Construct Your Future

YOUR GUIDE to careers in ARCHITECTURE & CONSTRUCTION

- Showcasing 25 Careers
- How to Create a Texas Achievement Plan (TAP)
- Inside College Admissions
Dear Texas Student,

You are probably tired of people asking, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Some students know exactly what they want to do, but most haven’t got a clue. The idea of choosing a career is intimidating, and it feels like it’s far in the future. There’s little time in the commotion of classes, activities, sports, work, and fun to think about what career you want to pursue after graduation from high school or college.

It pays, though, to take the time to think about your future career. The truth is that you’ll save a lot of time and money if you have a direction in life, as opposed to just finishing high school and worrying about it later. It’s really a matter of dollars and sense. If you choose a career direction now, you can select classes and activities that will make you highly marketable—and highly paid—when you look for work. And it only makes sense to have an idea of what you want to do rather than just wandering aimlessly through school.

Nobody wants that. Not your parents. Not your teachers. Not your friends. They want you to be somebody. They want you to use your talents, follow your interests, and pursue your ambitions to become great at what you love to do in life. That’s what you should want, too.

So the time is right to take charge of your life and think about the future. You need a plan of action for how to get from where you are today to where you want to be in a few years: starting out on a personally and professionally rewarding career.

That’s what AchieveTexas in Action is all about. The magazine you are holding is one of 16 guides to different career clusters. It is designed to help you make smarter decisions about your education and career options.

You’ve heard the phrase, “Information is power.” Well, this magazine is power. It puts you in charge of your future. You need a plan of action for how to get from where you are today to where you want to be in a few years: starting out on a personally and professionally rewarding career.

Get information. Get a plan. Get a clue about your career direction. It’s all right if that direction changes; choosing a direction now is better than having no direction at all. Just promise yourself that you’ll make smart choices about where to focus your time, energy, and passion.

We’re proud that you are taking steps to plan your career direction, and we pledge that your school, teachers, and counselors will do all they can to help you make wise choices on your plans for success. We wish you the best of luck on your journey.
Governor Rick Perry has launched a strategic plan that targets state efforts on six industry clusters that economists say will be the engines of economic growth in Texas. As you plan your future, think about a career in one of these new and emerging sectors.

- **Advanced Technologies & Manufacturing**
  - Molecular technologist
  - Sensor/robotics engineer

- **Aerospace & Defense**
  - Aerospace engineer
  - Unmanned autonomous vehicle engineer

- **Biotechnology & Life Sciences**
  - Bioinformatics specialist
  - Biocontainment technician

- **Information & Computer Technology**
  - System integrator
  - Computer game developer

- **Petroleum Refining & Chemical Products**
  - Petrochemical engineer
  - Refinery process design engineer

- **Energy**
  - Wind/solar energy engineer
  - Geophysical (oil and gas) prospector
THE FIRST STEP toward success is making smart decisions about your education and career options.

When I was in high school,” says Sheryl Kovach, a senior human resources generalist with IKON Office Solutions in Houston, “the only job that I even knew about was receptionist work. I didn’t aspire to be a manager or entrepreneur because I really didn’t know about those disciplines. I was just looking forward to graduating. That was it. I really didn’t know what it was I wanted to do.”

Sound familiar? You, too, may not have a clue about what to do with your life.

Don’t worry, though. Help is right here in your hands. This issue of AchieveTexas in Action is your guide to education and career choices that can shape your future. It’s one of 16 career cluster guides published by AchieveTexas, Texas’s college and career initiative (www.AchieveTexas.org).

This edition is all about Architecture & Construction.

Let’s start with some basic steps you should take to get organized, plan for the future, and start on the road to success.

Assess Your Talents and Abilities

First, you need to figure out some things about yourself. This step can be as simple as writing down a list of your interests (like video games or rock climbing), your hopes and dreams (like helping others), your talents (like writing or math ability), and your weaknesses (if you’re squeamish at the sight of blood, for example, you might not want to be a doctor).

Follow up on this informal exercise by taking some formal assessments to determine your interests and abilities. Common assessments include the Kuder (www.kuder.com), Bridges (www.bridges.com), Career Cruising (www.careercruising.com), COIN (www.coinedu.com), and Myers-Briggs (www.myersbriggs.org) tests. Terry Brock, director of the Texas Counselors’ Network, a group that helps counselors statewide advise their students on career planning, says, “These tools give most of our students some career exploration awareness by the time they enter eighth or ninth grade.”

Ask your principal or counselor about the career assessments available at your school.

Research Your Career Options

Once you’ve learned about yourself, learn more about your career options. There are thousands of occupations out there of which you may never have heard, and others that do not yet exist because the technologies have not been developed. Fortunately, there are plenty of resources (see inside back cover) for you, and they are as close as the nearest computer.

One of the most helpful is the Occupation and Skill Computer-Assisted Researcher (or OSCAR, for short) from the Texas Workforce Commission. It is a vast database of information about hundreds of professions. You can find OSCAR at www.o*net.org/tx. Another good place to start is O*NET (online.onetcenter.org).

Gather information about what you can earn in the careers in which you are interested. Find out whether the careers you are considering have a promising future—are they adding or losing jobs? Check out the education you’ll need to enter those careers.

The chart on pages 10–11 presents data on 25 possible professions. Remember, though, that
these are just a sampling of careers available in the cluster. Go to OSCAR, O*NET, or another resource to investigate other careers.

Create Your TAP

Once you have a better idea of your interests and abilities, you are ready to plan for high school and beyond. The Texas Achievement Plan, or TAP, is your plan for preparing for the career of your choice.

“Students first choose a cluster,” says Terry Brock, “not a particular occupational goal. In the eighth grade a student might choose Health Science and then later become interested in a narrower field such as surgery or radiology technology.”

The program of study you choose—your plan—does not stop with graduation from high school, Brock emphasizes. “A student could then pursue a two-year degree as an x-ray technician or a four-year degree as a radiologist.”

You should set up a TAP that takes you through career preparation after high school, revising your blueprint as needed as you go along. If your career plans include college study, ask your counselor about tests required for admission to college, such as the PSAT, SAT, or ACT.

Seek Out Special Programs

Many Texas schools offer innovative programs to prepare students for specific career areas. These include career and technical education (CTE) programs, academies, and magnet schools. Once you’ve decided on a career direction, ask your counselor about special programs in your area that may provide related experiences in your chosen career.

Samuel Odamah, an undergraduate student in architecture enrolled at the University of Texas at Arlington, found his career calling at Dallas’s Skyline Career Development Center, a high school with career programs in a number of different fields.

“Skyline is one of the few schools in the country that offer programs in architecture,” Odamah says. “In some careers, Skyline students could even get professional certifications or licenses right in high school. It was a great place because you could find out whether you really wanted to enter a career.”

Odamah says that the career cluster system at Skyline taught him the value of planning for his career and his life. “We learned about planning ahead,” he says. “Those who plan things ahead of time don’t have to catch up. It’s just a matter of what a person wants out of life. Planning gives you a better platform for success.”

Architecture & Construction CTSOs

One of the best ways to acquire experience in your chosen career is by joining a career and technical student organizations (CTSO). In Architecture & Construction, the most helpful CTSOs are:

- Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) www.texasfccla.org
- SkillsUSA www.bskillusa.org
- Texas Technology Student Association (TSA) www.texastsa.org

In 1996, Texas Tech University College of Architecture became the first architecture education program in the nation to offer a 173-credit-hour master of architecture professional degree.
In Texas, TAPs (Texas Achievement Plans) will guide students’ high school and college experiences (see next page). As part of this process, students focus their studies within a chosen career cluster and program of study.

A career cluster is a group of occupations and broad industries that share certain features. The Architecture & Construction cluster, for example, includes architects, carpenters, and electricians. Texas has adopted 16 career clusters (see back cover), the same ones designated and developed by the U.S. Department of Education. As the graphic below shows, within each cluster are programs of study, which are more specific groupings of similar occupations. Think of a program of study as being like a college major. In Architecture & Construction, you might choose to focus on Design/Pre-Construction in high school and college.

