

How to Find a Paid Summer Internship

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Paid summer internships not only give you valuable work experience, but they also allow you to figure out what you're passionate about and what might lead to a future career. While more difficult to come by than unpaid internships, paid summer internships are definitely possible to find if you do your research. Focus your attention on industries you're interested in and use networking to make potential connections. Once you've created the perfect application, you'll be on your way to a successful summer internship experience!

Part 1 of 3: Researching Your Internship Options



1 Decide on a subject that you're passionate about. Some people have a set idea of what type of career they'd like to eventually pursue, while others are still unsure. Either way, you want to find an internship that you're truly interested in and will lead to a worthwhile experience, so pick an industry or topic that you really want to explore.^[1]

- Maybe you find yourself spending hours out in the garden because you're interested in plants, or you love interacting with children — these interests could point towards careers as a horticulturist or teacher. To test out these careers, you might look for internships at a botanical garden or after-school tutoring program.
- Think about how you spend your free time and what you wouldn't mind doing for free — these are your passions.

EXPERT TIP



ALAN FANG
Former Competitive Swimmer

Confidence can be more important than experience. Alan Fang, a software engineering intern at Quora, says: "A lot of times in an internship, you have to learn a lot on the job, but you have to get your foot in the door first. Being able to communicate well is more important than people think. You have to convince the interviewer that you really know what you're talking about."



2 Focus on applying to specific industries or companies. Once you've narrowed down what your interests are, direct your attention to companies that offer internships in those subjects or areas. If you love writing, maybe you'll look at internships related to publishing or journalism, while if you're interested in nutrition, you might search for internships in the food prep industry or health and wellness programs.^[2]



3 Reach out directly to businesses you're interested in. If you find a company that you really like, go to their website to find information about potential paid internships. If there's nothing listed, reach out to the hiring manager and show your interest — you never know what a simple email or phone call could lead to.^[3]

- When emailing a business, be sure to spend a couple sentences introducing yourself, and then capture their attention by talking about why their business piqued your interest. Let them know what you can do for them and that you're really knowledgeable about their work and goals. Just make sure the email isn't too long — 5-7 sentences is ideal.^[4]
- An example might be, "I'm a student studying Studio Art with an emphasis in painting. I've visited your art gallery many times and am always impressed by the vibrant contemporary styles that you exhibit. I know that you're planning a new exhibition opening next season, and I have many years of experience planning successful art shows. I'd love to talk to you about how I could contribute my skills."



4 Search for available positions online. You can find pretty much anything on the internet these days, and that includes many paid internship possibilities. There are tons of websites designed specifically for helping you find potential jobs and internships, so take your time and really see what's out there.[5]

- Websites like wayup.com and internships.com allow you to plug in your specifics and conduct searches of available summer paid internships that might be right for you.
- Check the websites of nearby businesses, companies, or universities to see if they might be looking for a local intern.
- Consider interning abroad. There are a multitude of summer internship opportunities available to those who are interested in going overseas, and websites like GoAbroad.com help you find them.



1 **Talk to teachers, professors, or school counselors for internship ideas.** Whether you're in high school or college, there are people around you who are willing and able to point you in the right direction when it comes to finding paid internships for the summer. Your school's faculty and staff have many resources available that could help connect you to a summer opportunity, so schedule an appointment or make time to ask.^[6]

- Ask your counselor or teacher questions such as "Do you know of any strategies that have been successful in helping other students find paid internships?" or "Are there any universities looking for intern applicants?"



2 Use personal connections to your advantage. The people you already know can be a great source for finding internship opportunities. Tell your friends, family members, coworkers, and acquaintances about the type of internship you're looking for, and ask if they know of any such openings or have a contact you could get in touch with.^[7]

- Start conversations with friends or family by saying things like "I heard you work for a television station — do you know of any available media internships?" or "I think I'd like to pursue a career in engineering. Do you have any friends who work in that field that you could introduce me to?"



3 Use Facebook and Twitter for networking opportunities. Social media is a very useful tool for finding potential connections and internships, and Facebook and Twitter are two of the top sites.[8]

- Follow a company or employer on Twitter that you're interested in to read their tweets and stay up-to-date with what they're working on. If the company is an active Twitter-user, consider sending them a tweet with any insight you might have or a creative introduction.
- There are many professional groups on Facebook that you can join, or apply to open positions using the Facebook Marketplace.
- Keep your social media pages professional — don't post inappropriate pictures, write offensive posts, or complain about past jobs or employers on your pages.
- Even using hashtags as a search tool, such as #internships, can lead to opportunities on social media sites.



