

# How to Drop Out of College

Let's face it: college isn't for everyone. Whether you're taking care of a sick family member, can't afford the steep tuition or just have other plans, there are a few things worth considering when putting your education on hold. It will...

Part 1 of 3:

## Handling the Bureaucratic Details

1.



**Talk to your professors about your decision.** A trusted professor or adviser will be able to help you clarify your reasons for leaving and offer prudent advice about what to do next. Even if you're not interested in hearing what they have to say, letting your instructors know that you'll no longer be participating in their class is common courtesy.<sup>[1]</sup>

1. Meet with your professors in person to explain your circumstances instead of sending them a cursory email or leaving them to guess what happened to you.<sup>[2]</sup>
2. Feeling like your classes are too hard is not a strong enough reason to justify dropping out—realizing that you don't need a formal education to do what you love is.

2.



**Discuss the potential consequences with a counselor.** Meet with an academic adviser from your school to talk about what will happen once you discontinue your education. Keep in mind that by dropping out, you might be forced to forfeit scholarships, grants or other benefits that you've managed to secure. It could also strain your relationship with your family if they don't agree with your decision.<sup>[3]</sup>

1. Some schools don't allow students who have dropped out to re-enroll, which could limit your opportunities should you make up your mind to go back later on.
2. Repaying student loans after dropping out will leave you stuck with the financial burden of going to college and none of the advantages.

3.



**Finish out the semester.** If the term is already underway and you've missed the deadline to drop classes, it's good idea to just see it through. That way, you won't have to worry about ruining your GPA. When the following semester rolls around, you can tie up a few administrative loose ends and make a clean break.<sup>[4]</sup>

1. Completing a semester will leave you with a documented final grade and not a more ambiguous 'W' or 'I.'
2. The more classes you have under your belt, the more experience you'll be able to show employers.

4.



**Submit a withdrawal request.** As part of the withdrawal process, you'll have to fill out a few forms and provide a reason for leaving. You may also be asked to meet with your academic adviser for exit counseling, which typically involves reviewing important school policies and discussing the options you have open to you. Once the paperwork goes through, your enrollment will be officially terminated.<sup>[5]</sup>

1. Inquire about deferred payment plans and other options that might make the financial burden easier to bear while you figure out your next move.

5.



**Take advantage of your school's refund policy.** Depending on when you drop out, you may qualify for a full or partial refund on your tuition. In most cases, students who drop classes or withdraw from the university before the first day of the semester are eligible to receive 100% reimbursement. You'll still be

responsible for paying back student loans and other scholastic expenses, but putting what you paid for your classes back in your pocket can lighten the load significantly.<sup>[6]</sup>

1. The amount you stand to be refunded will usually decrease the later into the term you wait.<sup>[7]</sup>
2. Check with the bursar's office to see whether you need to make a formal request in order to receive a refund.

Part 2 of 3:

## Planning Your Next Step



**Be prepared to pay off your student loans.** Your loan payments will kick in following a six-month grace period after your dropout date. To ensure that you can meet the costs, you'll need to either find job with steady pay or have some other means of financial security in place, like an existing savings account. At this point, your primary focus should be doing everything you can to avoid the dreaded debt trap.<sup>[8]</sup>

1. Draw up a financial plan to determine how much you can afford to set aside to make your monthly payments.
2. Defaulting on your loans can severely harm your credit, along with your chances of ever being accepted to another school.

2.



**Find a place to live.** Since you won't be able to continue living in the dorms after you drop out, you'll need to begin looking into alternative lodging options. Search for an apartment or small house somewhere near campus. Once you get set up, you can focus on working and getting ready to begin a new phase in your life.<sup>[9]</sup>

1. If money is tight, consider moving back in with your family until you make enough to get back on your feet.<sup>[10]</sup>
2. Moving in with a roommate can ease the financial burden of renting a place by yourself.

3.



**Analyze your prospects.** Take inventory of the options you have available to you now that you've put school behind you for the time being. It may be that you're curious about pursuing a career in the military, or you're already working an internship that promises to lead to a full-time position. No matter where your interests lie, having a goal to work towards will give you a sense of purpose and help you make better use of your time and energy.<sup>[11]</sup>

1. Find out whether (and how) it would be possible for you to land your dream job without a degree by researching the typical requirements on a job search board or career advice website.
2. Be realistic about your other opportunities. Assuming that you'll find a way to make things work without a concrete plan could just end up putting you in a more difficult position.

Part 3 of 3:

## Exploring Alternatives to College



**Consider taking a hiatus.** Rather than giving up on academics once and for all, you might simply take an extended break. Inform your adviser and professors that you're planning on taking some time off from college. They'll be able to walk you through the steps needed to re-enroll in the future and explain what will happen to your grades and financial aid money when you pull the plug.<sup>[12]</sup>

1. If you're leaving school in good academic standing, it may be possible for you to be reinstated in the same program later on with your record intact.
2. When you look at dropping out as a temporary measure, it can make the whole ordeal a lot less scary.

2.



**Have a job lined up.** If you weren't already working to put yourself through school, you'll definitely need to find employment to make ends meet once you're on your own. Even a part-time job will serve as a safety net and give you a chance to build up your funds while preparing for what may come—just be willing to start at the bottom and work your way up, since you'll be coming in with fewer credentials.<sup>[13]</sup>

1. Sales, retail management, customer service, office administration and waiting tables can all be lucrative jobs for those who don't hold graduate degrees.<sup>[14]</sup>
2. For some people, leaving school can actually be a plus, since it allows them to focus their time and attention on a job they're passionate about.

3.



**Apply for an internship.** The right opportunity can help you build valuable real-world work experience and attach your name to a reputable company, which will make you much more attractive to employers. Most companies don't require that their interns have a college degree, which means your chances are no worse than anyone else's. With a little luck, you could even be offered a permanent position once your

internship comes to an end.<sup>[15]</sup>

1. Research internships that are directly related to your field of interest or area of expertise. If you want to get involved in nonprofit work, for instance, you could try volunteering with an organization that helps the indigent gain access to critical social resources.
2. Don't be too quick to rule out unpaid internships. They have the potential to lead to steady, gainful employment.<sup>[16]</sup>
3. Be sure to mention your time in college when you're filling out your educational history.



**Take part in an apprenticeship.** Find someone who does what you want to be doing and ask them to take you under their wing. Many trade and vocational schools offer apprenticeships for professions like carpentry, plumbing and automotive repair. Learning the ropes firsthand from an experienced craftsman is an excellent way to gain practical knowledge that will help you break into a new industry.<sup>[17]</sup>

1. Apprenticeship programs tend to be cheaper, shorter and more specialized than working towards a degree at a traditional university or community college.<sup>[18]</sup>
2. Run a search online to find out which companies and organizations offer apprenticeship opportunities in your area.

You finished reading the article "**How to Drop Out of College**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.