Related Occupations
Each program of study includes a range of related occupations; interior designer is an example of an occupation that falls within Design/Pre-Construction. Choosing a career cluster and program of study will help you acquire the knowledge and skills you’ll need to enter your chosen career. It will allow you to follow a seamless course of study from high school into college or other postsecondary education or training. The electives you choose can complement your core academic classes to prepare you for the challenges of the real world of work.

Review Your TAP Each Year
Don’t get locked into a cluster and program of study you don’t like. You should reexamine your TAP at least once a year and change clusters or programs if your interests have changed. Choosing a cluster and program of study, even if it changes later, means that you’ll have a direction in life. The idea is to be aware of what’s going on in your life and take control of your future. When you know where your education is going and why, your classes will become more meaningful. You’ll make contact with students, teachers, and employers who share your interest in a particular career area. You’ll have experiences that are fun and exciting. You’ll be on your way to success in school, in a career, and in life.
What is a TAP?

A TAP is a Texas Achievement Plan, and it’s a smart idea to create one to guide your studies through high school and into college or other postsecondary education or training. Your TAP represents your chance to take control of your education and career choices. Working with your parents/guardians and guidance counselor, you can pick the cluster on which you want to focus your studies as well as your career and postsecondary education goals. Don’t worry. You aren’t locked into your choices. You should revisit your TAP at least once a year to update it. You can change clusters, programs of study, and career and postsecondary goals as your interests and ambitions change. Having a plan—even if it changes—is smarter than having no idea of what you want to do and why you are attending school. Here’s how to fill out your TAP.

Choose a career cluster on which to focus your high school and college or postsecondary studies. The idea is to offer you a seamless route to follow from high school, through college or other postsecondary education, and into a career. Not all Texas schools offer all clusters, so ask your guidance counselor which clusters are available at your school.

List basic information such as your name and school.

Choose one or more occupations for which you would like to prepare. Use resources such as OSCAR (www.ioscar.org/tx) to research your options.

Plan for what you want to do after high school. Your goal may be to attend a four-year university or two-year college, join the military, or enter an apprenticeship program. Your postsecondary goal should influence the classes you take in high school; for example, you will need certain course credits to qualify for admission to a college.

Choose one or more extended learning activities that complement your classes (see page 14). Work on community service projects. Plan for paid and unpaid career learning experiences, such as job shadowing and internships. All these extracurricular activities can give you experience that will help you get into college or land a job.

Sketch out your schedule of classes for your high school years. Most of your time will be spent taking your core academic courses. By carefully selecting your electives, you can get the education and experience you need to start toward the profession of your choice.

Texas Achievement Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: Taylor Jones</th>
<th>School: West High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluster: Architecture &amp; Construction</td>
<td>Program of Study: Design/Pre-Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Goal: Architect</td>
<td>Postsecondary Goal: Bachelor's Degree in Architecture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9th Grade</th>
<th>10th Grade</th>
<th>11th Grade</th>
<th>12th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algebra I</td>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>Algebra II</td>
<td>Precalculus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English I</td>
<td>English II</td>
<td>English III</td>
<td>English IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Geography</td>
<td>World History</td>
<td>U.S. History</td>
<td>Government/Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Other Than English I</td>
<td>Languages Other Than English II</td>
<td>Communication Applications</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/PE OR Equivalent</td>
<td>Technology Applications</td>
<td>PE OR Equivalent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduction to Construction Trades OR Drafting I OR Interior Design AND Housing OR Landscape, Design, Construction, and Maintenance OR Construction Systems

Technology Systems (Modular Based Lab) OR Painting and Decorating OR Architectural Graphics OR Architectural Construction OR Architectural Drafting I

Architectural Drafting II OR Drafting II OR Building Trades I OR Career Preparation I

Engineering OR Architectural Drafting III OR Drafting III OR Building Trades II OR Housing, Furnishings, and Equipment Production, Management, and Services OR Career Preparation II

Career Learning Experiences: Apprenticeship, Career Preparation—Paid or Unpaid, Internship, Job Shadowing

Curricular Experiences: FCCLA, SkillsUSA, Technology Student Association

Extracurricular Experiences: Architectural/Engineering Summer Camps, Association of General Contractors Conferences, Historic Building Tours, Home Tours, Student Council

Service Learning Experiences: Habitat for Humanity

A Career Portfolio (see page 15) is a good way to organize information about your educational experiences, record results of career interest and abilities assessments, and hold examples of your best work. Include a TAP in your portfolio.
The opportunities for employment in Architecture & Construction are huge,” exclaims Charlene Anthony, executive director of Houston’s chapter of Associated General Contractors of America. “The industry is strong and predicted to stay strong. In terms of workforce development, I’d even say it’s in a crisis state because there just aren’t enough people—at all levels, from professional all the way down to the trades.”

Look around any Texas city and you’ll see what Anthony is talking about. Office buildings, hospitals, shopping malls, and other structures are sprouting up everywhere. Subdivisions consisting of everything from condos to mansions are spreading throughout the suburbs. The Dallas Cowboys are building a new 2.3 million-square-foot stadium at an estimated cost of $1 billion.

Clearly, Architecture & Construction is a hot cluster when it comes to career opportunities. In fact, in 2006, construction was the fastest-growing industry in Texas in terms of employment.

Tactile and Analytical

In the building industry, it takes two types of people to construct a structure. People working in design and pre-construction—such as architects, landscape architects, and interior designers—use their creativity to plan and design buildings and their environments.

Construction, maintenance, and operations workers, on the other hand, are detail-oriented people who like to work with their hands.

What brings these two types together in a common enterprise? Both say it’s their love of buildings.

“The most fulfilling part of my job,” says Russell Niemann, project manager at the successful Houston construction firm Tribble & Stephens, “is being able to see the results of your work—a building. You look up and there’s this finished product.”

Is Architecture & Construction the right cluster for you? Take this quick quiz to find out. Answer “yes” or “no” to the following questions.

1. Do you like to draw?
2. Are you good at working with tools?
3. Did you build things with Legos or blocks as a child?
4. Do you get good grades in math and science?
5. Do you like working on projects as part of a team?
6. Have you ever built a tree house or another structure?
7. Do you enjoy decorating your bedroom or other rooms in your home?
8. Are you good at following directions?
9. Do you dream of constructing skyscrapers or other structures?
10. Do you like working with your hands?

If you answered “yes” to five or more of the above questions, Architecture & Construction may be the right cluster for you. To get a more specific and scientific idea of your attitudes and abilities, ask your guidance counselor or teacher about taking a career assessment test or interest inventory.
**Fast-Growing Careers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rigger</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tile and Marble Setter</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installer</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrician</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>9,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior Designer</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Worker—Helper</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>3,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect, except Landscape and Naval</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>1,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installer</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter, Wallpaperer, Plasterer, and Stucco Mason—Helper</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Estimator</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a projection of 10 fast-growing careers in Architecture & Construction in Texas from the year 2002 to 2012 and the number of new jobs created in each occupation. Note that while the percentage of growth in jobs may be high, the actual number of jobs created may be low. For example, there will be only 350 new jobs for Painter, Wallpaperer, Plasterer, and Stucco Mason Helpers created in Texas during the decade that the data covers. Source: Texas Workforce Commission.

**All-Around Good Workers**

What do you need to do to take advantage of the hiring boom in Architecture & Construction?

“It’s really good to have a knack for science and math, but you also need to be proficient at reading and understanding,” says architect Lynne Cagle, now a project coordinator of trade and industrial education at the University of North Texas in Denton. A successful career in construction or architecture depends on your ability to work with others, and that requires people well-informed in all subjects who can get along with almost anyone.

