

Summertime Jobs

....for Teens



Most teenagers look forward to the time when they're old enough to get their first summertime job. The summertime job helps countless teens take control of their financial futures in a way that can't be done without a job and income.

A teenager with a summertime job will learn about money management, time management, building a network, and so much more. There are even some studies that show that grades are higher among teens who work as compared to those who do not. There really is not much of a downside of having a summertime job for teens.

The Many Benefits of Having a Summertime Job

As a parent you want your teenager to grow up and leave your home understanding how to navigate the world as a fully functioning adult. As a teen, you just want some money without having to ask your parents. Most people learn life lessons better if they experience them. For this reason, a summertime job is an excellent way to expound on the lessons you teach your child with your goal in mind. Let's look at some of the many benefits of teens having a summertime job.

Learn Time Management

Having a job more than almost anything else can teach you about time management. You must be at work on time, and you also must still do all the other tasks of daily living required of people - such as cleaning up after yourself at home, doing household chores, summer reading and yes, also having fun with friends. Learning to do everything that you want to do in life requires the ability to schedule and stick to a schedule.

Learn Money Management

Earning an allowance is one way to learn money management, but something changes when a child gets their first "real" job with a real paycheck that is paid by someone other than Mom and Dad. They start to feel some pride in earning that money, and that will continue if you let them learn money management by letting them pay for many of their own needs and wants from the money they earn.

Learn about Teamwork

Working with others in a job is excellent teamwork training, almost better than playing sports. You learn to trust the other members of the team to do their part so that you can do your part, and the customer has no idea what it took to bring together their to-go bag of sandwich, salad, and drink.

Learn to Deal with Authority Figures

It's one thing dealing with your parents and even teachers. But it's an entirely different feeling dealing with authority figures who aren't your parents in a professional way. By taking a summertime job, a teenager can learn how to negotiate with a boss on pay, time off, and other aspects of building a work-life balance.

Learn to Deal with the Public

There is nothing quite like dealing with the public regularly in a job. When you do that, you learn things from an entirely new perspective. It'll make you a better citizen and a better consumer understanding what goes into the products and services that you use from the point of view of the person delivering those services.

Learn to Build Relationships

Making new friendships, making professional connections, and building that network starts now, not after college. The people your child works with may be huge influences in their life today and tomorrow. Maintaining and building those relationships and connections now via summertime jobs is an excellent way to teach the power of networking.

Learn to Develop a Work Ethic

One of the most important lessons anyone can learn in life is developing a work ethic. A work ethic means that they get to work on time, leave on time, and give it their all while they're working without being on electronic devices and messing around. Learning that now while a teenager is going to pay off later in life.

Additionally, some studies show that teenagers who work 19 hours a week get better grades. This is probably due to practicing better time management and simply learning more about life in the real world. Like reading more helps a person become more well-rounded, so does working around different people and in various types of jobs as a teenager.

Types of Jobs You Can Do at Different Ages

Every state and area have their own rules about who can do a particular job at what age. Therefore, check in your area what is allowed and what is not allowed, but use this list as a guide for helping your teenager figure out what type of job that they would like to find for themselves.

- **Babysitting** – This is a time-honored profession among teenagers from 13 years of age and on up, depending on the rules in your area. Check with your local Red Cross for information about CPR training and babysitting training to set up your child for success. If you attend church, one way to start your teen with child care is to let them advertise in the church bullpen as a "mommy's helper" for the summer.
- **Car Washing and Detailing** – This is an easy business to start that most teenagers can do, especially if they have their own car and can drive to the where the cars are easily. This service is often done on site where people work, but it can also be done in the neighborhood.
- **Cleaning Service** – Some teenagers like starting their own cleaning service. They might clean and organize a garage or storage shed, or they might do normal household chores like cleaning windows and mopping floors.
- **Technical Services** – If your teen is good with technology, they can start a computer repair service, or help other people with their needs. For example, if your teenager is good at editing video, they can start a video editing service.

