



Class of  
**2017**



# Getting Ready for College

Along with this immense self-pride, you might also be feeling nervous about the next step in your education. The good news is, with a bit of simple planning, you'll be college-ready in no time.

## BUDGET

Budgeting isn't all about your money. In fact, you'll need to allocate everything from cash to meal plans and your time.

Know how much student loan or scholarship money you receive per semester, and what it needs to cover. Know the details of your meal plan — how many meals it covers, and if there is a flex account for spending in the book store or student center.

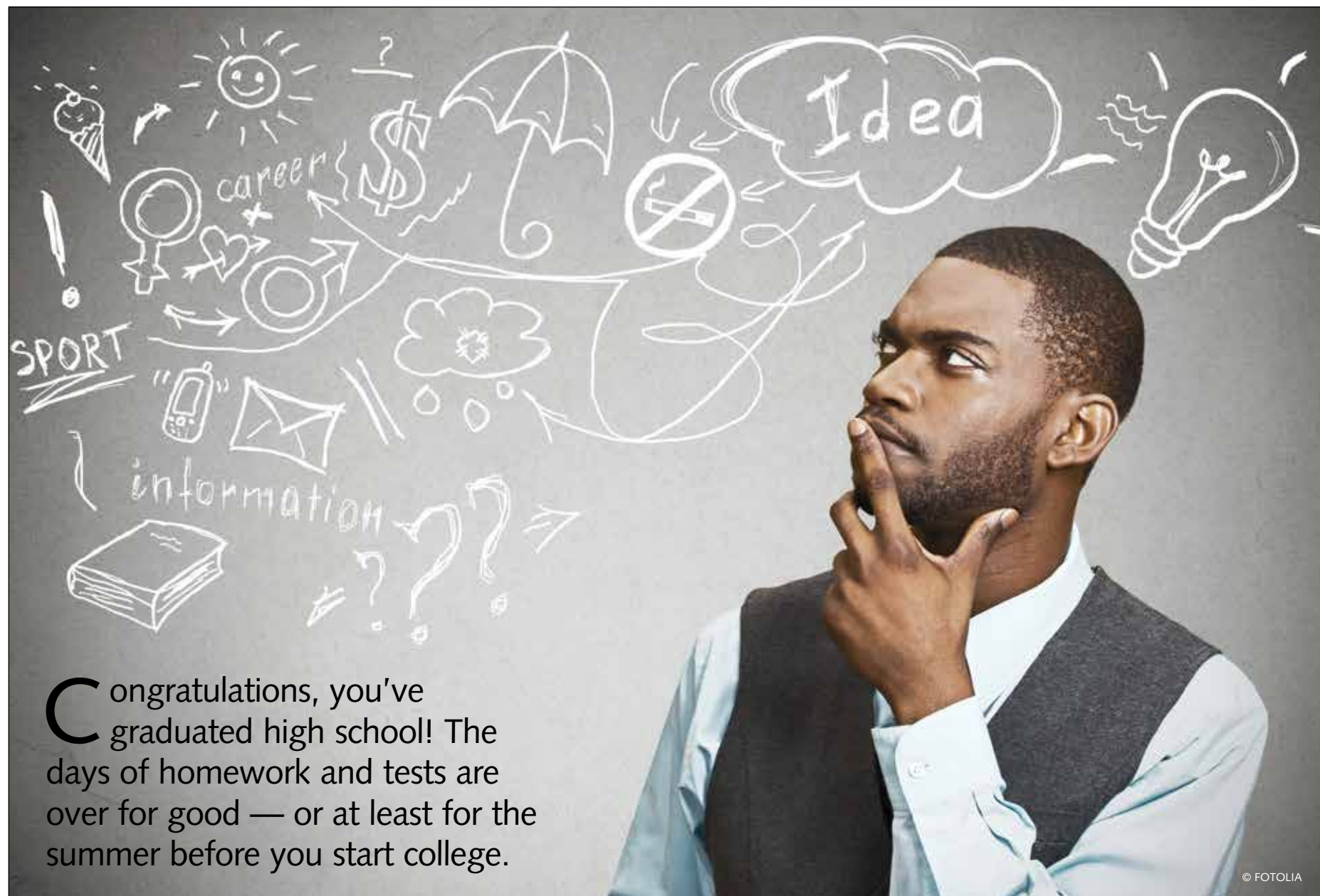
The time of letting your parents handle everything is over. It's OK if they manage and oversee the big stuff, but you should stay informed for your own good. Remember, college is about learning responsibilities both inside and outside the classroom.

