

How to Choose the Right Course

Going to college? Choosing the right course is a big decision and it is important to get it right, as it can impact your future success.

1. **Talk to you guidance counsellor** – frequently, and not just at the last minute.
2. **What interests you?** List the fields of study that interest you, and come up with a list of courses you would consider studying based on these interests. Add the topics that you were most interested in during school as well as jobs that you envied others for. Studying something that interests you is the most important criteria, it will help to ensure that you enjoy College and get a good grade of qualification. The first step to success is reading the course content thoroughly to ensure that you will be studying something you are interested in and that leads to the career you want.
3. What subjects am I good at? What can I see myself enjoying for the next **four years**.
4. Is this a course I really want to do, or am I following other students in my year group?
5. **Research.** The internet, newspapers, television and people around you are the best sources of information. Check online (Qualifax, College websites) about the courses you are interested in and find out about the career prospects and the other info. Speak to people who are in your interested profession and find out what it is to choose your future career. People who have recently completed college courses can give you an insight from a student's perspective - they can tell you the pros and cons. Check "College Resources" in CareersNews.ie for lots of videos about courses.
6. **Course content.** To avoid making mistakes, make sure you review the course outline of the course(s) you want to apply for. Have a look at the subjects you must undertake and the types of learning, assignments and examination tasks involved. This will enable you to form a rough idea of what lies ahead for you. Be particularly careful if you are planning to take a course where you have no experience of the content e.g. computing.
7. **College level.** If you are set on going to a particular College, don't let this completely dictate your course selection. Compare course outlines and studying facilities between Colleges to make sure you make the right choice for your educational needs and preferences. If possible, visit the college on an open day and attend some of the lectures to get a feeling of what some of the subjects will be like.
8. **Course duration.** To be certain that you will be committed to your studies, find out the duration of your course. Taking double-degrees, full time or part-time depends on your personal choice. Ensure that you will be able to balance your other priorities along with education. Study flexibility varies amongst Colleges.
9. **Entry requirements.** It is more difficult to get accepted into high points competitive courses, especially those which are in high demand. This is a good measure of whether you are actually capable of doing well in the course or not. Unfortunately, some courses are too hard to get in to, or just too hard to actually succeed in completing, so be honest with your course selection. You should research other Colleges or similar courses at different levels if you are not confident in being accepted into your first preference course.
10. **Cost of study.** Affordability is another aspect you need to consider while deciding on your course, as well as the additional costs that occur, such as text books, field trips etc.

11. **Career opportunities.** Look at the career prospects of the course before selecting one. Consider various factors such as income, job security, stress, responsibility and other benefits while researching a profession.

12. **Remember that this is your decision, others can only advise you.**

Based on original article here <http://www.wikihow.com/Choose-the-Right-Course>