

Yes, it can be!

This guide

will

help you

plan for

and enroll

in college

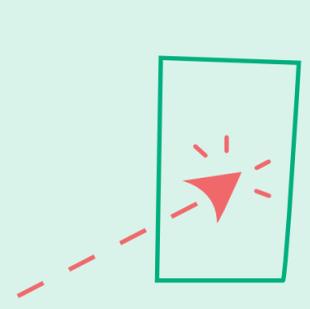
Open here to learn about the benefits and basics of college.

Flip over if you want to know how to enroll in college.

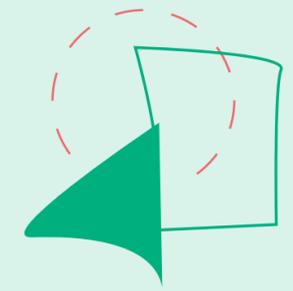
Is College for Me?



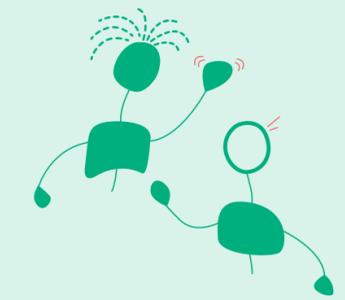
# Benefits



No matter what your involvement with the criminal justice system is or how rocky your educational pathway has been, college may still be an option for you!



Good colleges care about having a diverse body of students with all kinds of experience. You'll have the personal experience colleges look for!



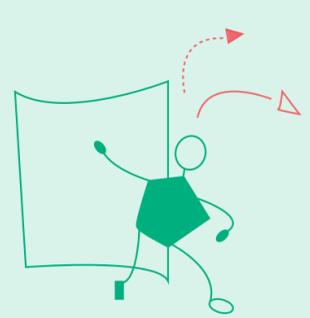
Going to college is a good way to meet people and make professional connections.



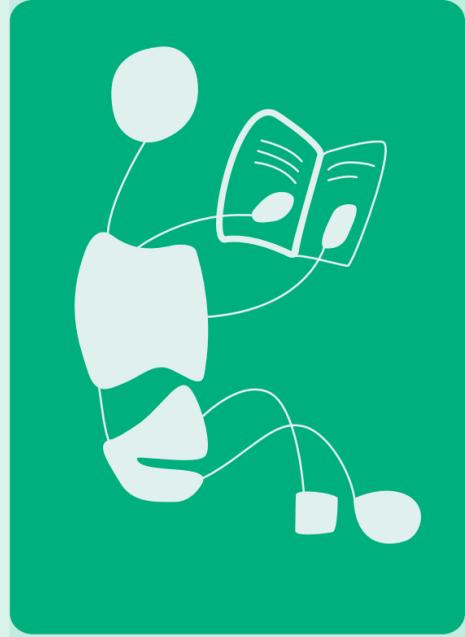
If you have children, there's a higher chance for them to be more excited about college if you went because they see the value of it.



You will have more job options with a college degree. You will also earn more money!



After college, you'll have more professional opportunities, including those in fields like healthcare and law.



This project was produced through Public Access Design, a program of the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP). Public Access Design projects use design to make complex urban issues accessible to the people most affected by them. [publicaccessdesign.org](http://publicaccessdesign.org)



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The Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) is a nonprofit that uses the power of design and art to increase meaningful civic engagement. [welcometocup.org](http://welcometocup.org)

Prisoner Reentry Institute's (PRI) diversified portfolio reflects an overall focus on understanding what it takes for people to live successfully in their communities after contact with the criminal justice system, and on increasing the effectiveness of the professionals who work with them. We do this through our three main tracks of policy advocacy, direct service practice, and collaborative partnerships. [johnjaypri.org](http://johnjaypri.org)

Miles Barretto is a graphic designer based in New York. Through his design, he engages in topics that tackle various social and cultural issues. [milesbarretto.com](http://milesbarretto.com)

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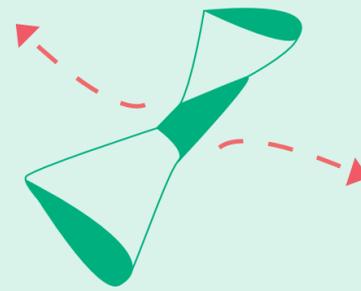
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# Degrees



There are many different types of college degrees and they can take two or more years.



## Associate's Degree

- (A.A., A.A.S., etc.)
- Two or more years.
- If you earn an AA or AS at some schools, you're guaranteed acceptance into a Bachelor's degree program.

## Bachelor's Degree

- (B.A., B.S., etc.)
- Four or more years.
- You need a high school diploma or equivalent to get it.

## Master's Degree

- (M.A., M.S., etc.)
- One to three years
- You need a Bachelor's degree.

## Doctoral Degree

- (M.D., PhD, etc.)
- Doctoral Dissertation and Four or more years.
- You need a Master's degree, but sometimes they can be combined into one program.

## Professional Degree

- (Law, Nursing, etc.)
- Each degree varies in length.



# Public Schools



- Are under the authority of New York State.
- Are usually the most affordable option.
- Don't require applicants to disclose their criminal justice history.

There are two important public school systems to get familiar with in New York State:



## The City University of New York (CUNY)

11 four-year colleges and 7 community colleges and graduate schools in NYC (212) 997-CUNY (2869) [cuny.edu](http://cuny.edu)

## State University of New York (SUNY)

64 Campuses around the state Phone: (518) 320-1888 Phone (Toll-Free): (800) 342-3811 [suny.edu](http://suny.edu)

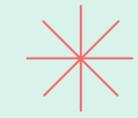


All public and most nonprofit schools are **accredited**.

