Listed below are some suggested activities you can do each year to help prepare for a career. Please know this timeline is a suggestion only and that it represents the ideal process. And remember Career Services staff and academic advisors are available to assist you each step of the way!

**STEP ONE: Get started and explore opportunities**

- Your first priority is to adjust to campus life. Become acquainted with Career Services offices and professionals on campus. Learn how to balance academic requirements with campus activities and your social life.

- Explore your academic options and utilize the Majors Card Sort to narrow down your interests. With the assistance of academic advisors, choose general education and elective courses that will help you explore different majors, minors, and certificates.

- Make a list of previous jobs, volunteer experiences and courses you’ve taken. Note what aspects you enjoyed and did not enjoy in each experience and see if there are patterns that reveal your interests, abilities and potential majors/career paths.

- Make a first draft of your résumé and have it reviewed by a career development advisor.

- Join a student organization related to your planned or potential major. Talk with students already in your major to decide which organization is right for you.

- Create a profile on Handshake to get up-to-date information about internship opportunities and events.

- Meet with a career development advisor to learn more about your CliftonStrengths results and how you can use them to discover your career path.

- Look for internships, volunteering, and part-time and summer jobs that will provide you with experience in career fields of interest.

- Continue developing the qualities that brought you to CU Boulder such as leadership, analytical thinking, communication, and interpersonal skills.

- Try to keep your GPA above a 3.0 and seek out academic coaching, tutoring and professors’ office hours when needed.
STEP TWO: Prepare for internships

- Clarify and define your interests, skills, and values and use this information to develop an internship search strategy. Meet with a career development advisor to develop an internship search plan and gain understanding of hiring timelines and recruitment trends in your field.
- Consider working a part-time job on campus to gain experience, explore areas of interest (for example: athletic training, marketing and promotions, higher education, research, customer service, and others) and make new connections.
- Attend Buff Talks and career information events to learn more about internships and job opportunities.
- Update your résumé and write a cover letter. Have them reviewed by a career development advisor.
- Make a profile on LinkedIn and connect with CU Boulder alumni to begin making connections and discovering potential internship opportunities.
- Schedule a mock interview appointment with a career development advisor or utilize InterviewStream to practice on your own.
- Strengthen transferable skills by taking on leadership roles in student organizations, obtaining a part-time job, internship or volunteer experience.
- Declare your major if you have not done so already.
- If you are considering medical school, law school or other graduate school options, talk to a career development advisor about timelines and preparation.
- Develop professional connections with your professors and supervisors and discuss your professional goals with them.
- Consider pursuing global experiences—study a foreign language and study or intern abroad.

STEP THREE: Gain experiences

- Meet with a career development advisor to refine your career interests and internship search plan. It’s common for students to secure an internship related to their career interests during their junior and senior years of college.
- Expand your LinkedIn network and reach out to first degree contacts doing work you are interested in to conduct informational interviews.
- Continue to develop technical and soft skills that will position you well for future employment and graduate school.
- Attend career fairs and employer information sessions in your field of interest. Begin to do in-depth research into companies you will target for internships or full-time employment next year.
- Actively participate in professional organizations and associations.
- Review and revise your resume. Upload your application materials to Handshake and make your profile visible to employers.
- If you plan to attend graduate or professional school after graduation:
  - Continue identifying graduate school programs that are compatible with your educational and career goals.
  - Begin obtaining letters of recommendation from faculty for your graduate school applications.
  - Develop your application materials and meet with a career development advisor to learn about drafting honing your personal statement.
  - Become familiar with admissions procedures. Find out if you will need to take a standardized test for admission and plan to take it at an optimal time.
STEP FOUR: Finish strong

- Begin to actively conduct your full-time job search 6-9 months prior to graduation.

  **Peak hiring season for employers:**
  September & October in the fall | January, February, March in the spring

- Start researching companies and organizations you wish to pursue for employment.

- Network with potential employers as much as possible your final year at CU Boulder and attend career fairs, graduate school fairs and employer information panels.

- Polish your résumé, cover letters, and interview skills. Create a portfolio of your work or personal brand website.

- Meet with a career development advisor to determine which job search strategies would be optimal for you, and learn more about career resources you can use during your search.

- Interview for positions before you graduate (ideally 6-9 months prior to graduation).

- Prepare for life after college. Expand your professional wardrobe, learn how to negotiate your salary and understand your personal finances.

- If graduate or professional school is your next step after graduation, meet with a career or academic advisor to plan your application process this year.
  - If you haven’t already done so, find out if standardized tests are required to apply to your target programs and plan to take them as soon as possible.
  - Have your application and personal statement reviewed by a career development advisor and a faculty member.

- Attend a graduate school fair.

STEP FIVE: Stay connected

- Understand your benefits with Career Services as a CU Boulder alum.

- Attend events and watch webinars for career help and professional development.

- Continue updating your LinkedIn and Handshake profiles and utilize them to search for job opportunities.

- Explore panelists opportunities at CU Boulder so that you can share your experiences and career path with students.