

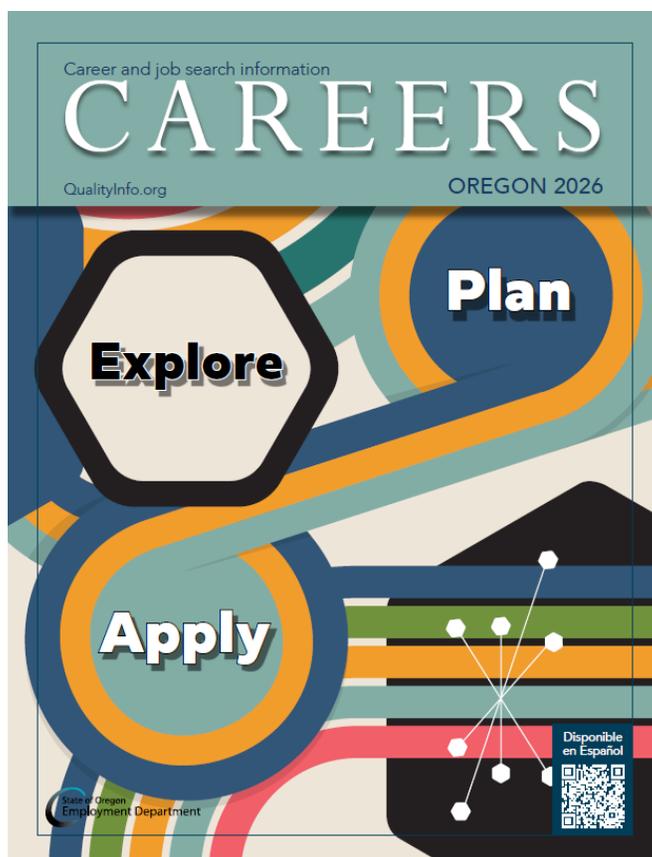
2026

Oregon Employment Department

Jason Payton

503-871-0069

Jason.M.Payton@employ.oregon.gov



[CAREERS ACTIVITY GUIDE]

A series of activities and exercises designed to help students explore the Oregon Careers 2026 publication.

The Oregon Employment Department (OED) is an equal opportunity agency. OED provides free help so you can use our services. Some examples are sign language and spoken-language interpreters, written materials in other languages, large print, audio, and other formats. To get help, please call 800-262-3912. TTY users call 711. You can also send an email to lmipubs@employ.oregon.gov.

Careers 2026 Activity Guide

The *Careers 2026* Activity Guide is an excellent tool to help students explore *Careers*. Each easy-to-understand activity is tied to a particular section in *Careers*.

Teacher's Guide

A *Teacher's Guide to the Activity Guide* is available by sending an email to Jason Payton at Jason.M.Payton@employ.oregon.gov. Please put "Teacher's Guide" in the subject line and note what school or organization you work with. You will receive a document with the answer key to exercises in the Activity Guide.

Table of Contents

Section 1: Career Planning Activities	3
Exercise 1: Fill in the Blanks.....	3
Exercise 2: Finding Resources.....	4
Exercise 3: Volunteering in Your Community	5
Section 2: Education Activities	6
Exercise 4: Finding Resources.....	6
Section 3: Job Search Activities	7
Exercise 5: Fill in the Blanks.....	7
Exercise 6: The benefits of my first job.....	8
Exercise 7: Finding Job Openings and References.....	9
Exercise 8: Résumé Writing (True or False)	9
Exercise 9: Preparing for a Job Fair and Job Interview	11
Section 4: Career Guide Activities	12
Exercise 10: Research an Occupation (Online Activity)	12
Exercise 11: Thinking Through Your Career Choice	13
Exercise 12: Exploring Oregon's Universities and Community Colleges (Online Activity)....	16
Exercise 13: Finding Resources.....	18
Exercise 14: Budget Planning	19
Exercise 15: Budget Planning Reaction	21

Section 1: Career Planning Activities (Pages 4-12 in Careers)

Exercise 1: Fill in the Blanks

1. Internships are a great opportunity for _____, _____, _____, and _____ looking to explore a career change.
2. When you meet with people for _____, you can learn what they do in their jobs, _____, what they do and do not like about their jobs, and _____.
3. The easiest way to set up a job shadow is to contact companies or organizations directly. _____, _____, and colleges' _____ can also help you arrange a job shadow.
4. Volunteering helps you learn about your _____ and the _____. It helps you explore different careers and roles in an organization that in turn will help you make an informed decision about the _____ or _____ you would like to pursue.
5. (*Choose either men's or women's basketball*) Out of _____ high school basketball players, _____ players were drafted into professional teams.
6. Only the top _____ % of YouTube channels make more than \$16,300 a year.
7. Three volunteer opportunities available to those who are thinking about joining AmeriCorps are _____, _____, and _____.
8. Teach for America members may be eligible for _____, _____, and _____.

