

Step 3: Prepare Yourself

You don't need to make a decision on a specific career at this point of your life. In fact, it is not recommended that you do since your interests are changing. But it is important to give some thought to what you want to do after high school so you can plan your high school coursework before 9th grade registration. You don't want to find yourself as a junior or senior, without enough semesters left to fit in all the classes you need for a technical institute or college program you want to attend. Don't let any door be closed for you!

So if you have at least a general idea of the career area you are interested in, find out as many specifics as you can about the type and level of education recommended or other training options for the career. Then plan your high school coursework accordingly.

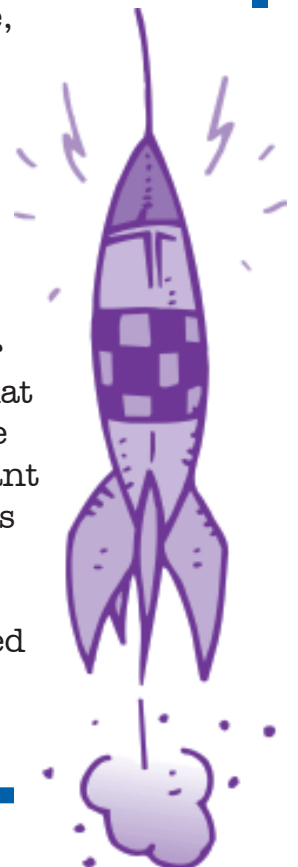
If the careers you are interested in require post-secondary education,

plan ahead. Your goal should be to have successfully completed, by graduation, all the classes which are pre-requisites for the level of post-high education needed to pursue your chosen career field.

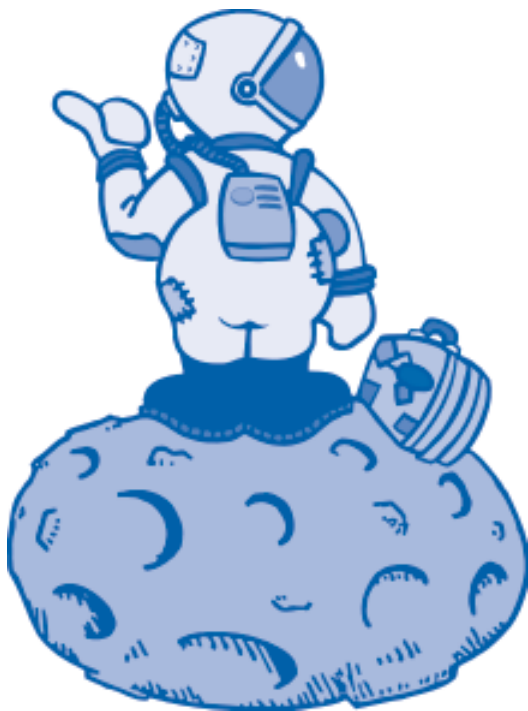
If the career area you are interested in does not require post-secondary education, find out about other training options. Plan to take high school courses that will allow you to explore careers of interest and to gain the skills you'll need.

Aim high

If you have no idea at this point what career field you want to pursue, your best bet is to "aim high." Plan your high school coursework with the highest level of post-secondary education in mind. That will keep your options open, so that when you do decide what career you want to pursue, the doors to whatever educational institution you need to attend are not closed to you.



How will you get where you want to go?



For careers requiring post-secondary education

Check into requirements

Refer often to the charts on pages 46 and 47, which show high school graduation requirements for South Dakota, as well as the admission requirements of South Dakota's public universities.

Universities, colleges and technical institutes sometimes recommend specific high school courses for certain programs they offer. So as soon as you

have specific careers or schools in mind, check into those details.

Technical or vocational training

South Dakota has several post-secondary institutions offering technical or vocational training. The state's four technical institutes are one example. They offer formal shorter-term programs (lasting just a few months) up to associate degree programs (most about two years in length). Other opportunities for formal education at less than the bachelor's degree level include private colleges, hospital-based programs and tribal-operated community colleges. If those aren't enough options for you, keep in mind that many of the state's colleges and universities also offer several associate degree programs.

