



# look within

*Understanding your values,  
comfort zones, skills and  
aptitudes*

To choose a career that will fit you well, first you have to understand yourself. Explore who you are. Know your likes and dislikes. Recognize what you are good at, and what you are not so good at. What things are most important to you? Pay attention to the way you feel about your experiences. All these things help you figure out the kind of work you might enjoy someday. The checklists on the next few pages will give you a start.

## values

### *What do you value most?*

From the list at the right, think about what things are most important to you. Which ones make you feel best? Which ones would you be most upset not to have? Prioritize the six or seven you value most by writing a “1” in the blank in front of the thing that is most important to you, a “2” for the thing that is next most important to you, etc. If some of the things you value most are not on this list, add them.

- acceptance
- material possessions
- security
- status
- people
- challenge
- creativity
- independence
- power
- family
- other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_)

# in the zone

## Your workplace comfort zones

It is important to learn about various careers' working conditions. Think about how well they would fit you. For example, if you don't like to sit still for very long, you probably would not be happy working mainly at a desk.



### Likes and Dislikes

Write an "L" in the blank beside the working environments you think you would like. Write a "D" in the blank beside those you think you would dislike. As you learn more about careers, keep your preferred "comfort zones" in mind. Online sources like the Occupational Outlook Handbook, My Next Move and O\*NET Online can provide information on the working conditions of specific careers.

- outside work
- inside work
- quiet environment
- noisy environment
- risk-taking work
- safe, predictable work
- rotating shift work
- regular hours
- weekend work
- physical work
- non-physical work
- overnight travel
- extended travel
- repeating tasks
- variety of tasks
- working with people
- working with things
- working with data
- working with ideas

## sources for working conditions

Occupational Outlook Handbook  
[www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh)

My Next Move  
[www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org)

O\*NET Online  
[www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)



# talent show

Your aptitudes & skills

## What do you enjoy?

Think about how you spend your free time. It could be helping children, playing sports, cooking, doing paperwork, reading or anything else.

1.

2.

3.

## What are your aptitudes?

What are you naturally good at, either physically or mentally? It could be getting along well with other people, quickly grasping how to do math problems or being able to carry a perfect musical pitch.

1.

2.

3.

## What are your skills?

Skills are slightly different than aptitudes. While aptitudes are natural abilities or talents, skills are the abilities gained through training and practice. Your skills could be in any of several areas, such as art, a craft or science.

1.

2.

3.

## Not sure what your aptitudes or skills may be?

Ask someone who knows you well (like a relative or teacher) for help.



keep  
in mind

Some of your interests, values and skills may change over time, but many will stay the same. Keep this information in your career portfolio or personal learning plan along with your goals. Refer to it often and update it as you develop your career plans.