- 4 Use LinkedIn to build a professional profile.** LinkedIn is the job site of social media. You can create a professional profile, search for open jobs or internships, and network with companies all over the world.^[9]
- Typing in a company's name into LinkedIn not only allows you to see potential jobs and internships they have available, but you're also able to see a list of people who work there already. Messaging someone who has a job or internship similar to the one you're hoping for could lead to a helpful connection.

Part 3 of 3: Creating a Successful Internship Application



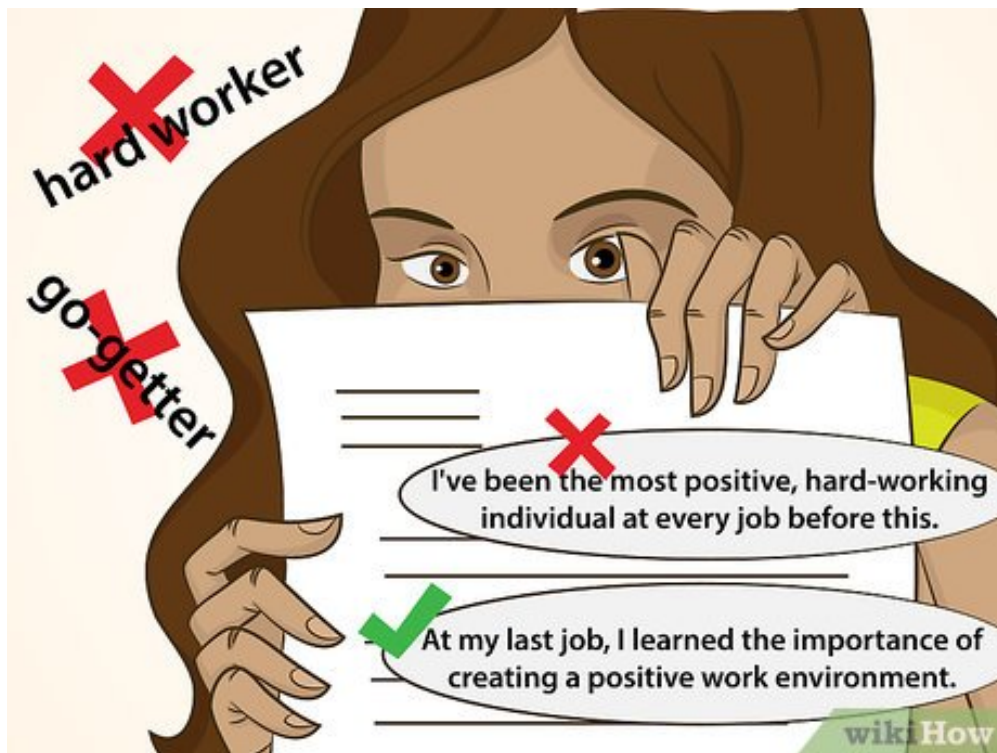
1 Put time and effort into your internship applications. These applications are the main way potential employers are going to get to know you and what you could bring to the table, so don't rush through them. Whether you're building a strong resume, writing a professional cover letter, or maybe even submitting a personal video interview, put your best foot forward.

- If you're submitting an interview video, many companies will tell you how long your video can be (usually 15-30 minutes), or how many minutes you have to answer a certain question (usually 3-5).
- Different applications will take different amounts of time — if you feel like you've answered each question thoroughly and completely, you've spent enough time on it.



2 Create a strong resume to go with your application. Your resume should show your academic and professional accomplishments, and it's one of the first things employers will look at when deciding if they want to work with you or not.^[10]

- Only put relevant information or work experience on your resume. You don't need to list every job you've ever had — pick the ones that relate to the field you're interested in and showcase those.
- Don't make your resume too long. Most successful resumes fit all of the information on one single page.
- Your resume may need to be tweaked each time you apply for a different internship, so don't feel like you can only have one version.



3 Use specific strategies to make your application successful. You want your application to be memorable, but don't stretch the truth about your accomplishments. Describe yourself using unique terms and expand on your strengths.

