

ART

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Art Direction
Administration
Curatorial
Conservation
Restoration
Registrar
Collections Management
Exhibit Design/Preparation
Archive Management
Education
Tours
Sales
Publications
Development
Public Relations

Art Museums:
University
Public
Private
Archives
Historical societies
Natural history museums
Living history museums
Galleries

Gain relevant experience through internships or volunteer positions in museums or galleries.
Visit museums around the country and world to gain exposure to art. Learn a foreign language and plan to study abroad.
Supplement curriculum with courses in history, religion, anthropology, and classical civilizations.
Most art historians will specialize in a period or region.
Acquire strong skills in research, fund-raising, speaking, writing, and an attention to detail.
Plan to earn a graduate degree in art history, museum studies, or other related discipline depending upon specific interests. Each specialty has varying qualifications and required training.
Develop good interpersonal skills, including the ability to work well on teams.
Read published resources provided by the American Association of Museums (AAM).

FINE ARTS AND CRAFT ARTS

Painting
Sculpture
Illustration
Printmaking
Weaving
Media and Techniques Including:
Pottery
Glass
Ceramics
Textiles
Wood
Metal
Paper
Multi-Media (Film, video, computers, etc.)

Self-employed
Studios
Living history museums and historical sites
School and community programs
Colleges and universities

Complete a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) to continue developing skills and to increase professional opportunities in art related fields.
Consider whether you want to pursue art as a full-time job or as an avocational interest.
Opportunities are limited for full-time work. Many artists hold other jobs to supplement their income.
Participate in juried shows and exhibitions.
Maintain an up-to-date physical and digital portfolio of your work.
Gain additional skills and experience through an apprenticeship, internship, or volunteer position with a professional artist or organization.
Secure guild membership.
Learn to network and make contacts.

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COMMERCIAL ART

See also "What Can I Do With a Major in Graphic Art?"

Graphic Art
Computer Graphics
Illustration
Advertising
Medical and Scientific Illustration
Animation
Cartoons
Art Direction

Advertising agencies
Design firms
Publishing companies:
 Magazines
 Newspapers
 Books
Department stores
Television and motion picture industry
Manufacturing firms
Internet media companies
Self-employed
Large corporations
Governmental agencies
Universities

Develop excellent technical and computer skills in a variety of platforms and design software.
Maintain an up-to-date physical and digital portfolio of your work.
Gain relevant experience through part-time jobs and internships.
Obtain summer or part-time experience with book, magazine, or newspaper publishers.
Develop attention to detail and ability to meet deadlines.
Supplement curriculum with course work in advertising or business.
For medical illustration, undergraduate coursework in anatomy and biology may be necessary, as well as a master's degree in medical illustration.
Participate in the Society of Illustrators Student Scholarship Competition to build a greater understanding of the industry and to gain recognition.

EDUCATION

Formalized Instruction
Recreational Instruction
Research (Art History)

K-12 schools, public and private
Universities and colleges
Art schools
Adult and community programs
Museums
Recreation centers
Libraries
Group homes

Develop strong communication skills and teaching ability through coursework and campus activities.
Acquire a teaching certificate for public school teaching. Learn about requirements by state.
Gain experience working with children through volunteer or part-time work.
Participate in art clubs, juried shows, and exhibitions.
Maintain an updated physical and digital portfolio of your work.
To teach art history in higher education:
 Take general history classes in addition to art history classes.
 Learn one or more foreign language to research original sources.
 Earn a doctoral degree in art history.
To teach studio and fine arts in higher education, earn a graduate degree in a specific area of art.

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ART THERAPY

Art therapy is a mental health profession that utilizes the creative process of art to enhance functioning in individuals experiencing mental or physical difficulties. It combines the creation of art with theories of counseling and psychotherapy. (Adapted from AATA resources.)