- **Pet Walking / Care** – Another job that teens have performed for ages is pet care and pet walking. A teen can often find enough people right in their own neighborhood to pay them enough to save money and not have to work fast food.
- **Yard Services** – If your teen is older and strong enough to tote their lawn mower around, they can start a yard service business in their area. If you live in an area where yard work is a big deal in the summer months, this can really pay off.
- **Fast Food** – Most fast food places will hire teenagers as young as 14 if they have transportation to get there. This is a decent job that can teach your teen a lot of things since they often train kids and even promote them too.
- **Grocery Stores** – Many grocery stores will hire teenagers too at a young age to stock shelves, bag groceries, and perform various duties. It's a good choice because there are opportunities for advancement, and some stores even offer college scholarships.
- **Retail Stores** – Most of the time to work in a mall you'll have to be 18, but in some instances, the jobs might allow you to work there during the summer in the daylight hours. It depends on where you live. But working in retail stores is a great way to spend a summer as your teen will learn so much about what goes into sales.
- **Parks and Recreation Services** – Some local governments will hire teenagers to fill slots such as lifeguard, tour guide, caddy, and other positions. Check out the job listings early so that you can get your child to apply sooner rather than later. Certifications will be required.
- **Movie Theatres** – This is the classic teenage job. Working at a movie theater is a great way to learn a work ethic. Your teen will have to work nights and weekends most of the time so you should probably have a car and be able to drive at night.

- **Tourist Attractions** – If you have tourist attractions where you live, they will want to hire teenagers that are local to help. Check out these jobs early in the year as they will fill fast. These jobs are great for networking.
- **Small Local Businesses** – Some of the smaller local businesses will hire teenagers for office work and other types of work as long as it's legal. They might not even have ads for openings, so ask around for these types of jobs.

In all honesty, the jobs a teenager can do are vast. Anything that is legal for the teenager to do and anything the teenager has a talent for doing is fine. It doesn't matter if it's at a fast food place or on a local farm - any teen job will teach them more about life than anything they can read in books.

Useful Skills for a Summertime Job

While most people who employ teenagers for summer jobs (and often their first job) expect to have to train the individual they hire (more than if they hired someone with experience), they still expect the teenager to have some skills. Let's look at some of the more useful skills for a summertime job.

- **Enthusiasm** – When your teenager goes to a job interview and later to work for someone else, they must show that they really want the job and are happy to do the job. They should do the job with gusto and purpose regardless of how menial it is.
- **Communication Skills** – In this day of smartphones and online communication, it's still important to know how to look someone in the eye and talk with them in a conversation. Practice with your teen conversing professionally so that they can go right into the interview, shake their hand, and converse. The employer will be more impressed by this one thing than any other skillset.
- **Driving** – If your teenager can drive, that will open more possibilities for jobs. They may want to deliver pizza, work as a nanny during the summer, or

something else that requires that they either use their car at work or drive another vehicle at work.

- **Technical Skills** – Many teenagers have technical skills that rival older people around them. Therefore, many employers in small businesses like to hire teenagers with tech skills in the summertime. If your child is good with computers, software, graphic design or something technical, they can capitalize on that by applying for jobs in specific departments.
- **Leadership** – In a workplace with several teenagers, it can sometimes be tempting to goof off when the manager is not around. However, a teenager with leadership skills knows not to follow the crowd on this and will take charge even when their leader is not around.
- **Book Smarts** – If your child is a really good student and excels at some subject like math or science, they can be a tutor, and this can help them find great jobs working with kids and tutoring them. These jobs can pay 30 dollars an hour.
- **Creativity** – A creative teenager who knows how to paint, do artsy things, or build things is perfect for a more creative summer job like teaching painting, painting a house, or working on helping people reorganize their homes. It all depends on how the creativity manifests.
- **Problem Solving** – One awesome thing about most teenagers today is that they are good problem solvers because they know how to use technology to look for solutions. They aren't scared of computers or figuring things out.
- **A Good Work Ethic** – A teenager must get to work on time, work while they're at work, and excel in the work. You cannot complain about being at work while at work, be late, and perform poorly if you want to be seen as someone with a good work ethic.

When your teenager decides they want a job, the skills they need most are communication skills because that's how they'll learn the job. After that, being able to

solve problems creatively and have the ability to lead instead of following is also well sought out by employers.