“A sense of history, art, and architecture history is important,” says Cagle. “Then there’s also the marketing aspect of these careers, so a good business sense is helpful. Basically, there are a lot of people in this field who are good at being generalists.”

“Construction is a lot of teamwork,” Niemann adds, “so I would think anyone who enjoys being part of sports teams and things of that nature would develop strong teamwork skills. Communication is the most important aspect of this field—face-to-face contact, not just email.”

**Working Wages**

Salaries in both architecture and construction depend on the amount of training you have, the years of experience, and how much responsibility you’re willing to assume. “The pay in construction depends on your level,” says Anthony. “Carpenters can make $38,000 a year. Masons might make approximately $33,000. And of course, if you get into management positions and ownership, it’s going to be much higher. Going into a company after a reputable four-year university as a junior project manager, you’re going to start out right out of school at about $50,000 a year.”

Be aware that demand for workers and the wages paid in Architecture & Construction are both closely linked to the Texas economy. While times may be good at one point, an economic downturn can lead to layoffs. The way to protect yourself is to develop skills that make you unique in the job market.

**Giving Back**

In Architecture & Construction, be ready for interesting work and good pay. But keep in mind, Cagle says, that you owe something to the profession as well. “Throughout history,” she observes, “buildings have always affected culture as much as they have reflected it. Architecture is as much art as it is science, and I think there’s a tremendous responsibility to enhance the community with artistic design.”

**Top-Paying Careers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Average Wage</th>
<th>Entry-Level Wage</th>
<th>Experienced Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction Manager</td>
<td>$32.68</td>
<td>$19.69</td>
<td>$39.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect, except Landscape and Naval</td>
<td>$31.45</td>
<td>$19.49</td>
<td>$37.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Estimator</td>
<td>$26.34</td>
<td>$16.69</td>
<td>$31.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Architect</td>
<td>$24.11</td>
<td>$16.16</td>
<td>$28.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Drafter</td>
<td>$23.13</td>
<td>$14.72</td>
<td>$27.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior Designer</td>
<td>$21.81</td>
<td>$13.16</td>
<td>$26.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction and Building Inspector</td>
<td>$19.83</td>
<td>$13.42</td>
<td>$23.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>$19.28</td>
<td>$10.99</td>
<td>$23.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural and Civil Drafter</td>
<td>$18.89</td>
<td>$12.93</td>
<td>$21.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigger</td>
<td>$17.60</td>
<td>$12.02</td>
<td>$20.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a chart of hourly wages for 10 of the top-paying careers in the Architecture & Construction cluster in Texas. Note how entry-level wages are often much lower than pay for the average worker and experienced workers in each profession. Source: Texas Workforce Commission.
When you think about what it’s like to work in Architecture & Construction, imagine a team of people all pushing toward a single goal. The group includes workers with a wide variety of talents—building design, interior design, landscape design, project management, cost estimation, roofing, plumbing, electrical work, bricklaying, heating and air conditioning, building maintenance, and many other talents. Everyone plays a part in bringing a building project to completion.

Charlene Anthony, executive director of Houston’s chapter of Associated General Contractors of America, notes that the team is united by a common sense of accomplishment. “There’s a level of pride in the industry, driving around your community and knowing you’ve helped build it,” she observes. “That’s the resounding thing I hear, whether it’s building a place of worship or homes or shopping centers—there’s a sense of satisfaction in having helped build your community.”

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BROAD-BASED SKILLS
“Architecture is a blend of art and science,” says Kip Daniel, a principal architect at the Beck Group, a firm based in Dallas that does both architecture and construction. The firm has designed and built major projects as varied as airport terminals and churches, corporate offices and theaters. “What we look for at Beck is people with a broad background who can work in both areas, architecture and construction,” he says. “We require a professional degree in architecture for our architects, but there are different areas of expertise. I do conceptual creative design, for example, but other people in the company are more technical. And some have administrative skills. On the construction side, most of our people come from an engineering background,” he says.

TECHNICAL SKILLS
Josh Guerra, a designer with a master’s degree in architecture in the Dallas office of RTKL, an architecture, engineering, and planning firm, says that prospective architects should take rigorous classes in science and math, including physics. “When you design buildings, you have to deal with gravity and with the way loads are carried,” he observes. Computer literacy is a must, he says, particularly the ability to use three-dimensional computer programs. And, of course, specialized skills such as framing, roofing, plumbing, and wiring are essential for construction workers.

TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP
Evidence that a job applicant has the drive to finish a project and can work with a team is critical. “Architects need a sense of leadership,” says Ed Soltero, a practicing architect who oversees planning and construction at the University of Texas at El Paso. “They need self-motivation, self-starter attitudes, and the ability to work with a team. You typically deal with other consultants.”

Ed McGuire, senior vice president for construction at Bob Moore Construction, a mid-sized construction company based in Arlington, says that his company, too, looks for technical and leadership skills. “The construction business has come a long way from the hammer-and-nails image,” he observes. “Everyone here is an overachiever, and we go for the self-motivated, gung-ho person who is willing to work long hours.”

Design and Planning
Building projects usually start with an architect and project planners. “Architecture is a lot more complex than most people believe. It’s not just putting lines on paper,” notes architect Lynne Cagle, now a project coordinator for trade and industrial education at the University of North Texas in Denton. “It’s the ability to translate what those lines will look like once a building is built. Architects envision what no one else has seen. This is the largest form of visual arts.”

But architecture is not just about art, she’s quick to explain. It’s also about function. Designers must understand structural engineering, electrical engineering, and every other aspect of what goes into a building.

“It gets quite involved,” Cagle notes. “Designing systems gets pretty sophisticated, especially in commercial buildings.”

Planning and design is not just about putting up single structures, either. Architects who go into urban planning think even bigger—they plan communities, roadways, landscaping, and more. “They have to decide where to build the schools, the gas stations, the parks, right down to the municipal parking lots,” Cagle explains.

The decisions that take place inside buildings can be just as complicated and important as those made on the larger
scale. Interior designers make critical judgements that affect the function and environment of rooms in residential homes as well as in commercial structures. They create floorplans, often with computer-aided drafting software, and choose paint, wallpaper, flooring, furnishings, and other elements of interior decor. They work with spaces ranging from cozy breakfast nooks in suburban cottages to the broad expanse of office cubicles filling entire floors of commercial skyscrapers.

Construction
Once interior and external plans are created, they are turned over to a team of contractors and craftspeople who handle the construction. “There’s something wonderfully rewarding about watching something evolve from a drawing,” Cagle says. Specialists in the construction trades do framing, painting, masonry, flooring, electrical wiring, cabinet making, heating and air conditioning work, glazing (installing windows), and more.

Almost every member of the construction team must be up to the latest technology, Anthony stresses. “Technology has certainly facilitated the forward momentum as far as communications in the world of design go,” she says. “The use of software applications is absolutely crucial.”

Of course, there are the more “nuts and bolts” aspects of construction, which don’t depend on technology but are every bit as crucial. “The ability to read a drawing and translate it is important,” says Cagle. “In general, someone who builds things wants to measure twice and cut once. That kind of attention to detail is essential in construction jobs.”

“Some construction professionals, such as those who do skilled masonry work, are highly skilled artists,” Cagle notes. “You can really tell a building that has been put together by a craftsman as opposed to someone who has no vested interest in the outcome.”

Maintenance/Operations
Once buildings are finished, they require another team of people to operate and maintain them. These workers clean, repair, upgrade, and service every corner of a structure. They work as painters; groundskeepers; landscapers; roofers; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning experts; and refrigeration mechanics. Cagle notes, “If you have a broken window, no one is more important to you than a glazier.”

No matter what your academic aptitude, there is likely to be a place for you in Architecture & Construction. The most important requirements for success, says Anthony, are “dedication, maturity, loyalty, clear-mindedness, and a willingness to learn.”

Cool Careers

CHECK OUT THESE EXCITING CAREERS IN ARCHITECTURE & CONSTRUCTION.

