- What do I enjoy learning about?
- Do I enjoy working with teams or alone?

- Do I enjoy working inside or outside?
- What do I enjoy doing on a day-to-day basis?
- What job would I be good at?

Value-based questions

- What is important in my life?
- What are my priorities?
- What meaning do I want to find in life?

Character-based questions

- What does success mean to me?
- What do I want more of?
- What am I naturally good at?
- Which skills am I proud of?

Even a simple ‘how to choose a career’ quiz can be a useful tool to help you reflect on your aptitudes and interests. It can be worth completing a couple of different tests, like our [five tools and career quizzes](#) before taking the next step. Or if you’re already employed and you’re wondering whether it’s time to move on from your current position, take our [should I stay or should I go? quiz](#). If you’re feeling directionless and not sure what to do, it might help to fill out our free [Career Development Planner](#).

Reflect on what motivates you

Once you’ve completed your self-evaluation, spend some time reflecting on what motivates you in your work life. Include things like company perks and [benefits](#), career development, learning new skills, and flexible hours. For example, would you like to find a career that offers:

- Career growth
- Competitive salary
- Health and wellness benefits
- Autonomy
- [Work-life balance](#)
- Flexibility

Think about your long-term goals

When you choose a career, it's important to find a path that will get you to your long-term goals. To do this, reflect on what you want to achieve in the next 5–10 years' time.

For example, if your long-term goal is to live abroad, you might look for a company that offers travel opportunities or has offices in different countries. Alternatively, if you see yourself in a [leadership role](#) in 10 years' time, you should [map out a career path](#) that includes the steps you need to take in order to reach that goal. Along any career pathway you might need to take on [courses and qualifications](#) or work with a [mentor](#).

Explore different industries and sectors

Once you have a good understanding of your interests, values, motivations and long-term goals, you can start to explore different industries and roles that appeal to you. Write out a list of the industries or sectors that match your passions, skills and qualifications.

From here, create a shortlist of the top options. If you're struggling to narrow down your options, pay close attention to the job descriptions and ask yourself:

- Is this something that I can do?
- Is this something I'm interested in?
- Would I be happy doing this every day, for a long time?

Speak to professionals and career counsellors

If you're interested in a specific industry, it could be worth reaching out to a professional within the field to get a better understanding of how it works and what different roles in that industry might entail.

Attend industry events to connect with professionals and [expand your network](#). To get the most out of these experiences, prepare a set of questions to help you gain a better understanding of the industry.

Ask questions like:

- Can you tell me about your experience in this industry?

- What is enjoyable/not enjoyable about working in the industry?
- What are some challenges you have faced in this industry?
- What advice would you give to someone just starting out in this industry?
- Are there any specific skills or qualifications that are particularly important for success in this industry?

If you need more guidance, meet with a career counsellor to discuss your plans. They'll be able to share advice and suggestions to help you narrow down your options and achieve your professional goals. If you're a student, your school or college/university likely offers free career counselling services.

Career planning template for jobseekers

When planning your career, it helps to write down your goals and milestones, and create a roadmap you can refer to along your journey. You can use our [free career planning template](#) to help you map out the steps you need to take to reach your end goal.

If you have a big [final goal](#), break it into smaller, more manageable steps across the short, medium and long term. This is where the [SMART goal-setting approach](#) comes in handy. Make sure your goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based, to help you stay on track. When you [create a career plan](#), you can more easily visualise and track your progress to your ultimate goal.

It's not unusual for people to change career paths, or at some stage feel they're at a crossroads. Luckily, there are steps you can take to find a fulfilling career and create a roadmap that will get you there. By understanding your interests, motivations and natural abilities, you'll be in a good position to find a job you love and create a long-term career plan that works for you.

FAQs

How do I decide what career I want?

Deciding on the right career involves self-reflection, to understand your strengths, interests, weaknesses and motivations. Once you have identified these things, you'll be better positioned to find potential career paths that match your passions and abilities. From there, explore different industries and job roles that interest you and that you'd be good at. To test the waters, do an internship or some work experience within your

chosen field before making a stronger commitment.

How do I find the perfect career choice?

To find the 'perfect' career, first reflect on your abilities and passions. Finding the ideal job for you comes down to choosing a career that you enjoy and that gives you financial security. Think about the activities you like doing, what subjects and tasks you excel in, and what kind of work environment and lifestyle you prefer. Consider making a [career plan](#) to help you find a career that matches your preferences.

How can I find the right career?

Finding the right career for you requires self-reflection, research, open-mindedness and experimentation. The right career is often a job you enjoy, doing things you're good at, with people you like, that provides financial stability.

What are the 4 steps for choosing your career?

The four steps of the career planning process involve:

1. Getting to know yourself: by completing a self-evaluation and reviewing your strengths, weaknesses and interests
2. Exploring potential career options: create a list of all the industries and job positions that interest you and matches your preferences
3. Settling on a career path: from your list, narrow down your options until you settle on a final career
4. Making a plan to help you achieve your professional goals: create a career plan complete with short and long-term goals to help you achieve your professional objectives

What are the best tools and tests to help me choose a career?

There are a number of [tools and tests](#) you can use to help you choose a satisfying career, like:

- **Mind maps:** put your ideas, goals and objectives into a visual format so you can see them all laid out in front of you. Use your mind map as a way to generate ideas and guide you in your career choice.
- **Personality tests:** personality tests are designed to help you get a better understanding of yourself. They provide insights into your preferences, strengths, interests, communication styles and interpersonal dynamics.

From here, you're better able to find a career that fits your personality. Common personality tests include the Strong Interest Inventory (SII), Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and the DISC Assessment.

- **Career quizzes:** in addition to personality tests, you can also complete career quizzes to help you pick a path. These types of quizzes assess your interests, personality traits and values to provide personalised career recommendations and insights into suitable career paths.
- **Career advisors:** these professionals can provide you with tailored career advice based on your personal circumstances. They're training to work with you to provide support while helping you to choose a career path that excites you.

How can I discover my true passions and interests?

Discovering your true passions and interests is a personal journey that involves self-reflection, experimentation and exploration. Here are some ways to help you uncover your passions and interests:

- Reflect on past work experiences you've enjoyed
- Try new things to find what sparks your interest
- Identify your values
- Reflect on your strengths
- Explore different paths and possibilities

What strategies can I use to assess my strengths and weaknesses in relation to career planning?

Understanding your strengths and weaknesses is an important part of the career planning process. There are a number of tools and approaches you can do this, including:

- Self-reflection
- Feedback from others
- Skills and personality assessments

How do I research and identify growing industries and job trends?

There are lots of online resources you can use to research growing industries and job trends. For example, the Australian Government has created a website dedicated to [Labour Market Insights](#) that provides research-backed insights on trends across the Australian jobs market.