In all of these cases, the programs are generally technical in nature and focus on a specific career field. The institutions work cooperatively with business to teach the skills needed in today's workplaces. The programs include some general education as well, to prepare well-rounded individuals ready for employment. But the

Getting where you want to go, continued



programs are definitely hands-on, giving you an immediate chance to get a feel for the actual work involved.

College & University

Depending on how many more years after high school you want to invest in your career preparation, the choices are almost limitless for those with a college degree. Private colleges and public universities provide the type of well-rounded education that employers look for when hiring workers in a wide range of careers.

Earning a bachelor's degree involves a minimum of four years. If you're willing to invest even more time for a master's degree (usually another year or two), additional careers would be open to you. Additional careers (such as dentist) are open to those who really want to continue their education and get a doctorate or professional degree.

For careers not requiring formal post-secondary education

Apprenticeship

If you're a hands-on learner, another great option for career training is apprenticeship. Apprenticeship combines training at a job with some classroom studies. In both, the focus is totally on the skills necessary for the occupation. Apprentices learn the latest skills and technologies that employers need. They are guided and supervised by experienced workers, learning the tasks involved in a very structured way.

Because participants are learning at the worksite, they are also earning a wage. As skills increase, so does the paycheck. This "earn while you learn" concept is often recognized as an industry scholarship worth up to \$150,000.

Just a few of the careers that can be learned through apprenticeship in South Dakota are cabinetmaker, dental assistant, paralegal and

computer programmer. These and many other careers offer apprenticeship programs registered with the US Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training.

For more information on apprenticeship possibilities, contact your nearest South Dakota Career Center and ask for the apprenticeship representative. Or, contact Donald Reese, state director of the U.S. Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training in Sioux Falls at 330-2566.

Military

The U.S. Armed Forces provide training and work experience in a wide range of career fields. Career opportunities are divided between enlisted personnel and officers. Most enlisted personnel need at least a high school diploma. Enlisted personnel carry out the basic operations of the military in areas such as combat, healthcare, engineering and construction. Officers must have a bachelor's or

more advanced degree. They supervise and manage all military activities.

Reserve Office Training Corps (ROTC) programs in each of the branches of the military offer additional opportunities for training and experience. Those who qualify are eligible for financial assistance to attend college, in return for agreeing to serve in the military after graduation.

Specific career opportunities in the armed forces vary somewhat by military branch. Each of the armed forces listed below has an active component and a reserve component.

U.S. Military Branches

Air Force

Army

Coast Guard

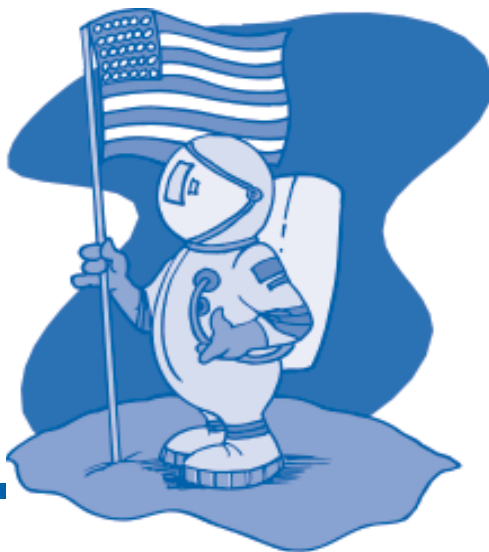
Navy

Marine Corps

Air National Guard

Army National Guard

For more information on career opportunities in the armed forces, visit the website www.todaysmilitary.com. "Today's Military" is an educational and informational website designed to help people better understand the U.S. military and the opportunities it represents for America's young people.



More options for getting where you want to go

Job Corps

Yet another option for preparing for a career is the Job Corps program. Job Corps is a free, residential education and training program for economically-challenged youth ages 16 to 24. Job Corps' mission is to teach young adults the skills they need to become employable and independent, and place them in meaningful careers or higher education. The Boxelder Job Corps Center at Nemo, South Dakota offers training in trades such as bricklaying, culinary arts, computer technology and welding,

among others. For more information, contact your nearest South Dakota Career Center or call 1-800-733-JOBS.