1. **Architectural Drafter**
   Are you the type of person who doodles snazzy cars or skyscrapers on the inside flap of your algebra notebook? If so, you just might be right for a career as an architectural drafter. Essentially, this line of work would have you working alongside the architect, drawing detailed plans of projects according to his or her specifications.

2. **Landscape Architect**
   Being in Architecture & Construction doesn’t mean you have to work on buildings themselves. Designing the landscape of residential and commercial projects is an equally exciting and important part of construction. Becoming a landscape architect entails a four- to five-year college degree and, of course, a green thumb.

3. **Stonemason/Stone Fabricator**
   This is the ultimate field for someone who dreads a desk job. Stonemasons and stone fabricators are highly skilled artisans specializing in the use of natural and synthetic stone in constructing walls, walkways, bridges, mantels, and more. Most learn the craft through an apprenticeship, which can last anywhere from a year to five years.

4. **Grazer, Bulldozer, and Scraper Operator**
   Admit it, you loved playing with toy bulldozers as a kid, right? Here’s your chance to work with the real thing. It only takes a few months of on-the-job training to become skilled at handling big machinery like grazers, bulldozers, and scrapers.

5. **Historic Preservationist**
   Careers in building aren’t always about new construction. As in any other creative field, architects and construction specialists look to the works of past masters for inspiration. In fact, some people specialize in preserving old theaters, schools, homes, and other buildings—restoring these treasures before they become condemned. This is one of the most lucrative and respected specialties in the building world.
# Architecture & Construction

Listed below are 25 careers you might consider in the Architecture & Construction cluster. These are not all the career options. Turn to the “Online Info” on the inside back cover to research all career options in the cluster of your choice and decide on the one(s) that best fit your talents and ambitions. Here’s an explanation of the kind of information presented in each column.

- **SOC:** Stands for Standard Occupational Code, which categorizes career information. Sometimes you can find data on a career faster by searching for its SOC.
- **GROWTH:** This is the projected annual growth in Texas for the career between 2002 and 2012. Fast-growing occupations may offer greater career opportunities for young adults.
- **OPENINGS:** This is the projected number of job openings for the career in Texas each year. Even though a career may be fast growing, there may not be a lot of positions available. Careers with more openings will give an entry-level worker a better chance of getting a job and greater job security.
- **WAGES:** This is the amount the average person in the career earns in Texas per year. Naturally, entry-level wages are lower than the average, and those for workers with years of experience are generally higher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOC</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Openings</th>
<th>Wages</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17-1012</td>
<td>Landscape Architect</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$50,143</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-1011</td>
<td>Architect, except Landscape and Naval</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>$65,413</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-1022</td>
<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>$40,096</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-1025</td>
<td>Interior Designer</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>$45,374</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-9021</td>
<td>Construction Manager</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>$67,964</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-3013</td>
<td>Mechanical Drafter</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>$48,106</td>
<td>Postsecondary award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-3011</td>
<td>Architectural and Civil Drafter</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>$39,300</td>
<td>Postsecondary award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49-2098</td>
<td>Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installer</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>$30,046</td>
<td>Postsecondary award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-1051</td>
<td>Cost Estimator</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>$54,791</td>
<td>Work experience in a related occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-4011</td>
<td>Construction and Building Inspector</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>$41,256</td>
<td>Work experience in a related occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-2111</td>
<td>Electrician</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>1,885</td>
<td>$36,497</td>
<td>Long-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-2031</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>1,505</td>
<td>$28,652</td>
<td>Long-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-2044</td>
<td>Tile and Marble Setter</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$28,769</td>
<td>Long-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-2021</td>
<td>Brickmason and Blockmason</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>$35,053</td>
<td>Long-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-2043</td>
<td>Floor Sander and Finisher</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>$25,839</td>
<td>Moderate-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-2181</td>
<td>Roofer</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>$27,207</td>
<td>Moderate-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-2081</td>
<td>Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installer</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>$26,540</td>
<td>Moderate-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-4051</td>
<td>Highway Maintenance Worker</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>$23,936</td>
<td>Moderate-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53-7021</td>
<td>Crane and Tower Operator</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>$33,434</td>
<td>Moderate-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49-9096</td>
<td>Rigger</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>$36,602</td>
<td>Short-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-3013</td>
<td>Electrician–Helper</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>$22,620</td>
<td>Short-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-3012</td>
<td>Carpenter–Helper</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>$20,065</td>
<td>Short-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-3014</td>
<td>Painter, Wallpaperer, Plasterer, and Stucco Mason–Helper</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>$19,579</td>
<td>Short-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47-3011</td>
<td>Brickmason, Stonemason, Tile, and Marble Setter–Helper</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>$21,314</td>
<td>Short-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49-9098</td>
<td>Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Worker–Helper</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>$19,994</td>
<td>Short-term on-the-job training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)

Note: This chart is a sampling of careers in the cluster, not recommendations from TWC or any other agency or organization. Always do thorough research and consult with your parents or guardians before making a career choice.
in the cluster—they are just a sampling showing the variety of occupations available to you at different education levels. ones that best fit your talents and ambitions. Here’s an explanation of the kind of information presented in each column.

**EDUCATION:** This is the minimum preferred level of educational attainment for people working in the career in the United States. This can range from short-term on-the-job training to a doctoral degree taking several years of college.

**EDUCATION LEVELS:** The color bars show the mix of education levels attained by people actually working in the profession in Texas (see bars at right). If a bar features mostly one color, that means that level of education is likely the one you’ll need to reach to work in the profession. Look at architect, for example, and you’ll see that virtually everyone in the field has a college degree or better. If the three colors in the bar are roughly equal in size, that means that there are opportunities in the profession for people of all education levels. For example, about 33 percent of the people working as cost estimators have a high school diploma, while 38 percent have some college, and 29 percent have four-year degrees or better.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Levels</th>
<th>Job Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Some College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of people in the occupation who have at most high school diplomas</td>
<td>Percentage of people in the occupation who have some college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Job Description:** These are brief descriptions of each career from O’NET Online (online.onetcenter.org).

**Education Levels**
- **High School**
- **Some College**
- **College or Better**

**Job Description**
- **Carpenter:** Construct, erect, install, or repair structures and fixtures made of wood, such as concrete forms; building frameworks, including partitions, joists, studs, and rafters; stairways, window and door frames; and hardwood floors. May also install cabinets, siding, drywall, and batt or roll insulation. Includes those who build doors or install windows in an already constructed building.
- **Electrician:** Install, maintain, and repair electrical wiring, equipment, and fixtures. Ensure that work is performed in accordance with relevant codes. May install or service streetlights, intercom systems, or electrical control systems.
- **Floor Sander and Finisher:** Scrub and sand wooden floors to smooth surfaces using floor scraper and floor sanding machine, and apply coats of finish.
- **Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Worker–Helper:** Help painters, paperhangers, plasterers, or stucco masons by performing duties of lesser skill. Duties include using, supplying, or holding materials or tools, and cleaning work area and equipment.
- **Landscape Architect:** Prepare detailed drawings of architectural and structural features of buildings or drawings and topographical relief maps used in civil engineering projects, such as highways, bridges, and public works. Utilize knowledge of building materials, engineering practices, and mathematics to complete drawings.
- **Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installer:** Install, maintain, and repair electrical wiring, equipment, and fixtures. Ensure that work is performed in accordance with relevant codes. May install or service streetlights, intercom systems, or electrical control systems.
- **Architect, except Landscape and Naval:** Prepare detailed drawings of architectural and structural features of buildings or drawings and topographical relief maps used in civil engineering projects, such as highways, bridges, and public works. Utilize knowledge of building materials, engineering practices, and mathematics to complete drawings.
- **Architect, except Landscape and Naval:** Plan and design land areas for such projects as parks and other recreational facilities; airports; highways; hospitals; schools; land subdivisions; and commercial, industrial, and residential sites.
- **Architect, except Landscape and Naval:** Plan and design structures, such as private residences, office buildings, theaters, factories, and other structural properties.
- **Architect, except Landscape and Naval:** Make exact measurements and determine property boundaries. Provide data relevant to the shape, contour, gravitation, location, elevation, or dimensions of land or land features on or near the earth’s surface for engineering, mapmaking, mining, land evaluation, construction, and other purposes.
- **Architect, except Landscape and Naval:** Plan, design, and furnish interiors of residential, commercial, or industrial buildings. Formulate design that is practical, aesthetic, and conducive to intended purposes, such as raising productivity, selling merchandise, or improving lifestyle. May specialize in a particular field, style, or phase of interior design.
- **Architect, except Landscape and Naval:** Plan, direct, coordinate, and budget, usually through subordinate supervisory personnel, activities concerned with the construction and maintenance of structures, facilities, and systems. Participate in the conceptual development of a construction project and oversee its organization, scheduling, and implementation.
- **Architect, except Landscape and Naval:** Prepare detailed working diagrams of machinery and mechanical devices, including dimensions, fastening methods, and other engineering information.
- **Architect, except Landscape and Naval:** Plan and design land areas for such projects as parks and other recreational facilities; airports; highways; hospitals; schools; land subdivisions; and commercial, industrial, and residential sites.
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At first glance, preparing for careers in Architecture & Construction might seem like a matter of picking a specialty within the cluster—carpentry, masonry, electrical work, drafting—and focusing on the specialty with single-minded precision.