An accredited school is reviewed by a regional education agency against a set of standards to determine the quality of their education and training. Teachers, coursework, facilities, equipment, and supplies are reviewed on a routine basis to ensure students receive a quality education and get what they pay for.

Attending an accredited school is often a requirement for employment and can be helpful later on to transfer academic credits to another institution. That means **if you take and pass classes in one school, you'll get credit for them if you switch to another school, and won't have to take them over again.** Also, the credits accumulate until you've earned enough to get your degree.

# Private Schools



## Nonprofit

Nonprofit schools have some scholarship funding available to students who don't have large incomes. If you're accepted at one of these schools, make sure to go over the financial aid package they've offered you to see if you'll have to take out loans and how much.

There are many different college programs on different subjects from highly specialized to more general. **It's okay if you don't know what you want to study before college!** Many programs are designed to guide you to pick your topic of study.



## For-Profit

- For-profit schools are private schools run as businesses.
- For-profit schools are usually expensive.
- Credits are usually non-transferable and many programs at these colleges are unaccredited.
- This doesn't necessarily mean that an unaccredited institution is of poor quality, but earning a degree from an unaccredited institution may create problems for students like transferring credits.
- Student drop out rates are high.



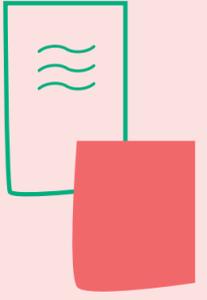
# While



Can I enroll in college while I'm in prison?

# still

# in



What happens when I get released?

How much would it cost?

# prison

Why should I enroll in college while still in prison?

You'll need a high school level diploma to enroll in college. If you don't have one, you have the right to get one!



## There are three kinds of programs

### Degree-granting programs

allow you to finish your degree while you're still in prison. In order to complete these programs, you need to have enough time left on your sentence to earn the credits required for your degree. These programs are free.

### Degree-earning reentry programs

allow you to start your college degree while in prison and finish it at a college when you're released. Programs may have eligibility requirements relating to how much time you have left on your sentence. These programs are free.

### Correspondence classes

are college classes that you do by mail. But be careful, you'll have to pay for some of these!

Most programs are free of cost but you'll have to give up another activity in its place.

There's homework and you'll have to study while you're in college, so make sure you make time for that. Talk to other students in your program for support.

Contact these organizations if you have any questions about college!

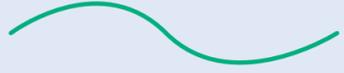
PRI:  
524 West 59th Street, Rm 609B  
New York, NY 10019  
(646) 781-5118  
[johnjaypri.org](http://johnjaypri.org)

and if you're a woman:  
College and Community Fellowship:  
475 Riverside Dr #1626,  
New York, NY 10115  
(646) 380-7777  
[collegeandcommunity.org](http://collegeandcommunity.org)

# After

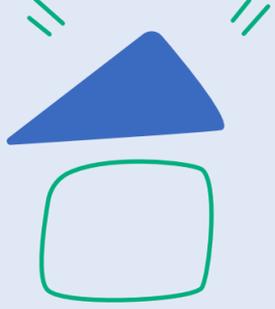
Do I want my college to be close to where I live?

# coming



How much am I willing to spend?

# home



What are the conditions of my parole?

# from

What makes the most sense for me?

# prison



What do I want to study?

## 1 Picking a college

- If you haven't been to school in a while, you should visit your local community college. Community colleges are for anyone with a high school diploma.
- If you live in NYC, CUNY is a good place to start. If you're outside of NYC but in New York State, SUNY is where you should start.

Several CUNY and SUNY schools also have programs to help you get a high school diploma if you don't have one.

## 4 Paying for college

- Apply for the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) here: [fafsa.ed.gov](http://fafsa.ed.gov). The website will walk you through this process as you're filling out your application. Talk to your college's financial advisor if you have questions.

You can get financial aid after having been in prison. Funding options may look different depending on your conviction.

The earlier you apply to FAFSA, the better! Check the website regularly for important dates.

### There are four types of financial assistance results from FAFSA:

- **Grants**  
Money received that doesn't have to be repaid and that is based on financial need. Grants may come with requirements that have to be met before receiving it again.

## 2 Gathering your documents

- Social Security Number (SSN). If you're not a U.S. citizen, then your Alien Registration Number.
- Federal Income Tax Returns, W-2 forms, letters of support if you're being supported by friends and family, and tax return transcripts. If you didn't file taxes or receive any assistance, then you must fill out a 4506-T form from the IRS.
- A list of schools you want to apply to.
- Selective Service registration number. You can verify this number at [sss.gov](http://sss.gov)
- College transcripts if you've been to college before.
- SAT scores if you're interested in applying for a Bachelor's degree.
- High school diploma or equivalent.

## 3 Understanding costs and tuition

- The cost of college can vary a lot depending on whether you're going to a public or private school. Private schools can be a lot more expensive. The price difference can be up to \$40,000!
- Tuition and fees are the price of taking classes at a college. This amount can change based on your program, your number of credit hours, and if you'll live at a school dorm.



## 5 You've been accepted

Congratulations! You should visit the academic advisement office to get help on registering for classes.

