

A Grad's Survival Guide for Finishing Uni

Congrats! You've made it out of university alive. The hard part's over, right?

Not quite.

Actually (and we're sorry to be the ones to tell you this) **it's a pretty tough gig being a grad**. Now that you're being released into the big wide world of work and council tax, there's a lot you need to crack on with. We can't all swan off to Thailand for six months.

It can be mildly terrifying, but this new chapter is also really exciting. The best way to tackle it is to **get ahead of the game** and **get organised**.

We've put together the ultimate graduate survival guide so that life after uni doesn't hit you like a ton of bricks.

Treat yourself

It sounds counterproductive, as you're probably feeling poor as hell right now, but think about it - you've probably been shackled to a desk for the last three or four years, living off meal deals and drinking vodka and squash to save money.

It's time to buy yourself a damn good meal, choose the expensive gin and tonic, go to that museum or do a parachute jump you've been planning on all year. Now's the time to actually have some fun!

The trick is not to get ridiculous about it.

Have a good time, let your hair down, paint the town red, get it out of your system...then get your head down.

Have a long old think

What do you *want* to do? If you have no idea, fine. Not everyone does at this stage, but this is your chance to really sit down and ponder the options.

Start by looking at your profile. What are your skills and hobbies? Do you like working with people? Do you speak any languages? Are you great at selling things, analysing things, drawing things?

Once you've narrowed down what you enjoy and what you're good at, you can start researching careers that require these things. Think about what you would ideally like to earn, where you'd like to live, what kind of company culture would suit you - these are all important factors in determining where you could end up.

It's important **not to panic** at this stage. Yes, it's scary and looking out into the abyss can be confusing. But if you get organised and remain focused, your path will become clear soon enough.

Develop yourself

If you haven't already (which you probably should have, but don't panic), you need to start polishing up that **CV** until it is absolutely gleaming. There are loads of handy tips and formatting advice that you can find online, and you can also utilise your **university careers centre** for expert help and advice.

This is the time to start identifying and working on your **skills**. You can partner this with getting some work experience or an internship at a relevant company or industry that you are thinking of getting in to.

Having some strong experience and some developed skills will put you miles ahead of the competition, and you'll stand out to employers.

Build a network

It's not *what* you know, it's *who* you know. We've heard it a million times, but that's because *it's true*.

There are loads of ways of doing this, even starting with the small things like speaking to people, making contacts, utilising your friends and family and see who you have in your current network already.

LinkedIn should also be your new best friend. If you don't have it yet, it's like Facebook for professionals.

Speaking with recruiters is another great way to get started and learn about new opportunities. Building a strong network of recruiters will give you an insight into what kind of jobs are available for your profile, and also open the door to them too.

Think outside the box

That classic phrase that you are always told to **never** put on your CV...but is still a valid thing to keep in mind.

Not to be too dramatic, but this is *genuinely* where you could make all the difference to your life and career.

Think about career options you haven't considered before. Many people find themselves in jobs that are completely new to them, but happen to be the perfect fit.

This is so true of **recruitment**. People that have a natural sales ability, that are good with people and that are goal-oriented often find that recruitment is the best career idea they never even thought about!

If your biggest fear at the moment is how you'll ever afford to live a nice normal life, then recruitment is definitely worth a thought - with **unrivalled starting salaries**, famously lavish rewards, and a fast-paced, team-spirited work environment, **it's a pretty incredible career path.**

So there you have it - our guide for how you can get ahead of the curve and start looking for that dream job. And remember that it's not all doom and gloom; once you've followed these steps you'll be in a strong position to get the best out of your situation, your network and yourself.