



A Guide for Teens:

HOW TO FIND A SUMMER OR PART- TIME JOB

Even if summer vacation is still a few months away for most teens, now is the time to plan and lay a foundation for landing that cool summer job you really want.

By Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.

The Action Plan

first step

The first step is to decide on the summer job you want or need—in terms of the type of job, the location, the hours and the pay. You may not be able to find a job that meets all your needs, but given the current employment situation you should strive to find one that meets as many as possible.

second step

The second step is to complete a self-analysis. What do you have to offer an employer? What kind of skills do you have? What other kind of work have you done—paid or volunteer? What have you learned at school that might be useful in your ideal summer job?

third step

The third step is to develop a résumé. You will put forth a very professional image if you present a professional-looking résumé to potential employers.

fourth step

The fourth step is to talk with your parents and older family members, your friends' parents, your teachers and any other adults you know and ask them if they have any contacts at your ideal job's company. Give them copies of your résumé. We call this step networking, and it will give you the highest chances of landing your ideal job.

fifth step

The fifth step is to hit the pavement, read the newspaper want ads and/or surf the Web. If you don't get any job leads from the fourth step, you have to take action!

sixth step

The sixth step is to apply for the jobs that interest you. This step is where your résumé comes in. Make sure you are familiar with job applications and have all the information you need to complete them.

seventh step

The seventh step is interviewing for the jobs. Make sure you know something about the company; develop answers to common interview questions; think of a few questions you could ask; practice, practice, practice with a family member or friend; dress conservatively for the interview.

Where to Look

There are any number of places where teens can find a good summer job:

- ▶ **Local merchants:** Local stores often need good help—and not just in the summer.
- ▶ **Small businesses:** Most towns have a number of small business offices—and your family or friends probably know several owners or office managers.
- ▶ **Corporate offices:** Many have established summer jobs and internship programs, but often these are the most competitive.
- ▶ **Stores at the mall:** Have a favorite store you like to shop at in the mall? Maybe now is the time to get a job there. Just be careful not to spend all your earnings buying their products.
- ▶ **Hotels and resorts:** Summer is the busy season for most hotels and resorts.
- ▶ **Tourist attractions:** Even if you don't live in Florida or California, most states have tourist attractions that especially need help during the busy summer season.
- ▶ **Golf and tennis clubs:** As the weather improves, these clubs are usually looking for part-time help.
- ▶ **Grocery stores:** Locations are usually convenient, and employment is not just for summer.
- ▶ **Fast food and restaurants:** Local restaurants always need good help.
- ▶ **Parks and recreation departments:** City, state, and national parks and recreation departments often develop special summer programs.
- ▶ **Local government summer job programs:** Often various government agencies sponsor different kinds of summer youth work programs.
- ▶ **Summer camps:** You went to camp as a kid—now you can go back as a counselor and get paid!
- ▶ **Working for yourself:** There are all sorts of jobs/businesses you could develop for yourself in your neighborhood—from mowing lawns to babysitting.

What Employers Look For

Employers want motivated teens who are going to arrive at work on time, have a positive attitude, work hard, work well with others, show leadership qualities, work their full shift and do the best job they can. You need to show your employer that you are a good investment, both for the current position as well as for any potential future positions.

Be prepared for some days not to be as great as others. But remember: You are earning money, you are gaining experience, and you are making good contacts (and references)! ❖

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SUMMER JOB RESOURCES ONLINE

▶ **Allen's Guide to Summer Jobs**

Browse through job listings for summer camps and travel programs—for all types of jobs, from instructors to tour guides, to directors: www.allensguide.com/Student-Travel/Summer-Jobs

▶ **Cool Works** Currently listing more than 75,000 job openings at national parks, amusement parks, resorts, camps, ranches and other “cool” places: www.coolworks.com

▶ **GetThatGig.com** Young job-seekers (16–21) can find cool summer jobs and internships, as well as learn about extraordinary career paths in all types of industries. Search for jobs or post your résumé: www.getthatgig.com

▶ **JobStar's Summer Jobs on the Web** A great collection of Web resources for high school and college students looking for summer jobs—both in California as well as nationally: www.jobstar.org/sacto/adjobs/summer.cfm

▶ **ResortJobs.com** Search for jobs by location or keywords and post your résumé for employers to view: www.resortjobs.com

▶ **Snag A Job** A job site for high school and college students looking for part-time, seasonal or summer jobs. Search for a job by type of job or by location, and then apply online: www.snagajob.com

▶ **SummerJobs.com** Search for jobs by location or keywords, and post your résumé for employers to view: www.summerjobs.com

Source: *Quintessential Careers*. For more information about finding summer employment and additional career advice, visit www.quintessentialcareers.com.