Ya gotta getta plan!



Whether you think you will continue your education after high school or pursue other career training options, you need a plan. Develop a written plan for each year in high school. Start with the required courses. (See pages 46-47.) South Dakota law requires that students who will graduate after July 1, 2004 must have a minimum of 22 units of credit.

What courses will you take for the remaining units of credit required for graduation? What additional courses will you take as allowed by your schedule?

Local school boards and other governing bodies sometimes have their own additional graduation requirements.

Think a technical institute education might be in your future? Consider taking high school courses in the same technical career area. They will help you explore whether or not a field is for you—before you're paying tuition!

Pick classes that you find interesting. High school courses can be a great opportunity to explore career fields of interest.

If you're interested in classes that aren't offered in your school, look into opportunities for distance learning. Ask your teachers, school counselor or principal for more information. You may even want to look into taking college-level courses via distance learning while you're still in high school. In some cases, you can get both high school and college credit for courses.

You don't have to go it alone!
Remember all the people



available to help you develop your high school educational plan. Ask your school counselor, homeroom teacher or advisor and parents for help and guidance. A paper or electronic career portfolio, provided in many schools, is a great tool for developing your high school educational plan and tracking your progress.

Remember, for as much of your life as you will likely spend on the job, it is really important that you enjoy the work as much as possible. Even if your career choice requires several more years of education after high school, that's a small investment of time to be able to do something you want the rest of your life. So shoot for the moon! Good luck!

South Dakota High School Graduation Requirements

(Beginning with the freshman class of 2006)

Graduation Requirements Standard Pathway (for the basic high school program)	Graduation Requirements Advanced Pathway (for the recommended HS program)	Graduation Requirements Distinguished Pathway
English/Reading & Communication Arts (4 units total) (1.5 Writing, 1.5 Literature (including .5 American Literature) and .5 Speech)	English/Reading & Communication Arts (4 units total) (1.5 Writing, 1.5 Literature (including .5 American Literature) and .5 Speech)	English/Reading & Communication Arts (4 units total)* (1.5 Writing, 1.5 Literature (including .5 American Literature) and .5 Speech)
Social Studies (3 units total) (1 U.S. History, .5 U.S. Government, .5 Geography, .5 World History and .5 Social Studies elective)	Social Studies (3 units total) (1 U.S. History, .5 U.S. Government, .5 Geography, .5 World History and .5 Social Studies elective)	Social Studies (3 units total)* (1 U.S. History, .5 U.S. Government, .5 Geography, .5 World History and .5 Social Studies elective)
Mathematics (3 units total) (1 Algebra I, 2 Math electives)	Mathematics (3 units total) (1 Algebra I, 1 Algebra II, 1 Geometry)	Mathematics (4 units or more)* (1 Algebra I, 1 Algebra II, 1 Geometry, 1 Advanced Math elective)
Science (2 units total of Lab Science) (2 Science electives)	Science (3 units of Lab Science) (1 Biology, 1 Chemistry or Physics, 1 Science elective)	Science (4 units total, minimum 3 units Lab Science)* (1 Biology, 1 Chemistry or Physics, 2 Science electives)
Fine Arts (1 unit) (1 elective)	Fine Arts (1 unit) (1 elective)	Fine Arts (1 unit)* (1 elective)
Health or Physical Education (.5 unit)	Health or Physical Education (.5 unit)	Health or Physical Education (.5 unit)
Economics or Personal Finance (.5 unit)	Economics or Personal Finance (.5 unit)	Economics or Personal Finance (.5 unit)
Required offerings: Students must select 2 units total of combination of: World Language or Computer Studies or Approved Career and Technical Education courses	Required offerings: Students must select 2 units total of combination of: World Language or Computer Studies or Approved Career and Technical Education courses	World Languages (2 units)* (2 units of the same language)
		Computer Studies (.5 unit)*
		<i>* Indicates offerings necessary to help meet requirements of the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship.</i>
The Standard Pathway set of courses meets the state's basic standards for graduation. It is designed to prepare students for entry-level jobs and some technical programs. An agreement, signed by the student's parents and the school administrator or counselor, is necessary to pursue this path.	The Advanced Pathway set of courses meets the state's standards for graduation and prepares students for education beyond high school. It fulfills the minimum requirements for admission to South Dakota's public universities and to most highly technical fields of study at technical institutes.	The Distinguished Pathway set of courses meets the state's highest level of standards for graduation. It fulfills the minimum requirements for admission to most major colleges and universities. This pathway satisfies the course requirements of the South Dakota Board of Regents Opportunity Scholarship.
Students must complete a minimum of 22 credits in any pathway in order to graduate. 1 unit equals one year.		

