What Can I Do With A Degree In Art or Art History?

Art Museums & Galleries
Areas
- Education
- Administration
- Curatorial
- Conservation
- Registrar
- Collections Management
- Sales
- Publications
- Development
- Public Relations
- Exhibit Design/Preparation
- Archivist
- Tour Guides/Docent

Employers
- Government or private museums
- Local historical societies
- Galleries

Strategies
- Intern or volunteer in an art museum. Develop strength in art history areas.
- Enhance computer skills. Earn a business minor.
- Acquire strong skills in research, fund-raising, speaking, and writing.
- Earn an advanced degree in an academic discipline or museum studies for greater career opportunities. Each specialty has varying qualifications and required training.
- Develop good interpersonal skills, including the ability to work well on teams.
**Fine Arts**

**Employers**
- Self-employed
- Shared studios
- Historic sites
- School/Community programs

**Strategies**
- Prepare a strong portfolio. Participate in juried shows.
- Secure guild membership.
- Consider developing a source of supplemental income.
- Learn to network and make contacts.
- Develop strong skills in area of interest.
- Obtain experience through apprenticeships, internships, or volunteering.

**Commercial Art**

**Areas**
- Graphic Art
- Computer Graphics
- Illustration
- Advertising

**Employers**
- Newspapers
- Publishing houses
- Advertising agencies
- Design firms
- Large companies - product design divisions
- Department stores
- Television and motion picture industry
- Non-technical and technical books, magazines, and trade publications
- Internet media companies
- Self-employed (freelance)

**Strategies**
- Prepare a strong portfolio.
- Gain computer and technical skills.
- Find an internship in a design firm.
- Work on campus publications in design or layout.
- Obtain summer or part-time experience with book, magazine, or newspaper publishers.
- Develop attention to detail and ability to meet deadlines.
- Supplement curriculum with course work in advertising or business.

**Education**

**Areas**
- Studio Art
- Fine Arts
- Art History

**Employers**
- Art schools
- Public and private schools (K-12)
- Colleges and universities
- Adult and community programs
- Libraries
- Museums
- Alternative schools
- Group homes

**Strategies**
- Obtain certification for public school teaching. Graduate degree usually required for post-secondary teaching.
- Work or volunteer as a tutor, camp counselor, Big Brother/Sister, or after-school program counselor.
- Become a member of art clubs.
- Obtain substitute-teaching experience.
- Develop strength in art history areas.
Art Therapy

Employers
- Hospitals, nursing homes
- Mental health facilities
- Rehabilitation centers
- Nonprofit organizations

Strategies
- Requires specialized training and certification, usually a master's degree in art therapy.
- Supplement curriculum with psychology, social work, or counseling courses.
- Gain experience working with diverse populations.

Media

Areas
- Sales
- Programming
- Design
- Video
- Production
- Editing
- Art Journalism
- Illustration
- Art Criticism
- Animation/Cartoons

Employers
- Corporate media departments
- Federal, state, and local government
- Nonprofit agencies
- Public relations and advertising firms
- Independent production companies
- Art-related publications
- Publishing houses
- Newspapers and magazines

Strategies
- Compile an up-to-date portfolio.
- Gain knowledge of a variety of technical equipment.
- Develop strong computer skills.
- Participate in student theatrical productions.
- Serve as audio-visual aide for campus films and lectures.
- Act as photographer for campus events.
- Work on student publications.
- Gain experience in internships in media or related areas.
- Supplement curriculum with courses in business, journalism, or broadcasting/electronic media.

Photography

Employers
- Museums and historical societies
- Media organizations
- Photo agencies, studios, and auction houses
- Libraries
- Self-employment
- Large corporations
- Hospitals

Strategies
- Apprentice with a free-lance photographer.
- Prepare a black and white and a color portfolio.
- Obtain a staff photographer position with the yearbook, campus newspaper, or magazine.
- Act as an audio-visual assistant or projectionist.

Fashion, Textile & Interior Design

Employers
- Pattern companies
- Apparel manufacturers/textile mills
- Interior design departments
- Commercial/residential design firms
- Self-employment
Strategies
- Prepare a strong portfolio.
- Complete an internship in a production firm.
- Create and fit costumes for stage productions.
- Enter design ideas in magazine contests.
- Become a student member of professional organization(s).
- Research requirements for entering these fields. Some may require specialized training or additional degrees.