Even if you know where your career is headed, it's important to take a variety of courses in high school. That's because Architecture & Construction is a generalist's field involving teamwork and interaction with all sorts of people. Although you can take specialized courses in specific skills such as drafting, don't think your academic classes aren't important.

Communication Is Critical
Those who want to work in Architecture & Construction need to be able to communicate with all different types of people, including contractors, clients, laborers, inspectors, and designers. That means having a strong foundation in English—reading, writing, speaking, and listening—is essential.

"You have to demonstrate good communication skills to be taken seriously," says Toby Velasquez, general manager of Pooldeck Construction in Dallas. If you're competing with someone else for a job, he says, the person who is better at writing and speaking will often be selected.

Speaking a foreign language is also a plus in this cluster. Velasquez speaks four languages (Spanish, Italian, and Japanese in addition to English) and says, "I've used all of them on the job at one time or another."

Master Science and Math
Architecture & Construction also requires strong math and science skills. Understanding the physics of how a building is built and knowing the algebra and geometry used for the thousands of specifications and measurements that go into a complex building helps you get ahead in the construction business.

"I would recommend taking rigorous math as well as art courses," says Mary Crites, an architect and principal in the Lubbock office of Parkhill, Smith, and Cooper, Engineers, Architects, and Planners. "I'm a firm believer that, for an architect, the art side can be learned. It does not have to be an innate ability. You have to be good with computers and math as well as have an eye for design."
I recommend advanced placement math, not regular academic courses.”

**Choosing Career Electives**

Your electives offer the opportunity to focus your studies on one of the three programs of study in Architecture & Construction. These classes will differ according to the program (see “Program Profiles,” page 12) you choose.

Construction career electives include Electrical Trades, Bricklaying, Plumbing, Welding, and Stone Masonry.

Electives in the Design & Pre-Construction program of study include Drafting, Interior Design, and Landscaping.

Students in the Maintenance/Operations program can take classes such as Home Maintenance and Improvement, and Building Maintenance.

**Pursue Skill Certification**

Classroom instruction in particular construction trades is sometimes paired with work-based learning opportunities that can help students work toward certification in particular skills.

Organizations such as the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCECR) and the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute conduct certification testing. The NCCECR maintains a national registry (www.nccer.org/credentials/nationalregistry.asp) of student transcripts and certificates of completion that can be referenced by potential employers when students enter the workforce.

**Try a Little of Everything**

Educators encourage students interested in Architecture & Construction to take a few courses in each of the three programs of study in the cluster. Even if you never pick up a hammer or saw, you need to know how a building is put together.

Architecture & Construction classes may lead you in a direction you never imagined. Historic preservation, for example, is a hot field as communities seek to refurbish older structures. Another growing area is “green construction,” which takes environmental factors, such as energy consumption and pollution, into account as new residential or commercial developments are planned, built, and maintained.

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**SPOTLIGHT**

**SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION**

Architects-to-Be Launch Their Careers at Dallas Skyline Career Development Center

These students are career focused,” says Tom Cox. He’s director of the Dallas Skyline Career Development Center architecture program, and he says the students participating show a special dedication. “They have chosen a career in Architecture & Construction,” he says, “and they are learning the skills to be successful in their career.”

“When they go to college, students in the Skyline program know that architecture is not easy,” says Samuel Odaham, a former Skyline student now studying architecture at the University of Texas at Arlington. “Of the maybe 50 students who started the Skyline program in the ninth grade, only nine or 10 completed it.”

That’s because the program is so rigorous. “The first part of the school day you take classes in the courses required for graduation, and then in third and fourth periods you take all architecture courses,” says Odaham.

“Architects come to school to give tutorials and critique student work,” says Cox. “We offer a mentorship program called ACE (architecture, construction, engineering) to our seniors to give them insight into the building industry.”

Cox says the program is a perfect fit for the type of person who’s always known what he or she wants to do, and who doesn’t want to waste any time reaching that goal. “Some cluster students travel great distances to get to Skyline,” he says. “If students spend an hour traveling each way, every day, they are serious about their education.”

Odaham sums up: “Skyline taught me what I needed to do to prepare for my career choice. We learned about the different schools of architecture in Texas, the history of architecture, and the Architect Registration Exam. I started college ahead of my peers.”
In the summer of 2004, Pilot Point High School student Kate Tickner entered Huckabee University, a high school internship program sponsored by the Fort Worth architecture firm Huckabee, Inc.

The nine students at Huckabee University (now called Next Generation Design Institute) formed three teams of three in a week-long competition for scholarship money. “Our project was to design a high-end, multiuse retail/housing, restaurant/park development along the coastline at Galveston,” Tickner recalls. “We had to fully develop a typical housing unit and then design the retail, restaurant, and park amenities.”

Tickner’s team won the competition. Now an architecture student at Drury University in Springfield, Missouri, Tickner continues to intern in the summer at Huckabee. “The week I spent at Huckabee really changed my plans for the future. It helped me see that architecture was definitely the route I wanted to follow through college.”

**Shadowing and Mentoring**

Out-of-classroom learning, or extended learning, as it’s also called, puts you in the offices and construction sites where buildings are planned and constructed. It takes a number of different forms. Job shadowing involves going to the workplace and following a professional through the activities of his or her day. Many businesses around the country participate in February of each year in National Groundhog Job Shadow Day, but you can set up job shadows at any time of the year.

Job shadowing can lead to mentoring relationships with professionals in your chosen career. Mentors take students under their wing and advise them on career preparation, academic performance, and even how to prepare for a job interview.

Tosh Chachere, a student in Central High School in Beaumont, met mentor Chuck Mason, who runs a family-owned construction firm, while serving as a counselor at the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), a camp sponsored by Rotary International to teach students leadership skills. “Mr. Mason showed a personal interest in me and my future,” says Chachere. “He regularly checked up on my progress and helped me out financially when I went off to college.”

**Internships**

Paid or unpaid internships can help you land a job by giving you the chance to show potential employers what you can do. Gary Lopez, who works in human resources with SHW Group, an architectural firm with four offices in Texas, says internships provided for high school students from the Irving and Carrollton independent school districts have helped him find some of his best hires.

“Applying for the internship includes an interview process,” Lopez says, “so students gain experience interviewing. Some of our best interns tell their friends about the firm. It’s a high achievers network. When students are good, we make them a job offer once they complete college.”
Apprenticeship
Apprenticeship training is a common entryway into careers in construction. Participants earn certificates in skills such as carpentry, masonry, and electrical work.