The Importance of Having the Right Attitude

When people go to work, the worst thing that can happen is having to work with someone negative. Having the right attitude at work is not just about you; it's about the people you work with too. At any rate, having the right attitude at work and about work will make anyone's life better.

Here's why having the right attitude is important for your teen in their summertime job.

- **Improves Teamwork** – When you have the right attitude at work, you will cut down on the stress everyone else feels and teamwork will go more smoothly. When everyone can get along and work together for the betterment of the customer and business, everyone will feel more positive too. How one team member behaves in terms of their attitude can change the entire dynamic of the workplace.
- **Reduces Stress** – Studies show that people who can keep a positive attitude about their life, whether at work or home, tend to experience less stress. Plus, taking a bad attitude to work not only makes your life worse but also that of everyone around you.
- **Improves Health** – Stress is a killer and working in a place where everyone has a bad attitude can ruin your health. If you don't want to work in a place like that, it starts with you and your own attitude. You can be a role model for others.
- **Helps Challenges Be Overcome** – When people have the right attitude about anything in life, it's so much easier to overcome challenges. Having the resilience to get through the moment and move on is imperative and can almost always be traced back to attitude.

- **Improves Relationships** – Obviously, if you're a good person to be around who is not moody, who is kind, who is thoughtful, and who does their job, the relationships you build at work are going to be so much better.
- **Increases Self-Esteem** – When you are happy at work, your self-esteem will be boosted when you're off work too. Nothing is worse than the stress of not wanting to go to a job that causes you to have a bad attitude. But a job where the people want to be there and behave accordingly will make all the difference.

To ensure that you do demonstrate a good work attitude, you can use positive language, avoid criticizing people, don't gossip, and put your team first. Additionally, don't complain all the time. If you can't say something nice, just keep it to yourself unless you can find a positive way to bring it up with the appropriate person. After all, being positive and having a good attitude does not mean being a welcome mat for bad treatment.

Tips for Marketing Yourself

If you want to get a job or help your child get a job, it all starts with knowing what you want to do and then finding ways to market yourself. When you know what you want to do, that can narrow down where you look for a job and how you market yourself. Here's some advice for teens.

- **Tell Everyone** – As soon as you know you want a job, start telling people that you know, especially adults. Telling people online and offline that you are looking for a job can open up a lot of possibilities because people you know right now might need to hire someone, or they may know someone who wants to hire a teenager.
- **Find the Right People** – When you know what you want to do, it might require that you locate people who own the right type of business, or work in high levels at the right type of business. Connect with them and let them know what you are looking for. For example, if you know you want to be a vet, contact veterinarians

that you know through others or that are in your town to let them know of your availability.

- **Practice Your Skills** – Even if you're not currently doing what you want to do for a job, you can practice the skills needed for the job. The more you practice any skill, the more you'll be able to use it when you need it.
- **Talk to Your Parents** – Your parents may know people, or they may actually have a real job for you at their place of business or work. While working for other people who are not your parents is also a good idea, starting with your parents can still help you.
- **Create a Resume** – Now that you know what you want to do, try to create a resume based on that idea. Your resume doesn't need to be more than one page and should demonstrate that with the right training you can do the job you want.
- **Find Job Leads** – Look in your local paper, online at job boards, and possibly via your chamber of commerce. If you know which business you want to work for, go to their website to look for jobs. If nothing is listed, contact those who are in charge to let them know of your skills and availability.
- **Volunteer** – While you want a paid job, there are some benefits of volunteering until you can find a paid job. One is that you can demonstrate your skills in doing the job before you find a paying position, and the other is that you'll make important and valuable connections with others.
- **Start a Business** – Depending on your skill set, it might be preferable for you to start a business instead of getting a job. However, keep in mind that while starting a business is lucrative and can give you what you need, it might take longer to earn money.
- **Find an Internship** – Some colleges, universities, and big businesses use interns (both paid and unpaid) to do some jobs. Even a person in high school can find a paid internship at their local colleges or businesses, but you may have to do some research and even ask those in charge to create the internship.

