**A guide to gap years**

What is a gap year?

A Gap Year is a year taken out of education or employment.

 For most, a gap year will be taken the year after they finish college and before starting at university or in an apprenticeship or employment.

However, gap years can be taken at any time in your life as long as you have the money to fund it!

What are the pros and cons of taking a Gap Year?

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| **Pros**  | **Cons**  |
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| Everyone has different reasons for taking a year out. Gap Years do not have to happen before moving on to your next steps, they could happen after university or even later in life. If you are considering this route you will need to look into whether you can ‘defer’ your place until the following year when you return.  | You may lose your studying momentum and may not want to return after your year out.  |
| The prospect of student loans can be daunting, although repayments are never as scary as they first seem. If this is a worry for you then it could be a good idea to work for a year and save some money. This could mean you can take out a smaller loan.  | Some people need more time to be ready to enter the world as an adult and need a few more years figuring out what you really want to do and get out of life.   |
| Whether you decide to work, volunteer or go exploring in your gap year you’ll gain some incredible experiences along the way. Taking a year out gives you time to think about your future and what you might want to out of your career  | You may miss out in financial support from the university as this changes each year. You may want to speak with universities you are interested in before deciding what to do to find out what changes may come into place.   |

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Where can I find out more?

There are lots of companies who offer support in planning a gap year. Here are a few:

* <https://bunac.org/gap-years> - whether your looking for a working holiday, a professional internship, a ski season or doing Summer stateside, this company have years of experience in supporting you with everything you need to know, and do before embarking on your adventures.
* <https://www.gooverseas.com/gap-year/jobs> - want to travel, learn and earn? This website offers opportunities for you to look at as well as 1000’s of reviews from people who have done it all