Exercise 2: Finding Resources

1. List five courses of action you could take to learn about a career.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

2. Give three examples of how you can learn organization and leadership skills.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

3. What questions could you ask in an informational interview?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

4. Describe what AmeriCorps and Peace Corps have in common.

Name _____

Exercise 3: Volunteering in Your Community

Volunteering is a great way to get involved in your community while gaining valuable work experience that may complement your résumé.

1. Brainstorm some of the causes you think are important (examples include improving the environment, helping the unhoused, cleaning up trash in public areas, supporting cancer patients through treatments, helping abused and neglected animals, working with the elderly, or donating blood).

- a. Some of the causes I find important are _____

- b. Ways I would enjoy addressing one of the causes I listed above and helping my community include _____

2. Use the internet or other resources to research local groups that are actively involved in some of the areas you listed above. Find a contact person for each group (if possible).

- a. Organization: _____ Contact: _____

- b. Organization: _____ Contact: _____

3. Select one of the groups and contact either an administrator or another volunteer and ask them the questions listed below.

Organization I chose to contact: _____

- a. What types of activities do volunteers at the organization perform?

- b. How much time are volunteers required to commit to?

- c. Who benefits from the services the organization provides?

- d. Does the organization have any upcoming volunteer opportunities?

Section 2: Education Activities, Pages 13-21

Exercise 4: Finding Resources

1. List six education or training opportunities available after finishing high school.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

2. What are the benefits of becoming an apprentice?

3. What are two signs of a scholarship scam?

4. The _____ Scholarship Application houses more than 600 scholarships that you can access through a single application.

5. What are the two programs that offer education assistance to spouses and dependents of veterans?

Section 3: Job Search Activities, Pages 22-41

Exercise 5: Fill in the Blanks

1. Don't be afraid to become _____. Sometimes the best way to get that first job is to create it yourself.
2. Be careful of _____ from job recruiters that found your contact information online. Posting _____ on job boards can be a productive way to find a job, but it can also lead to unsolicited scam emails.
3. More and more employers collect information _____ about job applicants and _____ individuals based on what they find.
4. Name two different résumé styles:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
5. Résumés, letters, applications, and essays with _____ are much _____ likely to receive a reply or result in a college admission or job interview.
6. List three important steps you should take prior to a job interview:
_____ about the company, prepare for your interview by reviewing _____, and prepare _____ in advance.
7. The _____ limits what employers can ask people about disabilities prior to a job offer.

Exercise 6: The benefits of my first job

The article “Looking for Your First Job” on page 23 lists examples of jobs people have when they first start working. Select three jobs you think you may be good at:

Work for Someone Else

- Retail store
- Restaurant
- Gas station
- Amusement park
- Movie theater
- Farm
- Hotel
- Tutoring
- Refereeing
- Lifeguard
- Political campaigning

Work for Yourself

- Babysitting
- Dog walking
- Lawn and yard care
- Painting
- Construction work
- Car washing or detailing
- Packing or moving assistance
- Computer repair and assistance

One job I may be good at:

I may be good at this job because . . .

Another job I may be good at:

Having this job could benefit me because . . .

A third job I may be good at:

The income I earn from this job could go to . . .

Exercise 7: Finding Job Openings and References

Select three job categories, either from the list below or think of some on your own, and list a local business in your area that might employ teenagers and students.

- Office work
- Retail stores
- Restaurants
- Hotels
- Car washes
- Gas stations
- Hospitals
- Dog kennels
- Farms
- Movie theaters
- Amusement parks

1. Job category: _____

Local business name: _____

2. Job category: _____

Local business name: _____

3. Job category: _____

Local business name: _____

Exercise 8: Résumé Writing (True or False)

1. Résumés are meant to serve the same purpose as a job application. _____
2. You don't need to tailor a résumé to each job application. _____
3. It is okay to use nicknames and abbreviations in a résumé. _____
4. The names and locations of previous employers should be listed. _____
5. You should include volunteer work in your résumé. _____
6. A "Recent Graduate" résumé includes relevant classes or projects. _____
7. A résumé should be at least two pages long. _____

Name _____

Now imagine that you are planning to apply for a summer position at the businesses you listed above. Brainstorm three different individuals who you could use as a reference on your applications. Try to think of people who can highlight your unique skills and abilities if they were asked about your potential as a job candidate by an employer.

1. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Why is this person a good reference? _____

2. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Why is this person a good reference? _____

3. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Why is this person a good reference? _____

Exercise 9: Preparing for a Job Fair and Job Interview

1. Name four disqualifiers that cause employers to screen out job applicants.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

2. How would you prepare for a job fair?

3. How would you prepare for a job interview?

4. If asked in a job interview, "what is your favorite subject or activity in school," what would your response be, and why?

Section 4: Career Guide Activities, Pages 42-71

Exercise 10: Research an Occupation (Online Activity)

Explore career options by following these steps.

1. Go to <https://www.qualityinfo.org>. In the [Occupational Profiles tool](#), type a job title you are interested in. You can use the list of occupations on pages 43-63 to help identify career titles. Keep it simple – the search will work better if you use simple terms or keywords. Click the Search arrow or press enter.
2. Click on the Search icon on the right side of the screen to explore the Matching Occupations. Expand the dropdown list for a complete list of job titles that match the keywords you typed and select one. If none of these occupations sound appealing to you, choose a different career keyword and click on Search again.
3. Using the expandable filters on the right, make sure the report type is set to “Full Report” and the area is set to “Oregon.” Click “Get Report.”
4. Scroll down to the section titled “Schools and Training Providers.” If there are any colleges, Job Corps centers, or other training providers listed in this section, go to #5 below. If there are none listed, choose another occupation until you find one with training providers listed, then go to #5 below.
5. Use the Occupational Profile to complete the following:
 - a. Occupation title: _____
 - b. How many current job openings are there? _____
 - c. Is there a state license associated with your selected occupation? If yes, indicate the license. _____
 - d. What is the average annual salary for your selected occupation, either statewide or in your local area? _____
 - e. List one skill required in your selected occupation.

 - f. List one school or training provider from the Schools and Training Providers section. _____
 - g. List one occupation that requires similar skills: _____
6. Click on the link for the program of the school or training provider. This will provide you more information about the program. What do you find interesting about the program?

Exercise 11: Thinking Through Your Career Choice

Review the occupations in the Career Guide (pages 42-63) and select three potential careers that might interest you. Evaluate each occupation based on the questions below.

1. Occupation: _____

a. What do you like about the description of this occupation? What don't you like?

b. What are the average annual job openings for this occupation? Does this encourage you or discourage you to pursue this career choice? Why?

c. Look at the wages for less experienced and more experienced workers in this occupation. Does this encourage you or discourage you to pursue this career choice? Why?

d. What level of education is needed for this occupation?

e. What Oregon schools could you go to for education related to this occupation? Are any of these near where you live now?

2. Occupation: _____

a. What do you like about the description of this occupation? What don't you like?

b. What are the average annual job openings for this occupation? Does this encourage you or discourage you to pursue this career choice? Why?

c. Look at the wages for less experienced and more experienced workers in this occupation. Does this encourage you or discourage you to pursue this career choice? Why?

d. What level of education is needed for this occupation?

e. What Oregon schools could you go to for education related to this occupation? Are any of these near where you live now?

3. Occupation: _____

a. What do you like about the description of this occupation? What don't you like?

b. What are the average annual job openings for this occupation? Does this encourage you or discourage you to pursue this career choice? Why?

c. Look at the wages for less experienced and more experienced workers in this occupation. Does this encourage you or discourage you to pursue this career choice? Why?

d. What level of education is needed for this occupation?

e. What Oregon schools could you go to for education related to this occupation? Are any of these near where you live now?

After reviewing the information you gathered on the three occupations, what would your top choice be and why?

Exercise 12: Exploring Oregon's Universities and Community Colleges (Online Activity)

Follow these steps to explore admissions requirements, tuition costs, program offerings, and other details of a university and a community college in Oregon.

1. Go to the website of a university that interests you. A full list of university websites is available on pages 63-64. Use the links on the school's website or the website's search function to answer as many of the following questions as possible.
 - a. What is the minimum high school cumulative grade point average for admission?

 - b. Is completion of the SAT or ACT required for admission? _____
 - c. What is the deadline (date) for admission for fall term? _____
 - d. What is the average annual cost of tuition and fees? _____
 - e. Locate the list of majors offered and select one that interests you. Read the description of the program.
Major: _____
What do you find interesting about it?

 - f. List one of the 100 or 200 level courses required for this major that you might enjoy.