## FIND A JOB

If you are not on an athletic scholarship, in which case your time is already split between academics and athletics, you may find yourself looking to land a part-time job.

Not only will you appreciate the extra cash, but it will help you learn to manage and prioritize your time.

Work-study jobs are a great option for students who qualify for federal aid. Your financial aid office will have more information on what's available, so



Congratulations, you've graduated high school! The days of homework and tests are over for good — or at least for the summer before you start college.

don't be shy. Non-work-study jobs on campus could include working in the bookstore or dining hall, as well as other service areas.

Don't discount local towns, which normally have plenty of part-time options for college students.

**VISIT THE CAREER PLACEMENT OFFICE**  
Studies show that those

who intern during college are looked on more favorably than students who did not. This is not surprising, because internships allow you to gain valuable work experience.

They help you hone valuable skills that don't have anything to do with the specifics of the job, such as initiative, responsibility and reliability.

## REDUCE YOUR DEBT

Try your best to leave college with as little debt as possible. Keep your grades up and apply for grants and scholarships every semester. There are quite a few academic scholarships out there that are not taken advantage of, simply because no one takes the time to apply.

Your college's financial aid office will be able to help you figure out which awards you

are eligible to apply for. Some student loans are sadly unavoidable for most students in the United States, but being cognizant of where that money is going will keep you on the right financial track.

Using loan money for tuition, books, a new computer and even housing is a good move. Using loan money to finance spring break in Vegas — not so much.

# So What's Your Major?

This question will be asked of you hundreds of times throughout your college career, and the answer may change. Here are a few pieces of advice to help you navigate your way through answering this question.

## DON'T DECLARE TOO EARLY

It's OK not to know for a while. Spend your first semester taking a mixture of general education credits and electives. Have you always wanted to take a photography class or an art class? Did a Russian lit class catch your eye in the course catalog? Take one.

You never know what will spark passion in you and might lead you in a direction you never imagined. Plus, odds are that these classes will fill a humanities or social science requirement for graduation.

## DON'T BE AFRAID TO CHANGE IT

In fact, approximately 80 percent of college students in the United States change their major at least once, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. On average, college students change their major three times.

Don't feel like it's the end of the world or that you've wasted your time not knowing what you want to do. Every class you take adds value to your education and contributes to your well-roundedness. Who knows what might end up useful in the future?



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## PAY ATTENTION IN EVERY CLASS

Remember that you are paying to be in each classroom.

Make sure you get a return on your investment. If you aren't learning something or getting any pleasure from it, you need

to be taking another class.

Don't take the "easy A" class that fills a fine arts requirement just because it's easy, and don't

shy away from the finance class just because it seems too difficult. Challenge yourself. You can handle it.



# Have A Great Party

Congratulations! You or someone you love has just earned a high school diploma or a college degree. Of course, you want to celebrate their accomplishment.

Throwing a party, whether small or large, is a great way to celebrate the graduate's success with all the people who helped them get there. Here are some quick tips to keep in mind as you plan.

## PLAN EARLY, UPDATE OFTEN

Knowing where you are going to host the party, creating a guest list and sending invitations are the major components of a great graduation shindig.

