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How to
FIND A JOB AFTER UNIVERSITY



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Preparing for the challenge

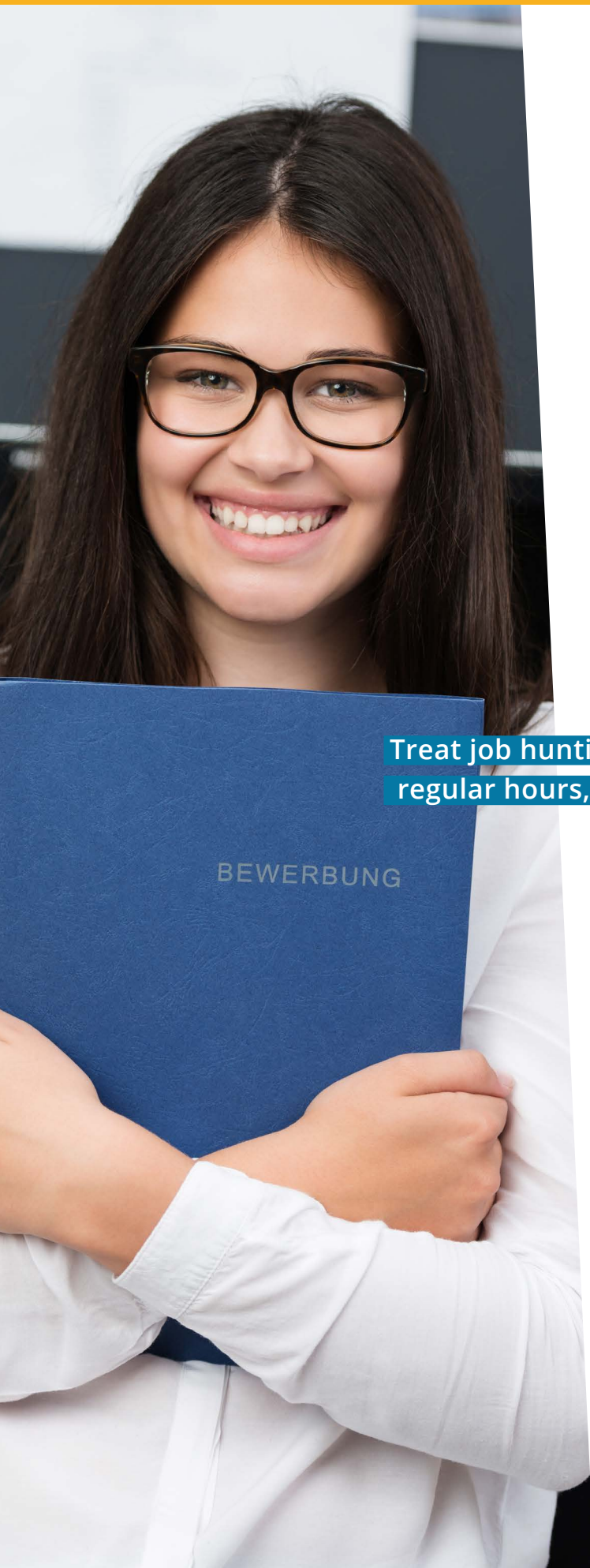
Finding your first job after university is exciting, but can sometimes be disheartening! High levels of competition for graduate jobs mean the search can take longer than you'd like, calling for all your powers of persistence, resilience and determination. But thankfully, there are strategies and tools that can help you rise to the task.

First, remember that – unless you're the rare and lucky graduate who walks straight into their ideal job – the search is likely to take some time. It's easy to feel lost when you've got no clear structure to fill your days, and no way of knowing when you'll find the right position. But trust that you will find a graduate job and everything will eventually fall into place.

Treat job hunting like a job in itself – work at it for regular hours, five days a week.

Devise a strict daily routine and stick to it. This will help you to feel organized and positive. Don't lie-in on a weekday. Treat job hunting like a job in itself – work at it for regular hours, five days a week. If you can, sit at a desk. Don't even think about searching and applying for jobs in bed, between episodes of the TV series you're currently hooked on.

But do cut yourself some slack. Take your weekends off. Hang out with friends. Take an hour for lunch. Fit an hour or two of exercise into your day. Take the time to cook delicious food and make sure you get enough sleep!



Creating a CV

A great error-proof CV (or résumé) and an up-to-date LinkedIn profile are both necessary to land your first job. Your LinkedIn page and CV both need to cover the same key points: outline your career goals and focus, highlight your skills, and list your academic qualifications.

