



Your Amazing Options After Finishing School

KS3 CITIZENSHIP

Ages 11-14 ⌚ 3 min read

What Happens After School?

When you finish school, you don't have just one path to follow. There are actually **many different options** available, and the right choice depends on your interests, skills, and dreams. Let's explore the main routes you could take.

University or Higher Education

University is where you go after finishing your GCSEs and A-levels to study subjects in much greater depth. You'll spend **3 to 4 years** getting a degree, which opens doors to careers like law, medicine, engineering, or teaching. Universities also offer you the chance to live independently, make new friends, and explore ideas you're passionate about.

Think of it like going from primary school to secondary school – it's a bigger step up, with more freedom and more specialised learning.

Apprenticeships and Training

Apprenticeships are brilliant if you'd rather learn by doing. You work for a company while training, earning **real money** and getting hands-on experience. These can lead to careers in plumbing, hairdressing, engineering, healthcare, or business. You earn while you learn – which many young people love!

Think of it like learning to cook by actually cooking in a restaurant kitchen, rather than just reading recipes in a book.

College Courses and Qualifications

Further Education (FE) colleges offer vocational courses – practical training in specific skills. You might study **BTEC** courses, **T-Levels**, or **NVQs** in fields like hospitality, construction, beauty, or business. These are shorter than university degrees and very practical.

Gap Year or Travel

Some young people choose to take a **gap year** - a year off between school and the next step. You could travel, volunteer, work, or do a combination. This gives you time to figure out what you really want to do.

Straight to Work

You don't have to go to college or university at all. Many employers are happy to train school-leavers on the job. You could start as a trainee and work your way up, learning valuable skills and earning money immediately.

Which Path Is Right for You?

Think about what makes you happy. Do you love practical work or academic study? Do you want to earn money quickly or invest time in qualifications? There's no **wrong answer** - everyone's journey is different, and you can always change direction later in life.