- Don't be cliché. Applications are your time to make yourself seem unique, so don't describe yourself as a "hard worker" or "go-getter"; dig deeper and really show them who you are as a person.
- Be honest. While you want to make yourself sound great, employers can tell when you're stretching the truth. You can talk about your strengths and accomplishments while also being honest and realistic. Saying "At my last job, I learned the importance of creating a positive work environment" is honest, while saying "I've been the most positive, hard-working individual at every job before this" is probably an exaggeration.



4 Proofread your application before you submit it. You may have the perfect application, but if there are spelling or grammatical errors, those are going to be the first thing to stand out. Read over your application several times, or have someone else look at it to check for errors.

- Ask a teacher or professor to look over your application for grammatical errors, or you could ask a family member or friend with editing skills.



5 Turn in internship applications early. There are generally more students than there are internship opportunities, especially for paid ones, so start early and turn in your applications before the deadline to make sure you don't miss it.^[11]

- Many large companies with lots of competition hold early deadlines in the fall, while other internship deadlines might not be until the spring, so do your research and know when the deadline is.
- Since many deadlines are in the spring, most people start looking for internships in the early fall. Give yourself several months to adequately search for and fill out applications.



6 Apply to many different internships to increase your chances. Paid internships are in high-demand, and receiving one is never guaranteed. By applying to several different ones (10-20 is reasonable — the more the better!), you'll increase your chances of landing a paid internship while also gaining experience in applying to jobs.^[12]



7 Prepare in case an employer asks for an interview. Sometimes an interview is part of an application, or a company may ask you for one later on. By **dressing professionally**, researching the company beforehand, and having answers to possible questions, you'll be sure to ace it.^[13]

- While what you wear to an interview may depend on the type of position you're applying for, you want to look professional and put-together to make a good impression.
- Before the interview, go to the company's website and learn more about what they're currently doing. Come up with some questions that you have for them to show that you're interested and engaged, such as "How would you describe this company's work culture?" or "How has this position changed over the years?"
- Think of the answers to questions such as "What are your strengths?" or "Tell me how you handled a difficult situation." You'll need to reflect on past experiences and how you reacted, as well as the characteristics that make you stand out as a person.



Expert Q&A

Question

What should I say when someone asks me to tell them about myself in an internship interview?



**Colleen Campbell, PhD,
PCC**
Career & Life Coach
Expert Answer

The main thing you want to do is demonstrate that you can do the job you're applying for, so focus on connecting your resume to the position. Explain how you might fit into the company culture by talking about your personal values and beliefs. You may tell them a story about your work experience, or draw on something that isn't on your resume to emphasize it in the interview.

Helpful 1 Not Helpful 0

Question

How do you convince a company to give you an internship?



**Colleen Campbell, PhD,
PCC**
Career & Life Coach
Expert Answer

Be confident! Confidence can be more important than experience. A lot of times in an internship, you have to learn a lot on the job, but you have to get your foot in the door first. Being able to communicate well is more important than people think. You have to convince the interviewer that you really know what you're talking about.

Helpful ☐ Not Helpful ☐

Question

What's a tip to find an internship?



**Colleen Campbell, PhD,
PCC**
Career & Life Coach
Expert Answer

Talk to people you know. Tell your friends and family members that you're looking for an internship to see if they know about opportunities.

Helpful ☐ Not Helpful ☐



Tips

- Certain fields are more likely than others to offer paid internships. For example, you may have better luck finding this type of internship at a tech company or financial institution, while internships relating to media, fashion, or entertainment are usually unpaid.
- Personalize each internship application. Make sure your resume, cover letter, and overall application speaks to the specific internship you're applying for. Don't simply reuse old application answers when filling out a new one.



Warnings

- Paid internships don't necessarily offer conventional, hourly pay. They often offer their compensation in the form of a monthly stipend or a lump sum payment upon completion.

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This article was co-authored by **Colleen Campbell, PhD, PCC**. Dr. Colleen Campbell is the Founder and CEO of The Ignite Your Potential Centers, Career and Life Coaching based in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles. Colleen is an International Coach Federation accredited Professional Certified Coach (PCC). Colleen received her MA and PhD in Clinical Psychology from Sofia University and has been career coaching since 2008. This article has been viewed 19,687 times.

★★★★★
2 votes - 100%

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