

Military transition action timeline: 12 months

Improving the skills I need

There may be skills necessary for your “perfect career” that you don’t have now. That’s ok. Now is a great time to gain those skills and qualifications.

Use the space below to list the skills you think you’ll need to prepare for the job you want. Be sure to include technical skills like using different computer programs, management or soft skills such as leading meetings or making presentations and personal skills like flexibility or dependability.

The following channels provide an opportunity for you to improve these skills.

Additional education or training

- **University:** Universities offer four-year degree programs and advanced programs for master’s and doctorate degrees. Many also offer shorter specialty/certification courses. Most universities require testing for admission, such as the SAT or GRE. Financial aid varies by school. Some universities have special programs and benefits for veterans.
- **Community colleges:** Most local colleges offer basic required or practical classes repeatedly throughout the year. Admission is generally less strict and costs are lower. Sometimes it makes financial sense to start at a community college and transfer to a university once basic requirements have been fulfilled.
- **Vocational school:** A vocational school, also called a trade school, is a higher-level learning institution that specializes in providing students with the vocational education and technical skills they need in order to perform the tasks of a particular job.
- **Online:** Online education ranges from individual classes to degree programs and is offered at a variety of online universities and training programs. The time requirement for online classes is normally more flexible than the schedule at colleges. Certification programs are often offered online.
- **Skill-building websites:** Certain websites offer training on specific skills. Although not as comprehensive as full semester classes, these websites can help build skills such as Excel or Java.

Personal instruction and self-study

- **Seminars:** Local seminars provide the opportunity to attend a one-day presentation on a specific skill such as Microsoft Office.
- **Self guided e-books:** Self-guided training can be found at most libraries and online. Such materials allow you to move at your own pace while learning a new skill.
- **Reading:** Reading printed and e-books can increase your personal and business vocabulary.

Do some research on who offers training on the skills you need and identify some specific learning opportunities. Then, get started!