Hospitals
Nursing homes
Mental health facilities
Rehabilitation centers
Nonprofit organizations
Community agencies and centers
Schools, colleges, and universities
Correctional facilities
Domestic violence and homeless shelters
Art studios
Private practice

Take courses in art, as well as courses in psychology, social work, education, and child and family studies.
A master's degree and coursework in art therapy from a program accredited by The American Art Therapy Association (AATA) is required to enter the field.
Volunteer in a rehabilitation setting.
Learn to work well with many types of people and develop excellent communication skills.
Cultivate a strong sense of empathy, patience, and interpersonal skills. Learn to work in a team environment.

MEDIA

Journalism:
 Production
 Design
 Art Criticism
 Editing
Art Direction
Sales
Programming
Video
Illustration
Animation/Cartoons

Newspapers
Magazines
Websites
Book publishers

Develop excellent grammar and writing skills along with knowledge of the history and culture of art.
Learn HTML and other computer programs to prepare for online work. This area of journalism is growing while print is declining.
Become comfortable working in a deadline-oriented atmosphere.
Work with campus or local newspapers. Create a portfolio of work samples, especially those that have been published.
Seek opportunities for recognition and networking through writing contests and freelance writing submissions.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Fine Arts
News
Commercial and Industrial
Portrait
Nature
Scientific

Museums
Newspapers
Magazines
Websites
Photo agencies
Studios
Libraries
Large corporations
Self-employed

Develop proficiency with photo editing software.
Because more than half of all professional photographers are self-employed, it is important to develop knowledge and understanding of business principles.
Apprentice with a free-lance photographer.
Maintain an up-to-date portfolio of both black and white and color photography.
Obtain an internship or part-time job with the campus newspaper, local newspaper, website or other media outlet.

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ART SALES

Self-employed
Dealers
Galleries
Museums
Auction houses
Specialty stores

Learn to communicate effectively with a wide range of people. Take additional courses in interpersonal communication and public speaking.
Prepare to work independently and to be self-motivated.
Plan to work irregular and/or long hours.
Entrepreneurial spirit, including self-discipline and perseverance, are keys to success.
Pursue a business minor to increase knowledge of business principles
Obtain sales experience through internships or summer and part-time jobs.
Volunteer in museums, membership drives, local galleries, and community outreach programs.
Serve as a student assistant in a university gallery.

FASHION AND TEXTILE DESIGN

Fashion Design
Fashion Product Development
Entrepreneurship
Colorists
Stylists
Fabric Development
Surface Design
Management
Buying

Fabric manufacturers, printers, and converters
Print design studios
Garment suppliers
Retailers

Most professionals in this field have formalized education and training in the field of fashion and textile design. Research schools offering related programs.
Develop proficiency using industry specific computer software such as CAD systems and Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.
Display motivation by designing clothes for yourself and others.
Stay up to date on fashion and design trends by following current media related to fashion and textile design.
Be able to communicate effectively with different types of people in various functional areas.
Expect to work with overseas suppliers. Knowledge of languages, customs, and cultures is helpful.
Gain experience by completing internships with design or related firms.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- A bachelor's degree is valuable for entry-level positions, but an advanced degree is usually necessary to attain competitive, upper-level positions.
- An art degree can and should be tailored to areas of specialization.
- Save artwork for a strong portfolio - too much is better than too little.
- Be prepared to relocate to the larger markets of metropolitan areas where more opportunities exist.
- Join art-related professional and student organizations.
- Volunteer with fundraising efforts for the arts.
- Gain valuable experience through volunteering, internships, part-time and summer jobs, and apprenticeships.
- Seek exposure to art by visiting museums around the country and world.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals in areas of interest to learn more about opportunities and strategies for these areas. Learn to network.
- Pair an art degree with other career interests to increase opportunities and provide supplemental income.
- According to the Department of Labor, 62% of Artists are self-employed.
- Develop skills in business management, computers, marketing, and other related areas to increase marketability.
- A career in the arts takes dedication, patience, flexibility, talent, and some luck.