 - g. Find the contact information for an advisor or faculty member in your selected major or program.
Name: _____
Phone or email: _____

Name _____

2. Choose a community college this time. To view a list of Oregon's seventeen community colleges, go to page 64. Use the links on the school's website or the website's search function to answer as many of the following questions as possible.

a. Is completion of the SAT or ACT required for admission? _____

b. What is the deadline (date) for admission for fall term? _____

c. What is the average annual cost of tuition and fees? _____

d. Locate the list of majors offered and select one that interests you. Read the description of the program.

Major: _____

What do you find interesting about it?

e. List one of the courses required for this major that you might enjoy.

f. Find the contact information for an advisor or faculty member in your selected major or program.

Name: _____

Phone or email: _____

3. Were there any differences between the two schools that surprised you? Explain.

Exercise 13: Finding Resources

1. Define the minimum wage.

2. What is the current minimum wage in the county in which you reside?

3. What is the minimum wage in the county in which you reside in July 2025, and how will it change in July 2026?

4. Assume you work full time and you are paid the minimum wage. Calculate your monthly and yearly gross income.

- a. Multiply the minimum wage by 174 hours to find your monthly gross income (there are an average of 174 work hours in a month if working full-time).

- b. Multiply the minimum wage by 2,080 hours to find your yearly gross income (there are an average of 2,080 work hours in a year if working full-time).

5. List three online resources that can help you explore careers.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Exercise 14: Budget Planning

This exercise can help you identify where your income will go, and help you understand how much you will need to earn to pay your expenses. For this exercise, we are assuming 25% of your wages will be deducted to pay taxes.

The budget sheet on page 41 provides an approximate low, medium, and high amount for each expense. If you have a roommate, and are frugal, your expenses may tend to fall into the low category. If you are less frugal, perhaps live on your own, enjoy eating out and generally spending more money, your expenses may fall into the high category more often.

1. First, select an occupation and look up its more experienced wage in the Career Guide (pages 43-63).
2. Multiply the hourly wage by 174 hours to find your monthly gross income (the average hours in a month when you work full time is 174 hours).
3. Calculate your net monthly income.
4. Estimate how you may spend your money on a monthly basis by entering the amount you think you'll spend on each expense category. A low – medium – high range is provided on page 41 for each expense. You can use an amount other than those listed if you have information about a particular expense.
5. Finally, add up your expenses and subtract the total monthly expenses from your net monthly income.
6. If the difference is greater than \$0, your income is enough to pay your expenses. If it is less than \$0, your expenses are greater than your income and you need to adjust your expenses and savings until they are equal and your budget is balanced. If you are not sure how much your expenses may be, you can search the internet or ask your family for assistance to estimate expenses.

Name _____

Income per Month

Monthly gross income	\$
Taxes (monthly income x 0.25)	\$
Net monthly income (monthly gross income – taxes)	\$

Expenses per Month	Low	Medium	High	Your Expenses
Rent or home mortgage				\$
Utilities (electricity, water, cable, internet, etc.)				\$
Phone				\$
Food – eating at home				\$
Food – eating out				\$
Entertainment and recreation				\$
Clothing				\$
Car (payments, gas, maintenance, insurance, etc.)				\$
Public transportation				\$
Healthcare (insurance, doctor visits, supplies, etc.)				\$
Personal care (toiletries, haircuts, etc.)				\$
Student education loan payments				\$
Miscellaneous (pet food and care, donations, gym fees, anything else you can think of)				\$
Savings				\$
Total monthly expenses				\$
Difference (net monthly income – monthly expenses)				\$

Exercise 15: Budget Planning Reaction

The difference between an expected budget and how much a person can actually afford to spend can be shocking. Consider your calculations in this exercise and respond to the following questions.

- 1. Are there any expense categories where you may have under-budgeted (or inserted an amount that is probably less than the actual expense amount)? If so, what are they? Do you expect to have any expenses that are not included in the worksheet?

Under-budgeted

Expenses not included on worksheet

- 2. Would you easily be able to cover the monthly expenses of your expected budget with the net monthly income of your chosen career? If not, what are some ways you could reduce your expenses to be able to work in the career of your choice without having financial difficulties?

- 3. Find your chosen career in the Career Guide (pages 43-63) and look at the wage for less experienced workers. Does it differ significantly from the wage for more experienced workers? How might this affect your budget early in your career?

- 4. Would you be willing to change career paths in order to earn enough money for your budget, or would you prefer to modify your budget in order to work in your preferred career? Why?