For more information:

<http://doe.sd.gov/oatq/gradrequirements/>

South Dakota Board of Regents Admission & Regents Scholar Requirements
(As of July 2005)

SD Board of Regents Admissions Requirements	SD Board of Regents Scholar Curriculum (Requirements for the SD Opportunity Scholarship)
English/Language Arts (4 units) (emphasis on grammar, composition, literature)	English (4 units) (courses with major emphasis on grammar, composition or literary analysis; one year of debate instruction may be included to meet this requirement)
Social Studies (3 units) (History, Economics, Sociology, Geography, Government)	Social Studies (3 units) (History, Economics, Sociology, Geography, Government - including US & South Dakota, American Problems, etc.)
Mathematics (3 units) (Algebra I and higher; does not include Arithmetic, Business, Consumer or General Math or other similar courses)	Algebra or Higher Mathematics (4 units) (Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry or other advanced mathematics including Accelerated or Honors Mathematics (Algebra) provided in the 8th grade shall be accepted. Not included are Arithmetic, Business, Consumer or General Mathematics or other similar courses)
Laboratory Science (3 units) (Biology, Chemistry & Physics with at least 1 laboratory period scheduled each week)	Science (4 units) (including 3 units of approved laboratory science (courses in Biology, Chemistry or Physics in which at least one (1) regular laboratory period is scheduled each week. Accelerated or Honors Science (Biology, Physics or Chemistry) provided in the 8th grade shall be accepted. Qualifying Physical Science or Earth Science courses (with lab) shall be decided on a case by case basis.)
Fine Arts (1 unit) (Art, Theater, Music)	Fine Arts (1 unit) (Art, Theatre, Music Appreciation, Music Analysis or Music Performance)
Health or Physical Education (None required)	Health or Physical Education (None required)
Economics or Personal Finance (None required)	Economics or Personal Finance (None required)
Computer Skills (Demonstrated either through high school course work or documented by some other means)	Computer Science (.5 unit) (Students will have basic keyboarding skills and have experience in using computer word-processing, database and spreadsheet packages and in using the Internet or other wide area networks.)
None	Foreign Language (2 units) (same modern language, including American Sign Language, or Classical Language)
1 unit equals one year	

For more information:
<http://www.sdbor.edu/k-12educators/>

With the right mind set,

A good attitude, or the right mind set, can be the biggest factor determining your future. Here are some tips to help you prepare to meet the challenges of tomorrow's world of work:

- ☆ Be ready to work harder and get smarter.
- ☆ Learn to work together with other people—all types of people, not just those you like.
- ☆ Be responsible for your attendance, tardiness, and getting your work done.
- ☆ Identify your weaknesses and work to improve them.
- ☆ Be flexible, adaptable and prepared to make changes.
- ☆ Be goal-oriented and focused. Use school and extra-curricular activities to take steps toward initial career decisions.
- ☆ Develop lifelong decision-making skills.

*the
sky
is
the
limit!*



Don't fall into the same traps of making poor choices like some people have in the past:

- ☆ Took easy classes in school. Avoided math, science and hard classes whenever possible.
- ☆ Didn't continue any education or training after high school.
- ☆ Avoided writing at all costs, including reports and papers.
- ☆ Spent little time reading.

South Dakota Career Wonders

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