- **Do Your Research** – Take the time to research a position and what it takes to do it, plus research a company to find out their values. Learning about the person who could hire you also will help. Learn all you can, and it will pay off.
- **Dress the Part** – One of the hardest things for young people to get on board with is often clothing and style. There are some jobs where you'll simply need to dress the part to be considered for it. For example, don't show up for an internship in an accounting firm in leggings and flipflops. Put on a nice business casual outfit and put your best foot forward.

Marketing yourself really requires that you tell as many people as possible what you want to do and who you want to do it with. You should use both technology and old-fashioned methods to ensure that you leave no stone unturned for your summertime job.

Tips for Avoiding Being Taken Advantage Of

Sadly, the world can be a dangerous place. Some criminals prey on teenagers and people without experience to trick them. It might seem nuts, but it happens. For example, many teenagers may not realize how the employment process works and that it requires paperwork, tax information, and more to be employed legally as an employee. And if you want to start a business, you need to get a business license and follow the laws. The best way to ensure you aren't taken advantage of is to keep your eyes open and always do your due diligence. As they say; if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Here's advice for teens on what to watch out for.

They Ask You to Do Things That Make You Uncomfortable

In most states, teenagers are not supposed to work alone at night under a certain age, or too early in the morning. If your employer regularly asks you to break the law to work for them, you are being taken advantage of. If they ask you to do things that make you feel uncomfortable, your best bet is to first talk to your parents. Then if your place has an HR department, you may want to talk to them about it to find out how to proceed.

They Are Rude to You

If you're at the workplace and people are being mean to you at work and treating you less than fairly, you have a right to speak up about it. Your employer does not have a right to yell at you, scream at you, or force you to do things that are against the law. In general, while you cannot expect a thank you for everything, you can expect to be treated with respect and courtesy.

You're Always Doing Tasks Outside of Your Job Description

Sometimes it happens that you get a job and then find out you're not doing anything as you thought. For example, if you're hired to do admin work in a daycare office, but you find yourself spending most of the day doing daycare, this is not something you should agree to. Of course, in right to work states, they can fire you, but if they're asking you to do things differently than what you thought you were going to do, that's wrong and you should stand up for yourself.

You're Not Getting Compensated

On occasion, it's been known that some unscrupulous business owners will trick a teenager into an "internship" to see if the job is right for them. They'll bring the teen in, give them a uniform, and have them train for the work for about six to eight weeks. Then they'll say there is no job because summer is now over. Make sure you get paperwork that states your job offer and the income you'll get paid.

They're Secretive

This is most especially true for applying for jobs online. Once you sign up for a job board, you'll start getting all kind of emails about jobs. However, some of them will not be real jobs and in fact, will be scams to try to get your information such as your social security number or worse, your account information. If a job owner is secretive about what you'll be doing, where the job is, and it pays a high rate, it's probably a scam.

The main thing is that you need to familiarize yourself with employment law as well as basic scams that exist for people looking for jobs or looking to start a business. When

you are aware and educated, you will be knowledgeable enough to avoid problems. When in doubt, ask other people about it before giving any information that could compromise you.

Your Legal Rights as a Working Teen

As a teenager looking for a job or working in a job, it's imperative that you familiarize yourself with the laws of the land. Depending on where you live, you'll have the main government (Federal in the USA) laws that are first, then you'll have state and local laws as well governing aspects of employment for you.

For example, in the USA the law from the federal government states that if you're under 16, you cannot work before 7 am and after 9pm or more than 8 hours a day and 40 hours a week. You can find out what the laws are in your area by finding the department of labor website. There will be information about curfews, pay, and more regarding the legalities of hiring teenagers.

They also have rules about working when school is in session, such as keeping employment to 18 hours a week but no more than 3 hours a day after school if you're under 16. It changes if you're over 16 but knowing these rules and laws can help you and your boss avoid any issues.