Art Sales
Employers
  - Galleries/Museums
  - Auction houses
  - Specialty stores

Strategies
- Gain sales experience.
- Obtain a business minor.
- Develop computer skills.
- Establish contacts by attending shows.
- Volunteer in museums, membership drives, and community outreach programs.
- Serve as a student assistant in a university gallery.
- Develop strong interpersonal and communication skills.

Retail
Areas
- Buying
- Store Management
- Display Design
- Fashion Coordination
- Custom Framing

Employers
- Retail stores, including department, grocery, drug, specialty, and variety chains

Strategies
- Gain sales experience.
- Enhance curriculum with business courses.
- Obtain summer, part-time, or internship positions in retail.
- Secure leadership in campus organizations.
- Serve as treasurer or financial officer of an organization.
- Obtain a sales position with the yearbook or campus newspaper.

General Information
- A bachelor’s degree is valuable for entry-level positions, but an advanced degree is usually necessary to attain competitive, upper-level positions.
- An art degree can and should be tailored to areas of specialization.
- Save artwork for a strong portfolio - too much is better than too little.
- Be prepared to relocate to the larger markets of metropolitan areas where more opportunities exist.
- Join art related professional and student organizations.
- Volunteer with fundraising efforts for the arts.
- Gain valuable experience through volunteering, internships, part-time and summer jobs, and apprenticeships.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals in areas of interest to learn more about opportunities and strategies for these areas.
- Learn to network.
- Be prepared to begin career in entry-level positions.
- Pair an art degree with other career interests to increase opportunities and provide supplemental income.
Develop skills in business management, computers, marketing, and other related areas to increase marketability.

A career in the arts takes dedication, patience, flexibility, talent, and some luck.

Prepared by the Career Planning staff of Career Services at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

**Major Exploration**
University of Delaware
http://www.udel.edu/CSC/art.html
http://www.udel.edu/CSC/arthistory.html

Kansas State University
http://www.k-state.edu/acic/majorin/art.htm

**Career Exploration**
University of Colorado, Boulder
http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/art/careeroptions.htm

University of Denver
http://www.du.edu/art/undergraduate/careers.htm

Occupational Outlook Handbook - Artists & related workers
http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos092.htm

ArtSchools.com - Directory of Art & Design Schools and Art & Design Degrees
http://www.artschools.com/careers-jobs/

State University of New York, Oswego
http://www.oswego.edu/student/career/careersin/arts.htm

Vocational Information Center

**Job Postings**

UC Berkeley
https://career.berkeley.edu/Arts/Arts.stm

University of Delaware
http://www.udel.edu/CSC/arthist.html and http://www.udel.edu/CSC/art.html

University of North Carolina, Wilmington
http://www.uncwil.edu/stuaff/career/Majors/art-history.htm

Alternatives for Art Historians
www.nd.edu/~crosenbe/jobs.html

Federal Careers in Art and Design
http://www.makingthedifference.org/federalcareers/art.html

**SMC Student Job Search - www.stmarys-ca.edu/studentjobs**

About.com
http://arthistory.about.com/od/jobs_events_networking/l/bl_ahjintern.htm

College Art Association
http://careercenter.collegeart.org/search/

Museum Employment Resource Center (MERC)
http://www.museum-employment.com/

ArtJobs
http://art.nmu.edu/department/AD_Career-Jobs.html

The Art Deadlines List
www.artdeadlineslist.com

ArtJob.org - Membership fee required
www.artJob.org
Museum Job Resources Online
www.algonquincollege.com/museum/jobres/index.html

Links to Museum Jobs Provided by the Smithsonian
http://museumstudies.si.edu/employment.html

Professional Associations
College Art Association
www.collegeart.org/

American Association of Museums
www.aam-us.org

The Society of Architectural Historians
www.sah.org

The American Institute for Conservation
http://www.conservation-us.org/

International Center of Medieval Art (ICMA)
www.medievalart.org/

Modernist Studies Association
http://msa.press.jhu.edu/index.html

Renaissance Society of America (RSA)
www.rsa.org/

Women's Caucus for Art (WCA)
www.nationalwca.org/

Graphic Artists Guild
http://www.graphicartistsguild.org/