



UNDERSTANDING MYSELF AND MY OPTIONS



# How To Explore Occupations



## Learning Outcomes

The information in this career resource will build your knowledge and understanding of:

- The information you need to seek when exploring occupations.
- Different ways of finding out information about occupations.
- Sources of information about occupations.

Getting factual knowledge about occupations is an important element of good career decision making.

## Occupational Information

Some of the information that you can gather when exploring occupations includes the:

- Duties and tasks involved.
- Education and training requirements.
- Skills needed.
- Personal requirements.
- Specialisations.
- National, state/territory and regional labour market information related to the occupation, including current and expected future job prospects.
- Earnings associated with the occupation. Salary, wage or hourly rate associated with the occupation.

This information will help you to answer these questions:

- Will I enjoy the tasks involved in the occupation?
- Do I have or can I gain the education, training, and skills needed for the occupation?
- How easy or difficult might it be to get jobs in this occupation in my region?
- What could I expect to earn?





## How To Gather Occupational Information

There are a number of ways that you can gather information about occupations. Here are some ideas for researching occupations.

### Read print and electronic career information resources

Examples of print and electronic resources with information about occupations that you may be able to access include:

- Books, magazines and brochures available in your school career resource centre, such as *The Good Careers Guide* and *Careers with STEM* magazines.
- Online sources of occupational information, such as [myfuture.edu.au](http://myfuture.edu.au), [joboutlook.gov.au](http://joboutlook.gov.au), [aapathways.com.au](http://aapathways.com.au), the Careers section of [gooduniversitiesguide.com.au](http://gooduniversitiesguide.com.au), state/territory career information websites.
- Information in job advertisements for occupations that interest you.

### Watch videos about occupations

Many career exploration websites and industry websites have videos with occupational information. Some examples are [myfuture.edu.au](http://myfuture.edu.au), the My Gain YouTube channel of [aapathways.com.au](http://aapathways.com.au), [skillsroad.com.au](http://skillsroad.com.au), [defencejobs.gov.au](http://defencejobs.gov.au).

Your school may subscribe to a virtual reality careers exploration platform such as Work Window (<https://www.workwindow.com.au>).





### **Participate in work exposure events and activities**

Work exposure includes activities and events at school or in the community where you learn about occupations, industries, education and training and the world of work. Examples include:

- Career expos
- Industry visits
- Career taster events
- Guest speakers from business, industry, education and training and occupations groups.

### **Information Interview**

An information interview is a meeting that you arrange to have a conversation with someone who is working in an occupation or industry that interests you. It is a way of getting first-hand knowledge and a personal perspective about the realities of working in the occupation, industry or job role that you want to know more about. Preparation that involved in arranging a face-to-face or online information interview, includes:

- Initial research into the occupation using print and online resources.
- Identifying a person to interview.
- Preparing how to introduce yourself and preparing the questions you want to ask.
- Conducting the information interview.
- Following up with a thank you email.

### **Experience an Occupation**

Work experience, volunteering and Australian School-based Apprenticeships and traineeships (ASbA) are three ways that you can learn about an occupation that you want to know more about by actually doing some of the tasks involved.





Many schools have a formal work experience program where all students spend time in a workplace to explore an occupation and/or the world of work in general. Work experience is a good way to reality test an occupation that interests you.

There may be opportunities to take on volunteer roles at your school, such as volunteering in the canteen or coaching a junior sports team. Some schools may include volunteer work placements in the community as part of the curriculum. There are many opportunities in the community to volunteer. Some volunteer roles may give you an insight into an occupation. For example, volunteering for your local Fire Brigade is a good way to learn about the realities of being career Firefighter. Similarly, volunteering to be a peer tutor at your school may give some insight through hands-on experience into an occupation such as Education Support Worker.

An Australian School-based Apprenticeships (ASbA) is a way to learn about an occupation on the job. ASbAs are available to senior secondary students. An ASbA involves paid work and training with an employer for approximately 8-15 hours per week while also completing secondary education. This means that you learn about an occupation by doing the tasks involved and undertaking training that leads to a nationally accredited vocational education and training qualification.

Your school may subscribe to a virtual work experience platform such as The Careers Department ([thecareersdepartment.com](http://thecareersdepartment.com)). This is a great alternative to physical work experience in times such as COVID-19 lockdown or if your school is in a remote region where it can be difficult to find work experience placements.



## Additional Resources

1. [growcareers.com.au](http://growcareers.com.au) > Exploring Career Options
2. [jobjumpstart.gov.au](http://jobjumpstart.gov.au) > getting-know-your-chosen-occupation
3. [myfuture.edu.au](http://myfuture.edu.au) > Career Articles: 4 steps to a successful information interview



Job Jumpstart  
Getting to Know  
Your Chosen  
Occupation



myfuture  
4 Steps to a  
Successful  
Information  
Interview



Grow Careers  
Exploring Career  
Options

## What To Read Next

1. How to Explore Post-school Courses.
2. Labour Market Information.