What Can You Do With an English Major?

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
WRITING/EDITING Creative Writing Novels: Fiction and Nonfiction Poetry Plays Screenplays Scripts Greeting Cards Lyrics/Jingle Writing Journalism Writing/Reporting Editing Critique Freelance Writing	Newspapers Magazines Broadcast media companies including television, radio, and the movie industry Trade, professional, or consumer publications Internet sites Large corporations Government agencies including: Department of Homeland Security Department of Defense Department of State Veterans Affairs National Archives and Records Administration Universities and university presses Technical industries Self-employed/Freelance	Select elective coursework in a particular area of interest. Write for campus publications such as college newspapers, magazines, or departmental or program newsletters. Volunteer to assist or tutor students in a writing center. Become familiar with the proposal writing and submission process involved in freelance writing. Gain as much experience as possible through volunteer positions, internships, or part-time jobs. Demonstrate patience and persistence in starting a career in creative writing.
TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION Technical Writing and Editing Science and Medical Writing Grant and Proposal Writing Software and Hardware Documentation Information Technology Writing Human-Computer Interface Design Corporate Communications and Training Mechanical Communication	Management, scientific, and technical consulting companies Technical industries Retailers including electronics Engineering firms Healthcare industry Computer systems design companies Software publishers Self-employed/Freelance	Earn a bachelor's degree with a focus in English, communication, or journalism. Complete course-work in technical communications. Minor or take classes in science and/or computer science to learn about technical areas and trends. Gain experience in a specialized field such as engineering, medicine, science, web design, or computer software. Develop strong grammar and language skills, including a second-language. Obtain volunteer or internship experience as a research assistant in a technical information department.

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AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
PUBLISHING		
Editing Advertising Sales Circulation Production Publicity Marketing Promotion Administration	Trade publishing Special interest magazines Trade magazines Association magazines Sunday newspaper supplements Educational publishing Religious books and magazines Professional and scholarly publishing University presses Independent publishers Alternative media publishers including: E-books Audiobooks	Obtain an internship in the publishing industry. Participate in a summer publishing institute. Develop word processing, editing, and desktop publishing skills; build additional technical skills if working in an online environment. Gain experience by writing for student publications such as the newspaper, creative writing magazines, the yearbook, etc. Conduct an informational interview with or shadow a professional in the publishing industry. Look for positions with local dailies and alternative weeklies in the community. Volunteer to write or edit publications with local nonprofit organizations to gain experience. Develop extensive grammar and language skills. Be prepared to relocate to cities with a publishing presence. A large majority of opportunities exist in New York City. Research the publishing industry to learn more about career ladders.
EDUCATION		
Teaching Administration Higher Education Administration: Admissions Financial Aid Academic Advising and Support Services Development Alumni Affairs International Education and Study Abroad Student Affairs, e.g. Residence Life, Student Activities, Orientation, Leadership, Greek Life, Multicultural Affairs Information/Library Science Non-classroom Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) Research Tutoring	Public and private K-12 schools Colleges and universities Language institutes, local and abroad Libraries Museums Private learning centers Test preparation organizations Nonprofit organizations involved with literacy	Obtain appropriate state certification for public school teaching. Gain certifications to teach multiple subjects or age groups for increased job opportunities. Earn a master's or doctorate degree for post-secondary teaching. Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations for graduate school. Plan to attend graduate school in college student personnel or information science for those fields. Seek volunteer experiences working with children through Big Brother/Sister programs, tutoring, summer camps, YMCA's, etc. Participate in activities such as debate or literary clubs, campus publications, or student government. Get involved in roles of leadership such as resident advisor, peer mentor, student advisor, etc.

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AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
ADVERTISING Creative Services Copy Writing Art Direction Web Page Design Account Management Media Account Planning Production	Advertising agencies In-house agencies of large companies	Demonstrate talent, persistence, assertiveness, and enthusiasm. Be prepared to start in an entry-level position. Obtain strong statistics background for market research positions. Create a portfolio of writing showing originality and imagination for creative positions. Gain knowledge of various media, contemporary tastes, and trends. Obtain experience with campus newspaper, TV, or radio. Participate in sales and promotions for student organizations or private businesses. Complete an internship in a market research firm or advertising agency. Supplement curriculum with courses in advertising, communications, business, art, or graphic design.
PUBLIC RELATIONS Account Coordination Writing/Editing Media Relations Social Media Account Management Fundraising Research	Public relations firms Advertising agencies In-house public relations departments Trade associations Colleges and universities Nonprofit organizations Government agencies	Obtain internship or other relevant work experience to break into this field. Be prepared to start at the bottom and work towards higher levels. Develop strong research skills, public speaking ability, enthusiasm, and interpersonal skills. Supplement curriculum with business courses. Become an effective team member by working on group projects for campus organizations. Volunteer to write publications for nonprofit or student organizations.
BUSINESS Management Customer Service Sales and Marketing Human Resources Insurance Claims Underwriting	Business organizations including banks, real estate agencies, insurance firms, and large and small corporations Retailers including department, grocery, drug, specialty, variety, and book stores	Obtain a business minor. Gain relevant experience through part-time jobs, internships, or volunteer work. Secure leadership roles in campus organizations and student professional associations. Seek experience as a financial officer or treasurer of a campus organization. Develop strong analytical and computer skills.

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AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
LAW		
Law Assistance Prosecution Defense Contractual Corporate Nonprofit or Public Interest Government Mediation Lobbying	Law firms Government agencies State and local government Corporations Public interest organizations Private practice Colleges and universities	Participate in a debate or forensic team to hone communication skills. Develop strong research skills and attention to detail. Take courses in and gain experience with mediation and conflict resolution. Get involved with pre-law organizations. Obtain a summer or part-time job in a law firm. Plan to shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties. Complete special training requirements for paralegal positions. Attend law school and earn a JD to become an attorney. Maintain an excellent GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations to gain law school admittance. Plan to take the LSAT.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- A bachelor's degree in English is very broad and is sufficient for entry level positions in business and industry, as well as in areas such as entertainment, radio and television commentary, and museum work. Because English can lead to many different career paths, it is important to identify an area of interest and be planful about gaining the right skills, experience, and credentials to enter that field.
- A major in English is also good preparation for continued graduate or professional training in areas such as English, law, political science/government, public administration, communications, religious studies (e.g. seminary).
- Be proactive, determined, assertive, and confident in order to secure freelance writing opportunities. Writers typically experience many rejections for each piece that is accepted for publication. Save samples of written work to be used for a portfolio. Cultivate other career opportunities in order to supplement a freelance writing income.
- Obtain additional areas of expertise such as journalism, broadcasting, technical writing, or politics for specialized positions.
- Conduct informational interviews or shadow professionals in careers of interest to learn more about their jobs.
- Join relevant professional associations. Attend their conferences and read their journals.

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Prepared by the Career Planning staff of Career Services at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. (1992, Revised 1999, 2004, 2006, 2011)
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