- **Know the Age Limits** – There are various age limits for working at formal jobs, although with a parent's help anyone can start a business as long as they're not performing a job that is not legal to do at that age.
- **Know the Job Classification Limits** – In some places, you won't be able to work as a farm hand or construction person if you're using certain equipment. For this reason, if you are interested in doing any of these jobs, you'll want to find out the exceptions and know how to do it legally.
- **Know How to File a Complaint** – It all depends on where you live on how you do it. It will help if you research how to file a complaint with the labor department before you ever need to. You may never need to, but teenagers are often more

exploited than their adult counterparts at work. You can prevent it by knowing how to stop it.

- **Know How to Deal with Discrimination** – One thing that is important to recognize and notice at work is whether you're being discriminated against due to your age, sex, race, or lifestyle. Learn about it so that you know when it's happening and what to do about it.
- **Know How to Deal with Sexual Harassment** – No one has to put up with sexual harassment. It's your employer's job to stop it. If you experience any issues, always say NO to the person, document the harassment, and talk to your family, friends, and co-workers immediately, finding witnesses if you can. Then file a complaint with the employer and if that doesn't work, go to your state labor board.
- **Check Out Websites That Help** – The USA has a government site called [Youthrules.gov](https://youthrules.gov) that goes over the different laws and rights that young workers have and need to know. This site stays up to date with changes and links to the local state labor departments too.

Knowing your legal rights at work is one of the ways to end maltreatment at work. Sometimes employers just don't know the law and need to be informed. But if talking to them doesn't help, you may have to file a complaint, so it's good to know how to do that. Always try to resolve minor issues with the employee in question, then escalate it to your boss, then HR, then the state labor board if you must. But you don't have to take mistreatment at work. Enforcing the laws will help you and everyone who comes after you.

Tax Considerations for Teens

Okay, you got your job, or you started a business. Congratulations! Of course, it's not all fun and games. Once you become an income-earning citizen, it's time to start paying taxes. Every person has to pay taxes on every penny they make, from the first dollar to the last dollar. However, due to deductions and other tax breaks offered at any given time, it's not going to be as bad as you may think.

Do the Paperwork Right

When you fill out the paperwork for your new job, you'll also have to fill out a W4 or a W9 depending on whether you're an employee or an independent contractor. You'll need to have original documentation with you such as a state-issued ID, your social security card, and your certified birth certificate.

You may need a little help filling out that form, but in general, if you claim zero, you should be fine when it comes to withholding and taxes. The employer is not allowed to help you so you may want to find the proper form online and get your parents or some other adult to show you how to fill it out properly. Often, when it comes down to it, the teen worker doesn't even end up owing any money. It really depends on the job and income bracket.

Current Tax Law

Currently in the USA, the standard deduction for a single taxpayer is \$12,000. This means that if you did not earn \$12,000, you probably will not owe any federal taxes. If you know this is the case, you may want to change your withholding amounts to be exempt from federal holdings.

However, if you have a business and fill out a W9 instead, please note that you'll have to pay self-employment taxes. This is the portion of employment taxes that normally your employer pays for you, but that you have to pay instead if you own a business or work as a contractor.

Household Labor

There may be different rules for babysitting or doing household help as a contractor that you need to know. In some cases, a babysitter who is under 18 may not have to pay self-employment taxes. It is best to talk to a certified tax person like an enrolled agent or a CPA to find out for sure, because these rules and regulations change constantly.

Family Business

If you are working for your family business, there are also some different considerations by the IRS and state tax agencies. Your parents may be able to pay you directly without having to pay any taxes for you at all. However, this is a disadvantage to you in a way because you won't be building up your credits for social security.

Once you start investing money, you will also have other tax considerations. The best thing to do is to assume you will have to pay taxes on the money you earn. This is a good thing, though, and not a bad thing. Paying taxes contributes to the common good in your country, state, and county. While you cannot vote regarding how that money is used yet, keep that in mind when you are old enough to vote.

Final thoughts...

Finding a summertime job as a teenager is not going to be as hard as you may think. Doing taxes and paying your fair share is not going to be as complicated as it might seem either. The truth is, you're going to get more out of your summertime job that you probably will out of any job you have in the future because it's all new and you're learning, changing, and growing.

Know that if you pick the right type of summertime job, you'll reap the benefits and experience the advantages of having done so, long before you finish school and get started on your career.