Gary Strouz, training director of the Electrical Apprenticeship Training Program in Houston, says his program “combines on-the-job training and classroom studies to produce top-notch electricians. Contractors generally pair up one journeyman electrician with each apprentice.”

Strouz says there are similar programs in the Houston area for plumbers, pipefitters, carpenters, insulators, heavy machine operators, bricklayers, and painters—“any craft that’s on a construction site.”

Though there are training programs for students still in high school, Strouz’s program requires a high school diploma, as well as proof of a passing grade in high school algebra. “You have to do mathematical calculations to do electrical work correctly,” he says. “We hold the students to a high level.”

SPOTLIGHT
CONSTRUCTION COMPETITION
Students Vie for Building Awards in CTSOs

If you’re interested in Architecture & Construction, it’s a good idea to get a jump-start in your field while you’re still in high school. Because that cluster is particularly competitive, students who learn the basics at the high school level can have a competitive edge when they get to college or enter employment.

SkillsUSA, the Technology Student Association (TSA), and Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) are student organizations that offer membership and activities related to a variety of occupational fields, including Architecture & Construction. In addition to membership, which allows students to form a network of friends with similar interests, there are also local, state, and national competitions.

Competitive events for students entering architecture and design fields include drawing floorplans or blueprints to judges’ specifications and other problem-solving exercises. Students interested in construction careers can compete in carpentry, residential wiring, welding, masonry, cabinetmaking, and more.

“The opportunity to compete really gives the students incentive. They strive to do better and learn skills of teamwork, problem solving, and leadership that you need to be successful on the job,” says Ada Kranenberg, program director for SkillsUSA Championships.

The thrill of competition may be enough motivation for some students to get involved in a CTSO, but Kranenberg suggests that participating in CTSO activities can also help a student take the right direction toward his or her career. “A student can get the experience he or she needs to decide whether to go to a four-year university, a technical school, or an apprenticeship,” she says.

To find out more about CTSOs, see “Architecture & Construction CTSOs” on page 3.

CREATE a Career PORTFOLIO

One valuable tool that can help you get ready for college and beyond is a career portfolio—a collection of items that document your achievements both in and out of school, assembled in one convenient package.

A career portfolio is not simply a resume, although it can certainly include one. So what should go in a career portfolio? A variety of things, depending on your own personal experiences. It could include transcripts and grades; writing samples; letters of recommendation from teachers, mentors, or employers; awards you’ve received; and items that document other activities, such as internships and job shadowing experiences.

“You need to be specific—dates, how many years, any awards, what they meant, and who you received them from,” says Grace Brauchle, who helps students put their portfolios together as the career center coordinator for Lehman High School in Kyle.

Brauchle says portfolios come in handy when students apply for jobs or admission to college. “First impressions are a very big thing,” she says, “and you want to be the one whose papers get passed around the office. You want to be the one where the admissions counselors say, ‘Wow, look at this one!’”

And a portfolio doesn’t have to be simply a collection of papers. Artists and photographers use their portfolios to provide visual examples of their work, and so can you. Do you have photos of someone giving you an award? Put them in. How about a video of a performance? Include it on a DVD. Do you have experience in Web design? Make an online portfolio to showcase what you can do.
was not a disciplined student in high school,” admits Samuel Odamah, who attended Dallas Skyline Career Development Center in Dallas, “and even now, as an architecture student at the University of Texas in Arlington, I struggle with that a bit. In college, I’ve learned from other students that those who prepare well ahead of time and are very organized do better.”

Whether, like Odamah, you’re aiming for a career in architecture or planning to work in a skilled construction trade, it’s important to start early, get organized, and create a blueprint for your future after high school. Here are some options.

**Apprenticeships**

“Typically,” says Kevin Alter, associate professor of architecture at the University of Texas at Austin, “people in construction jobs learn from working apprenticeships.” The Apprenticeship and Training Association of Texas, headquartered in Houston, includes apprentice training programs in all major construction trades, including bricklayers, carpenters, cement masons, electricians, ironworkers, pipefitters, plumbers, and others.

Programs range from three to five years in length and combine classroom training—usually one or two nights a week—with full-time employment and on-the-job training working directly with skilled craftspeople. At the end of the program, trainees are prepared to take licensing exams for state certification.

Gary Strouz, training director with the Electrical Apprenticeship Training Program in Houston, stresses the benefits of working while undergoing training. “Trainees have medical insurance and get a $2-an-hour raise every year, guaranteed in writing if they meet their obligations,” he says.

Trainees in some programs are eligible for postsecondary credit from the Houston Community College System toward college certificates or associate’s degrees.

**Community and Technical Colleges**

Community colleges and the Texas State Technical College System (TSTC) provide a variety of attractive options for students pursuing careers in Architecture & Construction.

Tech Prep, for example, sets up six-year career and technical education programs beginning the first year of high school and continuing through two years at a community college. A typical Tech Prep program in south Texas links high school studies in the United Independent School District’s Professional Studies Program with a specialized industry-related certificate or associate’s degree.

**The University of Houston’s Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture**

Launched the state’s first Industrial Design of Mass Produced Products Program in the fall of 2006.
District in Laredo with studies at Laredo Community College leading to certificates in air conditioning and refrigeration.

The four campuses of the TSTC System—Harlingen, Marshall, Waco, and West Texas—offer certificates and associate’s degrees in areas such as building construction technology, framing carpentry, architectural/civil drafting, and other building trades. (Check the TSTC website at www.tstc.edu for program offerings.)

**Four-Year Universities**

Texas has several universities with well-respected programs in architecture.

Whether you enroll in architecture or another popular major such as construction management depends on your career goals. The architecture curriculum is focused on exploring the creative mind and seeking innovative solutions to problems, whereas construction management tends to be more about the nuts and bolts of buildings. Educators say the two disciplines are equally challenging.

Joe Surber, a construction science major at Texas A&M University, points out that some of the high school classes that have helped him most in his college program are physics, statistics, and English. What would he have studied harder in high school? “I would’ve put more effort into calculus and physics,” he says. “A lot of the math-based classes in my major build off those academic courses.”

According to Audrey Maxwell, project designer at WKMC Architects in Dallas, you can get either a bachelor’s degree in architecture in five years or a master’s degree in six years. Then students take an apprenticeship or internship for approximately 5,600 hours before taking the nine-part Architect Registration Examination in order to be fully qualified to practice. People typically take this exam by divisions and can retake segments until they pass all components.

It’s important to thoroughly research each architecture school and particular program before you apply. Among university architecture programs, Alter notes that there are two different teaching approaches.

“There are more technical programs that are oriented to the practical aspects of building and there are other programs that take a more artistic approach,” he says. Additionally, it’s helpful to familiarize yourself with the teaching styles at your school choices. Alter explains, “More than any other major, architecture is one-on-one education. Studio courses are usually 15 students to one teacher. And there are public critiques, which vary from school to school. Some are more aggressive and some are more supportive. So it’s a good idea to visit a class.”

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**Get the CREDIT You Deserve**

Tech Prep in Texas is a great way to earn college credits toward a technical career while you’re still in high school. Tech Prep programs center on “articulation agreements,” contracts between the student, his or her high school, and community colleges the student would like to attend. The agreement includes recommendations for courses to be completed before graduation and outlines a two-year degree or certificate program.

Selected courses in a Tech Prep plan cover the same material as the equivalent college course, allowing the student to receive what is called advanced technical credit toward the college degree. It’s like a bank account. The credit is banked for you at the college, and you withdraw it when you enroll.