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Before you open a new document and start to list your credentials, you need to decide on an overall message. How would you like the recruiter to think of you? What is your elevator pitch? What will go at the very top of your CV?

Recruiters are likely to scan through your CV for approximately 20-30 seconds, so use space wisely. You should aim to fill approximately one side of A4 (two at the most). Depending on your strengths and weaknesses, you might want to draw most attention to your skill-set, work experience or education. Structure and format your CV accordingly.

Don't waffle! When outlining your strengths and skills, make sure to follow the PEE method: point, evidence, explanation. Substantiate any claim you make about yourself with examples, evidence and even stats if you have them, explaining how these strengths might serve your future employer.



University careers services

Try to attend as many careers events organized by your university as possible. Most universities organize graduate fairs and invite companies to give talks and attend networking sessions. Remember to dress the part and bring CVs with you, to hand out to potential employers. Send follow-up emails to employers you were particularly impressed by.

Many institutions organize networking events for alumni – including both recent graduates, and those who have become established in their profession.

You can also build connections through the alumni community of your university. Many institutions organize networking events for alumni – including both recent graduates, and those who have become established in their profession. You can also try reaching out via email, LinkedIn or other social networks, introducing yourself as a fellow alumnus/a.

If you succeed in establishing an interesting new contact, try to set up a meeting or a call. Prepare a list of questions – such as, “What does your average work day look like?” and “How do you see the sector changing?” Always follow up with a thank you note. In the best case scenario, you could be referred for a job opening, and in the worst case, you’ll be given helpful insider tips.



Internships

New graduates are increasingly expected to have some relevant work experience on their CV, often acquired through internships completed during or shortly after their studies. As well as helping you stand out to prospective employers, internships can also be a great way to develop useful skills, knowledge and connections, while honing your ideas about the type of job you really want.

Paid internships are often more competitive to get – but aside from the obvious benefits of being paid for the work you're doing, they also seem to correlate with better job prospects. A 2012 study from the US National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) found that 60% of students who completed a paid internship during college received at least one full-time job offer on graduation – compared to 37% of those who completed unpaid internships, and 36% of those with no internship experience.

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Finding internships

To find a great internship after or during your time at university, make use of your university and departmental careers services, personal network, alumni network, and online job listings. You can also send speculative letters to companies you'd especially like to gain experience at, outlining your skills and what you could contribute. Remember: persistence is key!

Make the most of the experience

Once you've secured an internship, focus on getting maximum value from the experience. Approach each day as a learning opportunity, and consider keeping a record of each new skill you gain – this will help you to keep track, and provide a ready-made list to consult for future job applications.

Take the chance to experience as many aspects of the organization as you can, and get to know as many people as possible, building up your professional network. If there are particular skills you'd like to develop or projects you'd like to join, don't be afraid to ask your line manager. After you leave, keep in touch via professional platforms such as LinkedIn, and ask for letters of recommendation when applying for jobs.