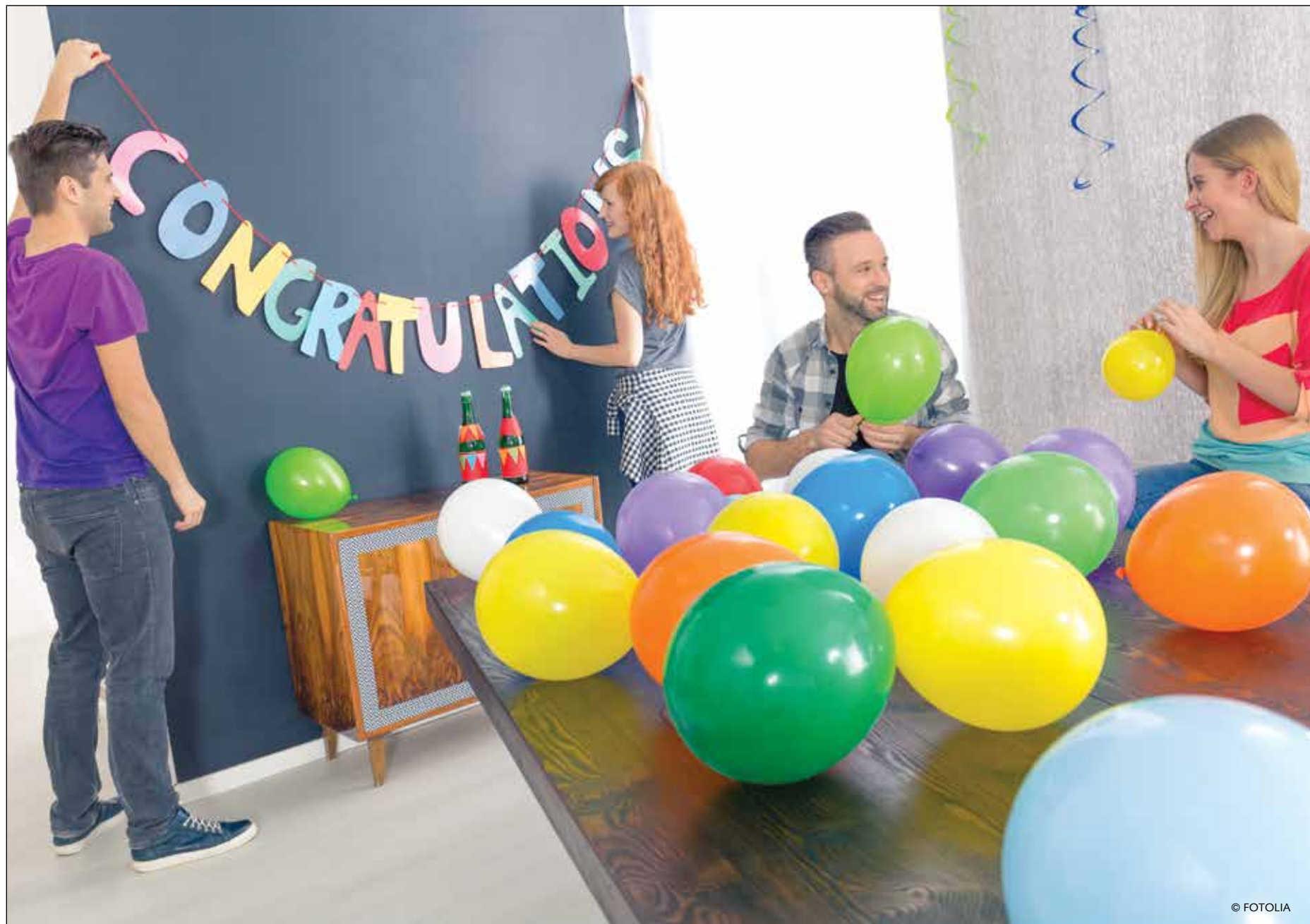
If the party will be at someone's home, set up the tables and chairs the night before. All decorations can be set prior to the big day. Make sure your house is clean so that on the day, you only need to concern yourself with food, drinks and any surprise you might have for the graduate.

Speaking of food, keep it stress-free. Vegetable trays, cheese and cracker trays, dips and most finger foods can be prepared the day before and heated up (if need be) the day of the party.

## TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS

You are bound to have many more people in your home than on a typical weekend, which will mean more cars in your driveway and down your street.

Telling your neighbors ahead of time can ward off frustra-



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tion. If your neighbors know the congestion is due to a special occasion, they are more likely to not feel put out.

## BE SENTIMENTAL

Don't be afraid to decorate

with photos of the graduate. This journey has no doubt been a long one, and people like to see how far this student has come — from playing school with her stuffed animals all the way to earning

a degree in teaching.

Plan a round of toasts and allow anyone who would like to say something a moment to speak. This might be something to tell guests ahead of time, as many people might

want to speak but would prefer to plan their words instead of giving them spontaneously. These are the things that become remembered and part of the graduation story.



# Rock the Internship

So you've survived the long internship application process and procured a position. Now that the worry of getting an internship is over, you might start to worry about making a good impression.

Don't fret. Here are a few tips to get you off on the right foot.

## BE ON TIME

This may seem obvious but cannot be stressed enough. Be on time for everything — not just the start of the day. This includes any meetings.

Internships are normally positions held by people who are hoping to gain their first professional experience, and they may not be used to managing their time effectively. Being on time or even early is a great way to set yourself apart on day one.

## BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL

While it shouldn't matter, a lot of times life is easier when you're well liked. This does not mean you should suck up to your superiors or be insincere.

Get to know the people you work with. Ask them questions. Invest time in learning about their families, hobbies and life challenges. Kindness has a way of finding its way back to you.

## AIM FOR EXCELLENCE

You will be bored at times. This is inevitable in most internships, because while you are there to learn, you are also there to do the grunt work.

Don't let this stop you from



putting all your effort into the task at hand. Work hard at being both effective and efficient. Good work does get noticed, especially in the business world, where strong team

members are hard to find.

## FORGIVE YOUR MISTAKES

Just because you give your best doesn't guarantee that you will be the best. In fact,

there will be quite a few times when you will make a mistake. Be OK with this and learn from them.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Internships are about

learning, and your superiors expect you to ask questions. It is important that you understand your role and responsibilities as an intern, which can eliminate confusion later.



# Considering a Gap Year?

**N**ot everyone is ready to head straight to college after graduating high school, and not everyone is ready to go directly on the job market after college.

You might be considering taking some time for yourself and having a gap year between these phases of your life. This is completely acceptable — if you understand what to expect.

## TRAVEL

This is a great time to go places and see things you've felt you never had the time or resources for. The easiest way to accomplish this is through an organized gap year program abroad. This can help you gain independence in a culture and language different from your own.

Traveling can be a great way of not only seeing the world but developing respect for people different from yourself. If traveling abroad is not an option for you, don't disregard the small ways in which you can experience new things. Visit museums, parks and traveling exhibits. Consider taking on work that would allow you to experience a different city or different part of the country.

## WORK

The most important thing



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to remember is that a gap year is not a license to be lazy, or take advantage of your parent's free couch and food.

It is not "taking a break." This is your life, and there are no breaks. You should always be looking for ways to expand your mind, deepen your understanding and contribute in some way to society.

## VOLUNTEER

This brings us to giving back. Take this time to explore different organizations and

find out what really is important to you. There are many ways to volunteer and many organizations that would more than appreciate any time and skill you could give.

You can volunteer on your own or through structured service programs, such as City Year, AmeriCorps or the Peace corps.

## KEEP IN MIND

If you plan on eventually attending a university, it is important to confirm defer-

ment with your school. Just because the university is fine with your deferment doesn't mean your financial aid package will stay the same. Most financial aid is determined on a yearly basis, and during your gap year, your financial needs will most likely be re-evaluated.

Also take time to consider what a year out of the classroom will do to your brain. No matter what you think, you won't be able to just pick up trigonometry right where

you left off.

Finally, most of your friends will probably be taking the more traditional route of entering college the fall after graduation, which means you will live in different places.

