

Finding a Job & Getting Work Experience

One of the most important aspects of career planning for high school students is experience. Experience makes it easier for you to get the kinds of jobs that you will enjoy in the future, helps you prepare for a career, boosts your resume, helps with college applications, and helps you to learn about yourself.

Here are some helpful tips on finding job opportunities, even when you're just starting out:

Here are some ways to gain experience:

- **WORK EXPERIENCE** – Is important in high school because you learn to function in a professional environment, you may find areas of career interests, and you learn job-seeking skills making it easier to get jobs in the future.
- **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE** – A great resource of career exposure for high school students, as well as a great thing to add to a resume. Volunteering also helps you connect to your community and make a difference.
- **RESEARCH AND LEARNING** – Do your own research on careers that interest you by going online, reading books, talking to people in those careers, and creating your own experiences.
- **REQUIRED EDUCATION** – Make sure that you understand and are prepared for the required education for your chosen career.



JOB SEARCH SITES

RUReady.ND.gov • www.ruready.nd.gov
Job Service ND • www.jobsnd.com
Career Builder • www.careerbuilder.com
Career OneStop • www.careeronestop.org

- **EARLY EXPERIENCES:** Babysitting, pet sitting, mowing lawns, and shoveling snow can be part of your work experience and history on your resume. The best way to find a job like this is to check with your friends, family, and neighbors, or even advertise on social media.
- **CONSIDER VOLUNTEER WORK:** Even if you don't get a paycheck, volunteering will add to your experiences and potential references for future paid jobs.
- **TARGET THE RIGHT INDUSTRIES:** Look for a job at a place that hires workers without experience. Common industries include hospitality, recreation, camps, food service, retail stores, and lawn care, etc. The peak season for jobs like this is summer. Summer jobs start hiring as early as spring, so start your job search early.
- **USE YOUR NETWORK:** The good news is that you already have a network of people who are willing to help you, family, friends, neighbors, teachers, counselors, etc.
- **FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING:** Look for a job that will allow flexible scheduling so you can balance school and work.
- **START A RESUME:** Having a resume to give to prospective employers can help you stand out from other applicants. Make sure to highlight your experiences and skills, especially your hard skills and soft skills. Both are necessary to find career success!
 - **Hard Skills:** Skills gained through education or specific training like how to use machines, software, and tools.
 - **Soft Skills:** Skills often seen as personality traits you may have spent your whole life developing like being able to manage your time, communicate with other people, or confront a difficult situation for the first time.
- **PARTICIPATE IN STUDENT WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS:** You can get experience and build your network by participating in work experiences like cooperative work, internships, and apprenticeships. (*RUReady.ND.gov* – WBL Module can help – talk to your counselor or CTE teacher.)
- **USE JOB SEARCH SITES:** See left for examples of helpful sources of information.