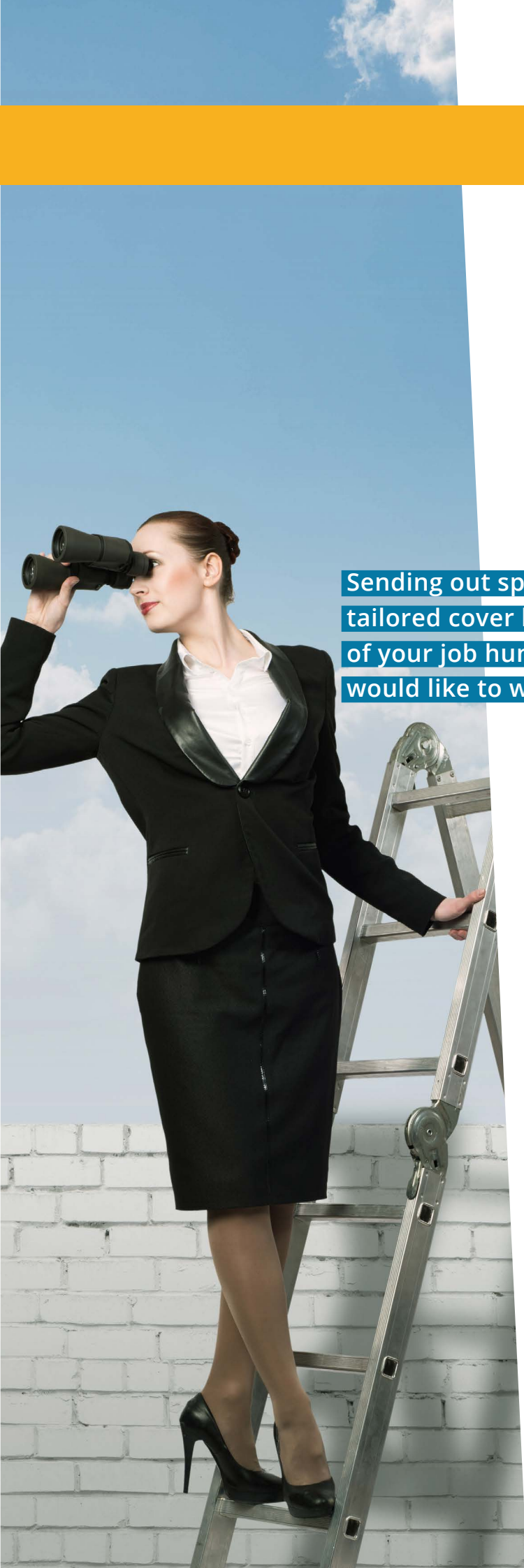
Speculative emails

Sending out speculative emails to companies, with a tailored cover letter and CV, is a great way to take control of your job hunt and decide on the kind of employer you would like to work for.

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Write up a list of companies you admire – both big and small – and search for the names of HR and department managers to reach out to, either via email or by making contact on LinkedIn. Keep a record of every company you've contacted, and the date, and send a follow-up two weeks after your first message.

Job hunting is basically like being your own sales rep, and your cover letter should be your elevator pitch. It should be succinct, while outlining your strengths and suitability for the role. Resist the urge to send out the same letter every time. Taking the time to research each organization and create a tailored message is likely to be much more effective, and worth the additional effort.



Recruitment agencies

The most effective job searches combine a variety of methods! Email your CV to a recruitment agency, listing your skills and areas of interest.

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Many recruitment agencies specialize in a specific sector. If you have your eye set on a particular industry, then choosing a specialized agency could get be a good way to quickly find the most relevant roles.



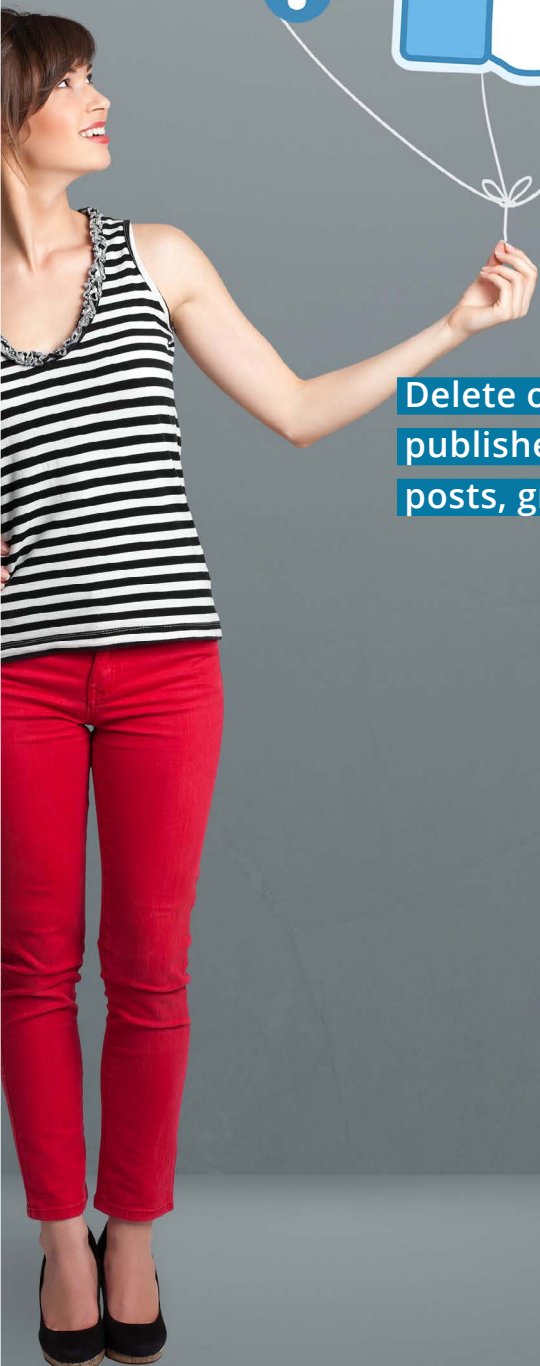
Social media

You need to do two things when it comes to social media: first, clean up your accounts, and second, build a professional online profile to network your way into new opportunities.

