

A photograph of a young woman with long brown hair and glasses, smiling warmly. She is wearing a light-colored, patterned button-down shirt. The background is a library with bookshelves and red structural beams.

So, You Want To Take A Gap Year?

By Kaley Ciluffo

With rising rejection rates at highly selective institutions many students are opting to take a gap year to further explore their interests and passions. This year, the number of students taking a year off looks to be on pace with or higher than in 2021, largely as a result of low college-acceptance rates. How students choose to spend this time varies, but for many students gap years can help them gain real-world experiences that improve the quality of their application. If done right, a gap year can be purposeful and help students derive more meaning from their college education. Below, we detail four creative ways that students can make the most of their gap year experience while setting themselves up for success throughout college and beyond.

[We've gathered some experiences and activities that can help boost your application and maximize your gap year!](#)

- [Hands on Learning Activities](#)

For those students who learn better by doing instead of sitting in a classroom memorizing information, experiential learning gap year programs are the perfect fit to supplement your education. With these programs, you can learn what you never could in a classroom and create meaningful opportunities to strengthen your application and supplemental materials, like your essay. With a hands-on volunteer position, you can take your learning to the next level.

Benefits: With hands on learning activities, you can gain practical life skills that will be useful throughout your entire life, long after you graduate college even. Taking the time to learn a variety of skills and reflecting upon your passions will set you up for success both personally and professionally.

- **Internships**

Working an internship is the quintessential resume booster and can open doors for students down the line, due in part from the skills acquired and the relationships built. If you want to take your internship experience one step further, consider applying to work somewhere abroad. Ask your high school college counselor what programs are available to students that can cover funding and provide a more structured environment. Gap year internships can help you to learn about local communities—your own included—while giving you tangible workforce experience that will be an asset to your college application.

Benefits: No matter what you're interested in, there is an internship out there for you. Companies need interns to support them with their missions and are happy to have eager students and fresh perspectives on their teams.

- **Journalism Experience**

If you're interested in taking up a career in the humanities or Liberal Arts, journalism is a classic way to combine work experience with critical thinking and learning. Further, journalism pushes you to be an excellent perspective taker and writer, which is an asset that many colleges want to add to their communities.

Benefits: A journalism internship shows a desire to learn and will sharpen your intellect and critical thinking skills. This sets you up for success in at liberal arts institution. Further, working on stories or authoring pieces and help you to create a portfolio for writing/photography that can be a huge supplemental piece of your college application.

- **Language Immersion**

We live in the era of globalization. More and more often looking for employees who speak two or more languages. Communication with those around us is increasingly important across disciplines as we try to serve diverse populations. Gap year courses will teach you a new language which is one of the best ways to understand the local community and their culture.

Benefits: Learning a language is difficult, and often, a classroom setting is not conducive for learning another language. Diving into using the language daily is the best way to learn and breaks from the rigid structure of a classroom environment. Overall, gap year language programs allow you to learn more in less time than a traditional classroom experience.