For more information on Tech Prep, visit www.techpreptexas.org. Ask your counselor about advanced placement, dual credit, or articulated courses and other opportunities to earn college credit.
SIX THINGS Texas students should know about getting into college

Applying to college is a lot like looking for a job or trying out for a team. You choose something that interests you, and then try your best to convince whoever is in charge that you have what it takes to be part of their organization. But whereas there might be only a few spots open on your high school’s varsity football squad, there are thousands of places available in hundreds of colleges each year. Whether you are the first in your family to apply to college or both of your parents have advanced degrees, going through the admissions process can be stressful. Fortunately, there are plenty of free resources available for Texas college-bound students. The best is College for Texans (www.collegefortexans.com), which features a list of all the state’s colleges and universities, a checklist for selecting a school, and a link to the online Texas Common Application. To help you get started on your own college search process, here are six steps you should take.

1. Make School Your Job
The first thing college admissions officers look for on your application is your grade point average. It’s simple—you have to make the grades in high school to earn your spot in a college. The easiest way to do that is to think of school as your job, starting in your first year. If you show up late for work, slack off, and talk back to the manager, you’ll get fired faster than you can say, “Do you want fries with that?” But if you always arrive on time, work really hard, and try to learn from management, then pretty soon you’ll probably get a raise or a promotion.

What works on the job works in the classroom, too. Take challenging courses. Turn in all your work on time. Pay attention in class. Contribute to discussions. Ask for help when you don’t understand something. By treating school as a career, you’ll have a better shot at earning the grades and teacher recommendations that you need to move to the next level.

2. Get Involved in Activities
Colleges don’t accept students to fill seats. They look for students who will add to the entire college community by playing on sports teams, performing on stage, volunteering for service projects, and so on. Look at the clubs and teams available at your school and sign up for the ones that interest you. In addition to showing school spirit, being part of an organization is a great way to build teamwork and leadership skills—two traits that can really help your college application stand out from the pack.

3. Build a Resume Portfolio
What if you had to take a final exam on the last three years of a subject and didn’t have any notes to study? Well, that’s exactly what it’s like trying to complete a college application if you haven’t kept an ongoing file of all your activities, honors, and employment.

Start your first year and build a career portfolio (see page 15). It’s also smart to create a computer file called “college resume” and add to it each time you participate in a service project, win an award, get a new job, and so on. Use technology to create a resume format or ask your parents or guidance counselor for help. When you sit down to complete your college applications, review your career portfolio and call up the resume—all the information you need will be right at your fingertips.

4. Prep for Tests
Most colleges use scores from the SAT, SAT II, or ACT tests in making their admissions decisions. Check which tests the schools you’re interested in require and sign up to take them in time to include the scores in your application. College for Texans (www.collegefortexans.com) also has a free ACT, SAT, and GRE prep course.

Spend time preparing for the tests before you walk into the room with your No. 2 pencils and calculator. Go through sample SAT questions at www.collegeboard.com or ACT tests at www.actstudent.org. There are also dozens of test-prep books you can buy, some including software that tracks your progress as you go through sample exams.

Remember: If you don’t do well on a test the first time, you usually can take it again and try to improve your score.

5. Make a List of Colleges
Do you want to stay in Texas for college or see another part of the country? Would you be more comfortable at a big university or a small college?

Think about what you would like to study and what matters most to you (like location, size, or religious affiliation), and then start developing a list of colleges that fit your criteria.

Use online tools like www.collegefortexans.com or www.collegeboard.com to learn more about each school and take online campus tours. Buy or borrow from the library some of the many college guides available. If possible, schedule visits to the schools you are interested in, or, through the school’s admissions office, arrange an interview with a recent grad who lives in your area so you can ask questions about courses, faculty, or anything else.

By the fall of your senior year, narrow the list down to the top five or six choices. While some online applications are free, it can cost up to $70 per school to apply, so be realistic about how much you can spend on applications.

6. Submit Polished Applications
Once you send in an application to a college there’s no taking it back, so make sure you get it right the first time. Double-check your spelling. If you use the same essay for multiple schools, remember to change the name of the school to fit each application. Make sure you have any required standardized test results (ACT, SAT, SAT II) sent to each school.

Be neat and complete, and meet every deadline. Make copies of each application before you hit the send button or pop it in the mail. If you don’t receive an email or postcard confirming that your application was received, contact the college to make sure it arrived. Items can get lost or misdirected, especially when thousands of students are sending in applications at the same time. By having copies, you can easily submit again.
EVEN IF you get accepted to college, you’ll never be able to pay the bill, right? Wrong! There’s financial aid available if you know where to look.

College isn’t cheap. With tuition and room and board at private schools often topping $40,000, and even in-state, public schools costing several thousand dollars a year, you may wonder why you should even apply.

Well, don’t worry. Every Texas student can afford to go to college.

“Access and affordability of higher education can be intimidating to students and parents; however, there are numerous resources available to walk you through the process and into an exciting future,” says Heather V. Crowson, vice president for enrollment management at Sam Houston State University.

The secret to getting the aid you need to go to school is in filling out the necessary forms, getting good grades, and applying to schools that offer generous financial aid packages. (A financial aid package consists of need- or merit-based scholarships and grants plus work-study jobs and low-interest student loans.)

Here’s a quick overview of steps you can take to get the financial aid you need to continue your studies after high school. For more information about the aid available at a specific college or university, go to the school’s website and click on the “admissions” link. Many schools provide an online form you and your parents can fill out that will give you the estimated financial aid package you might receive if accepted to that school.

Apply: You definitely won’t get any financial aid if you don’t apply. To figure out how much grant money (which you don’t pay back) and loans (which you do pay back) you’ll need to afford school, colleges use a formula that factors in your parents’ income and investments, your income, the number of kids in the family who will be in college at the same time, and other financial information. Families of all income levels may receive aid, so fill out the forms.

All schools require the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which determines eligibility for federal aid, such as work-study, Pell grants, and the Stafford loan program; and for college grants and, sometimes, merit scholarships. Complete the application as soon as possible after January 1 of the year you’ll be starting college. FAFSA forms and instruction booklets are available in your guidance counselor’s office, or you can complete the form online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Most private schools also require applicants to complete a school financial aid application and, in some cases, the CSS/Financial Aid Profile form (profileononline.collegeboard.com), which is used to award nonfederal student aid funds. Carefully read each college’s application to determine financial aid deadlines and what forms you will need to submit.

Study In-state: Whether you choose a public or a private school, staying in-state for college will cut your costs considerably. Plus, since Texas covers 267,339 square miles, you can “go away” to college without ever leaving the state.

To help ensure that qualified Texas high school graduates with financial need can go to college, the State Legislature established the Texas (Towards Excellence, Access, and Success) Grant Program. Grants can be used to study at any public college or university in the state and are equal to the student’s tuition and required fees. In 2005–2006, 61,086 students received Texas Grants. To apply, fill out the FAFSA.

Another way to score some serious state aid is to get good grades in high school. Texas students who are in the top 10 percent of their graduating class are eligible for automatic admission to any public university in the state. With that automatic admission comes the opportunity to apply for merit scholarships and special programs available at each school.

Take Two at a Community College:
The first two years of many college programs are filled with core courses that could easily be taken at a local community college for a lot less money. If you fill out all the forms, do the math, and still can’t afford a four-year school, enroll in a community college for the first two years, then transfer to a four-year school.

By living at home, working part-time, and getting required courses out of the way, you could save tens of thousands of dollars in tuition and room and board, and be able to afford to attend the college of your choice for junior and senior years. For a complete list of the state’s community colleges, go to the Texas Association of Community Colleges website at www.tacc.org.

Target Your Search: Applying to a couple of colleges where your grades and talents put you near the top of the typical talent pool makes it more likely you’ll qualify for merit aid and other special school scholarships and grants. Do a little research on college websites to find schools where your standardized test scores and grade point average rank you in the top 25 percent or so of the most recently accepted first-year class. Colleges want to attract the best and brightest students available, and often will offer attractive scholarship/grant/loan packages to convince those students to come to their school.