Delete or hide any offensive or potentially problematic content published on your social media channels, including photos, posts, groups, likes and pages. If you use Facebook, review your privacy settings and don't forget to activate the tag review function so that you don't get tagged in any compromising posts. Alternatively, you might want to consider downloading the Google Chrome extension, **Facebook™ manager** to delete any old posts from your feed. Facebook can be very fiddly when it comes to privacy settings, so triple check!

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But of course, not all social media is bad! Using Twitter and LinkedIn to make connections is a great way to network with professionals in your field. Depending on your interests, you might want to start a blog, and follow various 'influencers' on social media. Join industry groups on LinkedIn, adding relevant comments to other users' posts, and linking to any relevant articles you have written.



Job interviews

If you've been following all the steps outlined in this guide, chances are that you've already got a string of cool job interviews lined up! If so, don't panic. (If no interviews yet – also, don't panic.) Relax and take yourself through the following steps...

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Before the interview

Ask via email whether you should prepare anything in advance, or follow a specific dress code. Print out your CV and the job description, and (if applicable) some examples of your work. You should also spend some time researching the company and the role, and planning how to answer the questions you're likely to be asked (read our guide to [common interview questions](#)).

On the day

If no dress code has been provided, make sure you look smart and feel comfortable. Allow plenty of time to reach the venue (much more than you think you need), and bring a book or some notes to keep yourself occupied if you arrive early. Keep yourself calm by breathing fully, and remember to smile and make eye contact when you first meet your interviewer. During the interview itself, try not to fidget, and don't be afraid to pause before answering each question. This will give you time to make a more



considered response, and will show the interviewer you're really engaging with the question, rather than churning out a set of memorized answers.

Follow up with a short email to your interviewer/s, thanking them for their time, and reiterating your interest in the role.

After the interview

Follow up with a short email to your interviewer/s, thanking them for their time, and reiterating your interest in the role. This is also a good opportunity to share a link to your online profile or portfolio, or mention any relevant information you forgot to highlight during the interview. Keep it short, positive and professional. Bear in mind that you may be asked to complete a task or attend a second round of interviews. If your application is unsuccessful, ask for constructive feedback, and start preparing for the next challenge!



Questions for the interviewer

Remember, interviews are also an opportunity to ask questions and find out whether the role is right for you. Don't be shy! Here are some questions you could ask:

- *What are the first projects I'd be working on?*
- *What sort of candidate are you looking for?*
- *What would my daily activities include?*
- *Can you tell me about the team?*
- *What are your plans for growth?*

Working abroad

There are lots of great reasons to work abroad. If you've studied abroad, you may not feel ready to leave just yet, and you could be eligible for a visa extension allowing you to stay and seek work. If you haven't studied abroad, then this is the perfect time to gain some international experience! Not only does working overseas open up new job markets, it's also a great way to add extra value to your CV. You'll develop all kinds of skills – including adaptability, intercultural communication, and understanding of local markets – that will stand you in good stead for years to come.

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Working holidays

Depending on your age, career goals and the kind of work that you are looking for, you might want to consider applying for a working holiday visa in a country such as Cyprus, New Zealand, Canada or Australia. This usually means taking on temporary work in industries such as hospitality, tourism or agriculture, while exploring your chosen country. Note that you may be subjected to higher tax rates than local residents, and that working conditions will be variable, so do as much research as you can before making a choice.



Internships abroad

Completing work experience overseas is another great way to experience a new culture, while building a second network of contacts and developing your linguistic, professional and life skills. Browse for opportunities on international jobs listing websites and social media, as well as specialized 'internships abroad' websites and agencies.

Language teaching abroad

You could also apply to teach English or your native language in a school overseas. In most cases, schools won't require you to have a background in teaching, but you might be asked to complete a qualification such as TEFL either before or during your contract.

Long-term work abroad

To work abroad long-term, you will usually need to apply for a permanent work permit or visa. Depending on the country, you may need to find a company to sponsor your application first, or you may need to acquire the visa first. Once you have researched the visa requirements, send off applications to jobs advertised on local and international job sites. You could also search for jobs with companies based in your own country, which offer opportunities to relocate to an office elsewhere in the world.

Got a video interview? Check out our [top tips](#).



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