This is not a bad thing, but be wise enough to know that you aren't hitting a pause button: You won't be taking a break from your life as it is now and pick it back up without major changes when you return.

# Prepping for an Interview

**P**reparing for a job interview takes more than showing up on time looking nice (although these are two very important things).

You need to make a great first impression, show off your intellectual assets and leave a lasting impression on your interviewers. Here are just a few ways to demonstrate that you are perfect for the job.

## **KNOW THE COMPANY**

Research the organization or company you are hoping to join. This will help you gain a better understanding of what the company does and how they've done it thus far.

Knowing that a company started in the garage of the now-CEO's house, or that it has strong relationships with certain philanthropic causes could help you better connect in the interview.

## **ANTICIPATE QUESTIONS**

Great preparation for any interview involves thinking about the types of questions you might be asked and preparing answers to them.

This does not mean you need to practice your answers. Doing so can actually lead to your replies sounding scripted. Also, you can be thrown off if an anticipated



question is never asked.

## **HAVE A FEW OF YOUR OWN**

You can be almost certain that, at some point in the interview, normally near the end, you will be asked if you have any questions for your interviewers.

A smart candidate always has at least one. You can dis-

cuss information that wasn't covered in the interview or ask for clarification on a particular point.

Don't ask for information that can be found on a company's website. If no immediate questions come to mind throughout the interview process, don't be afraid to ask a more general question, such as, "What makes this organi-

zation a great place to work, in your opinion?" or "What do you feel is the most crucial quality for success in this job?"

## **KNOW HOW TO TELL YOUR STORY WELL**

Make sure you go over your own work history. You should be able to talk about yourself without stumbling over your

words or having to think about dates.

While your experience in the fast-food industry might have just seemed like a part-time job with the singular goal of paying rent during college, consider what valuable skills you developed or honed during that time and be proud of the work you've done.





# 10 Things No One Tells You About Graduating from College

**1. It will take time to get used to a life without semesters and spring and winter breaks.** Your time will no longer be earmarked by breaks. If you want to go home for Christmas, odds are you will be vying for vacation time with other employees who have been there longer.

**2. One of your friends will be successful immediately after graduation.** He will have the Instagrammable apartment in a cool city and spend his weeks at his dream job. He will make it look easy, and you will be jealous. Don't compare yourself. You are doing better than you think.

**3. Your first job won't be your dream job. (Neither will your second or third.)** You might even reach your dream job only to find that it isn't your dream job after all. You also might find your dream job somewhere you thought was temporary. Dreams don't come easily. They take a lot of hard work. Give yourself some grace.

**4. It's easy to fall into the trap of monotony. Don't.** No matter where you go, there will be people who complain about their jobs constantly, live for the weekends and generally wish their lives away. These people regularly say things like, "I can't wait until today is over." Stay away. Live in the moment and enjoy life for what it is right now. You will never get it back.

**5. Living requires an indecent**

**amount of paperwork.** W2s. W4s. 1099s. 401(k)s. Roth IRAs. Taxes. Healthcare forms. Health insurance. Car insurance. Homeowner's or renter's insurance. And heaven help you when you decide to purchase a home, because the paperwork explodes from there. There is no escaping it, but you must manage it.

**6. Food is expensive.** All food. Be forewarned.

**7. Being an adult doesn't mean you instantly know what you want to be or what you want to do.** In fact, if you continue to grow and learn and have new experiences, what you want will continually change. Being an adult is being OK with uncertainty.

**8. You need to learn to be good at being alone, even if you're not alone.** Your heart will be broken — by friends, by lovers, by a spouse, by your parents. Know how to love and take care of you first. Taking care of you only makes you better in all these relationships.

**9. Making and keeping friends is a lot harder.** Most of the time the result of this is that your friends become a more important to you and friendships become more meaningful.

**10. You parents become people.** You will call them now more than ever. You will have more conversations with them as peers, and probably begin to hold a deeper appreciation for them as people and the choices they made.