There are also more than one million local, national, and college-specific scholarships available each year. The trick is to find and apply for scholarships that best fit your strengths and talents. FastWeb (www.fastweb.com) is a free college scholarship search source. Register online and you will start receiving email notices about scholarships, internships, and other opportunities that fit the profile information you submit.
AchieveTexas: the name for Texas’s college and career education initiative.

Articulation agreements: formal agreements between or among educational organizations (high schools, community colleges, and universities) that align courses and majors in a way that allows students to transition from one institution to another without loss of course credit or time.

Associate’s degree: a two-year degree awarded by a community or technical college.

Bachelor’s degree: a four-year degree awarded by a university.

Career and technical student organizations (CTSOs): curricular organizations for students that offer activities and competitions related to particular careers.

Career cluster: a way of organizing curricula, instruction, and assessment around specific occupational groups (for example, Information Technology or Health Science) that offers students core academics, coursework related to specific occupations, and extended learning experiences.

Career guidance: structured developmental experiences presented systematically from kindergarten through 12th grade that help students analyze and evaluate abilities, skills, and interests.

Career portfolio: a collection of student work indicating progress made in subjects, activities, or programs. In career cluster systems, portfolios are often used to assess student performance in extended learning experiences.

Doctoral degree: a degree awarded by universities for study beyond a master’s degree. Also referred to as a Ph.D. or professional degree.

Dual credit: credit given in both high school and college for college-level courses taken while in high school.

Extended learning experiences: participation in career and technical student organizations, extracurricular activities, job shadowing, internships, or service learning.

Financial aid: scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study funds awarded to students to pay for college expenses.

Internship: an extended learning experience in which students work temporarily at entry-level jobs in careers that interest them.

Job shadowing: an extended learning experience in which students observe professionals in particular careers as they go through a day on the job.

Master’s degree: a degree awarded by universities for study beyond a bachelor’s degree.

Postsecondary education: education beyond high school. Middle school and high school are referred to as secondary education, so postsecondary means after high school.

Program of study: a way of organizing the curricula and educational activities within a career cluster related to a student’s specific academic and career goal.

Service learning: an extended learning experience in which students do volunteer work related to their career goals.

Targeted industry clusters: six industry clusters that have been identified by Texas as high-demand, high-growth sectors paying high wages. As they are developed by the State, these may be hot areas in which to build a rewarding career.

Texas Achievement Plan (TAP): an education plan suggesting the high school courses a student should take to prepare successfully for graduation and transition into postsecondary education. The vision for AchieveTexas is that eighth graders, in consultation with their parents/guardians, counselors, and teachers, will select a program of study and create a TAP. TAPs are to be reviewed and revised at least once each school year.
Online Info

Explore these Internet resources for more about your education and career options.

AchieveTexas
www.AchieveTexas.org
The AchieveTexas website offers information about the initiative and copies of the programs of study that recommend classes to take in high school, extended learning opportunities, and postsecondary programs.

America's Career InfoNet
www.acinet.org/acinet
This is the place to search for occupational information, industry information, and state-specific labor market information.

Career Voyages
www.careervoyages.gov
This is a career planning resource for students, parents, career changers, and career advisors.

College for Texans
www.collegefortexans.com
Here is information from a Texas needs to know about preparing for, applying for, and paying for college or technical school. And it's all in one up-to-date, easy-to-navigate mega-site almost as big as the state itself. Remember: $4 billion is available every year to help Texans attend college.

College Tech Prep of Texas
www.techpreptexas.org
Tech Prep is a way to begin your course of study in high school and continue in a community or technical college. The result is a certificate or associate’s degree in a career field.

O*NET
(Occupational Information Network)
online.onetcenter.org
Also available in schools and libraries, O*NET provides full information on occupations, including compensation, employment prospects, and skill matching for students. Information on compensation is available on a state-by-state basis.

U.S. Department of Labor
Occupational Outlook Handbook
www.bls.gov/oco
This nationally recognized resource offers information on job responsibilities, earnings, working conditions, and job prospects for the future.

Ask Oscar
The State of Texas has created a special website for students and others researching careers. It’s called the Occupation and Skill Computer-Assisted Researcher, or OSCAR for short. You’ll find a wealth of information about hundreds of career choices. You can look up careers, for example, by cluster. Choose “I Want to Take the Full Flight” from the home page, then click on “Clusters” on the following page. There, you can choose a career cluster and a career group, which yields a list of jobs. Click on a job title and you’ll get a brief description of the occupation and a summary of education requirements. Choose “Report” at the bottom of the page and you’ll see a detailed look at the job, including job duties, employment outlook, wages in Texas, and the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the occupation. There are many other ways to click through the data to explore your career options, from Able Seaman to Zoologist. To explore OSCAR, go to www.oscar.org/tx.

Take a Reality Check
The Texas Workforce Commission has created an online resource called Reality Check to help you understand how much money you’ll need to live on your own after high school or college and how you can earn it. • There are three ways to explore careers, expenses, and earnings. • For the first option, which is called “Get a Reality Check,” you choose an area you’d like to live in, such as Austin. You then go through a series of screens with real-world costs for items such as housing, clothing, transportation, health care, and personal expenses. The site automatically adds up your estimated monthly expenses, then uses salary information for Texas to show you careers that will make you that much money. • The second option, called “Future Salary,” starts with the wages you expect to earn, what education you plan to pursue, and the career cluster that interests you. Then it generates a list of careers in which you can make that amount of money. • The third option, “Career Direct,” begins with your career choice and the area where you want to live, then shows how your estimated expenses subtract from the salary for your chosen job. • The site, which is at www.cdr.state.tx.us/realitycheck, is a great way to play “what if” when it comes to mixing your job, earnings, and expense options.

The results of Reality Check show you how expenses add up quickly when you are living on your own.
AchieveTexas Career Clusters

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources
Processing, production, distribution, and development of agricultural commodities and natural resources

Architecture & Construction
Designing, managing, building, and maintaining the built environment

Arts, AV Technology & Communications
Creating, exhibiting, performing, and publishing multimedia content

Business, Management & Administration
Organizing, directing, and evaluating functions essential to productive business operations

Education & Training
Providing education and training services, and related learning support services

Finance
Financial and investment planning, banking, insurance, and business financial management

Government & Public Administration
Executing governmental functions at the local, state, and federal levels

Health Science
Providing diagnostic and therapeutic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research

Hospitality & Tourism
Managing restaurants and other food services, lodging, attractions, recreation events, and travel-related services

Human Service
Providing for families and serving human needs

Information Technology
Designing, supporting, and managing hardware, software, multimedia, and systems integration

Law Enforcement, Corrections & Security
Providing legal, public safety, protective, and homeland security services

Manufacturing
Processing materials into intermediate or final products

Marketing, Sales & Service
Performing marketing activities to reach organizational objectives

Marketing, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
Performing scientific research and professional and technical services

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
Managing movement of people, materials, and goods by road, pipeline, air, rail, and water

The career clusters icons above are used with permission of the States’ Career Clusters Initiative, 2007. For more information, visit www.careerclusters.org.

About AchieveTexas
You may have seen the name AchieveTexas on the cover of this magazine. What exactly is that?

Well, AchieveTexas is the name of Texas’s college and career education initiative. The idea behind it is simple: Planning for the future so that students achieve lifelong success. As AchieveTexas grows, you’ll see how subjects such as English, math, science, and social studies are relevant to your personal goals and ambitions. You’ll get the chance to begin a plan that gets you where you want to go in life. You’ll have the opportunity to take courses and engage in extended learning experiences that give you marketable skills. Best of all, you’ll be in control of your future. Read all 16 editions of AchieveTexas in Action (available through your counselor) to explore Texas’s career clusters and start on the road to success.

It is the policy of the Texas Education Agency not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its career and technical education programs, services, or activities. AchieveTexas in Action is developed by A3 Creative Group (www.A3CreativeGroup.com) under a contract from Texas Tech University and the Texas Education Agency.