

# STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU CHOOSE A MAJOR OR CAREER



## THINGS TO DO IN OFFICE

**Meet Often with an Academic and Career Advisor** - In the University Advisement Center, advisors are available to meet with students as often as needed to choose a major or career. Advisors also help with class scheduling, graduations plans, etc.

**Pre-Professional Advisement Center** - Interested in pre-law, pre-MBA, pre-med, pre-dental, or other health professions? Visit with an advisor in the PPAC located in 3328 WSC, 801-422-3044.

**Visit Exploration Point** - Exploration Point (2590 WSC) is the first stop for any BYU student seeking self, major, or career exploration. Exploration Specialists offer activities to help students deepen self-awareness, discover skills and interests, and use tools to research major and career paths.

## THINGS TO DO DURING THE SEMESTER

**Take a Career Exploration Class** - Student Development (StDev) 117 Career Exploration is a two-credit hour course designed to help students choose majors and careers. Get college credit for exploring your future!

**Choose Your Future University Core Requirements Carefully** - Your Advisor can help you select GE (General Education) courses that will help you learn more about majors and may fulfill University Core requirements.

**Keep Your Options Open** - If you are trying to decide between two majors, select courses that are required (or fill University Core requirements) for both with your Advisor.

**Job Shadow** - Thinking about a career but don't know if you would like it? Try job shadowing. Find someone who has the kind of job you want, and then ask if you can follow them around for a day or longer. What does a typical day look like?

**Turn One of Your Options into a Minor** - When trying to choose between majors, take courses that will fill major and minor requirements for both. Then your second choice can easily become a minor.

**Take Introductory or Lecture Series Courses for the Majors or Careers You are Considering** - BYU has seminar courses for pre-medicine, pre-dentistry, pre-optometry, pre-law, and for many of the engineering programs.

**Find Out about Deadlines, Prerequisites, and Requirements for Applying to Limited Enrollment Programs** - Some majors have limited enrollment and are application based. Find out what the requirements are for the majors that interest you. Use pre-requisite courses to explore, and do as well as you can in them so you are prepared if you decide to apply.

## THINGS TO DO NOW

**Obtain a List of BYU Majors** - Circle those that interest you and cross out those that don't. Available in the University Advisement Center and Exploration Point or visit the BYU Majors page at <https://universityadvisement.byu.edu/byu-majors>.

**Investigate the Major Courses that Interest You** - Check out the University Catalog (<https://catalog.byu.edu/>) to look at courses that are required for programs you are interested in. Do you like them? Will they help you prepare for the future?

**Work with a Plan** - Part-time work, summer employment, internships, and volunteer work should all be done with a purpose. Use these opportunities to investigate areas of interest and to make contacts that will help further your career goals.

**Create a Parallel Plan** - When applying to limited enrollment programs, create a parallel plan in case you are not accepted. There are often many ways to obtain a goal! Your advisors can help you develop alternate plans to achieve your goals.

**Take a Career Assessment** - The University Advisement Center has Career Interest Assessments to help you choose majors and careers. After you complete an assessment, please schedule an appointment with an academic and career advisor go over your results.

**Explore Career Online Resources** - Helpful information about careers and internships. Free to all current BYU students. <https://universityadvisement.byu.edu/career-exploration-tools>

**Informational Interviews** - Find someone who is already working in a profession you are considering and ask them for an interview. Ask them to tell you about their work assignments, what they like and don't like about their job.

**Major Snippets** - Visit our YouTube channel "BYU University Advisement Center" to watch short videos on each major you're interested in.

# THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A MAJOR



**Every student needs a major in order to graduate.** Many students come to BYU without a major, and most students will change their major at least once during their time at college - **that's OK!** However, it is important to start the process of major exploration and selection early.

## Some things to consider:

- Some majors are longer than others
- Some majors are limited enrollment programs, meaning that there is an application process
- Some majors require pre-requisite classes before students are eligible to apply

## MAJOR MYTHS

The following are common misconceptions about choosing a major and how majors impact students' university experience.

### There is only one right major/career for me -

- Most students discover that there are a variety of majors and careers that will make them happy and fulfill their educational/work values. Choose the one that you enjoy the most and get started!

### I must choose my major/career very carefully or I will be "stuck" in a job I don't like for the rest of my life -

- The reality is that most people will experience multiple career changes over their lifetime.
- Concentrate on building a transferable skill set, rather than worrying so much about the actual subject content of a specific major.

### Employers are only interested in students with majors that tie directly to the jobs they are offering -

- While it is true that some jobs require specific majors, most jobs require skills that can be developed in a variety of majors. Many jobs can be obtained without a specific major or track.
- Some skills to consider: Ability to problem solve and think analytically, communicating well with others, or being a good leader or manager.

### Multiple Majors or minors make me more employable, therefore, I should complete as many as possible during my time at BYU -

- Your major and minor are only one part of what employers are looking for. Work experience, participating in clubs, volunteer work, and internships also add to your credentials. Rather than completing multiple majors or minors, your time may be better spent gaining additional work experience, networking, or going to graduate school.

## MAJOR FAQs

### How do I officially declare a major?

- Go to MyMap > Tools > Change Major Request. This will send a request to the college advisement center of your major, and they will respond with additional program requirements (if any).

### How many majors does BYU have?

- Over 170! You can see the list at <https://universityadvisement.byu.edu/byu-majors>.
- The list of requirements for each major can be found at <https://catalog.byu.edu/>.

### When do I have to choose a major?

- Students must declare their major when they have attained 60 BYU credit hours (this does not include exam credits).
- No student may change their major once they have attained 75 BYU credit hours unless the student submits a petition and it is approved.

### Can I double major?

- Second majors (excluding some languages) are uncommon and must be approved by the college advisement center supervisor, and the dean of the college responsible for the primary major. Petitions for a double major must be submitted prior to earning 75 BYU credit hours.

### What are the most popular majors at BYU?

- The most common majors at BYU are Exercise Science, Psychology, English, Biology, Accounting, Economics, Communications, Political Science, Civil Engineering, and other Marriott School Majors.

### Does BYU have a pre-med or pre-law major?

- No, students can apply to medical or law programs with any major. For more information, visit <https://ppa.byu.edu/>.

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