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LINKING LEARNING WITH LIFE

GAP YEAR GUIDE

[TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-THREE]

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gap year guide

A guide to Gap Years for Year 12 students looking to take time out in 2023.

VERSION 1

Due to the ever changing world as we live with COVID some of the programs or organisations listed in this Guide may be subject to change. We always recommend that you do your own research and contact organisations directly. You'll also need to double check any requirements for visas, border controls, vaccinations, ID etc with the relevant authorities.



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what is a gap year?

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR GAP YEAR

Taking a year off is one thing, lazing around watching Netflix won't be very rewarding and is unlikely to score you any credibility in interviews and applications.

Sure taking life at your own pace is ok, but bear in mind that a successful gap year should include combinations of work, travel, volunteering and upskilling.

A gap year is traditionally when students who have just finished Year 12 take a year out before heading off to university or full-time work.

It's creating an opportunity to take a well deserved brain break after completing high school or university (or even several years in the same job).

Simply put, it's when you take some time out of your regular life or routine to concentrate on yourself.

Taking a Gap Year is about timing. In an ideal world, you'd take a gap year when you've finished one project or life chapter, before starting the next.

For example, once you've finished Year 12 you might like to take a gap year before you start your uni degree. Or after you've completed your tertiary studies, a gap year before you start working could be perfect for you.

But realistically, there is no right or wrong time, you can even take gap years once you've started working (terms vary depending on your employer). Not as common, some people start a uni degree and either have a change in circumstance or just feel they can't go on. And, as long as your university is agreeable and your scholarships, finances, etc. won't be impacted, you could even take a gap year mid-way through a degree.

a gap year could be an option if you...



Need a break



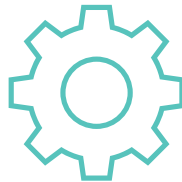
Have a plan



Want to broaden
your horizons



Need to save before
more study



Need to
build skills



Want work
experience

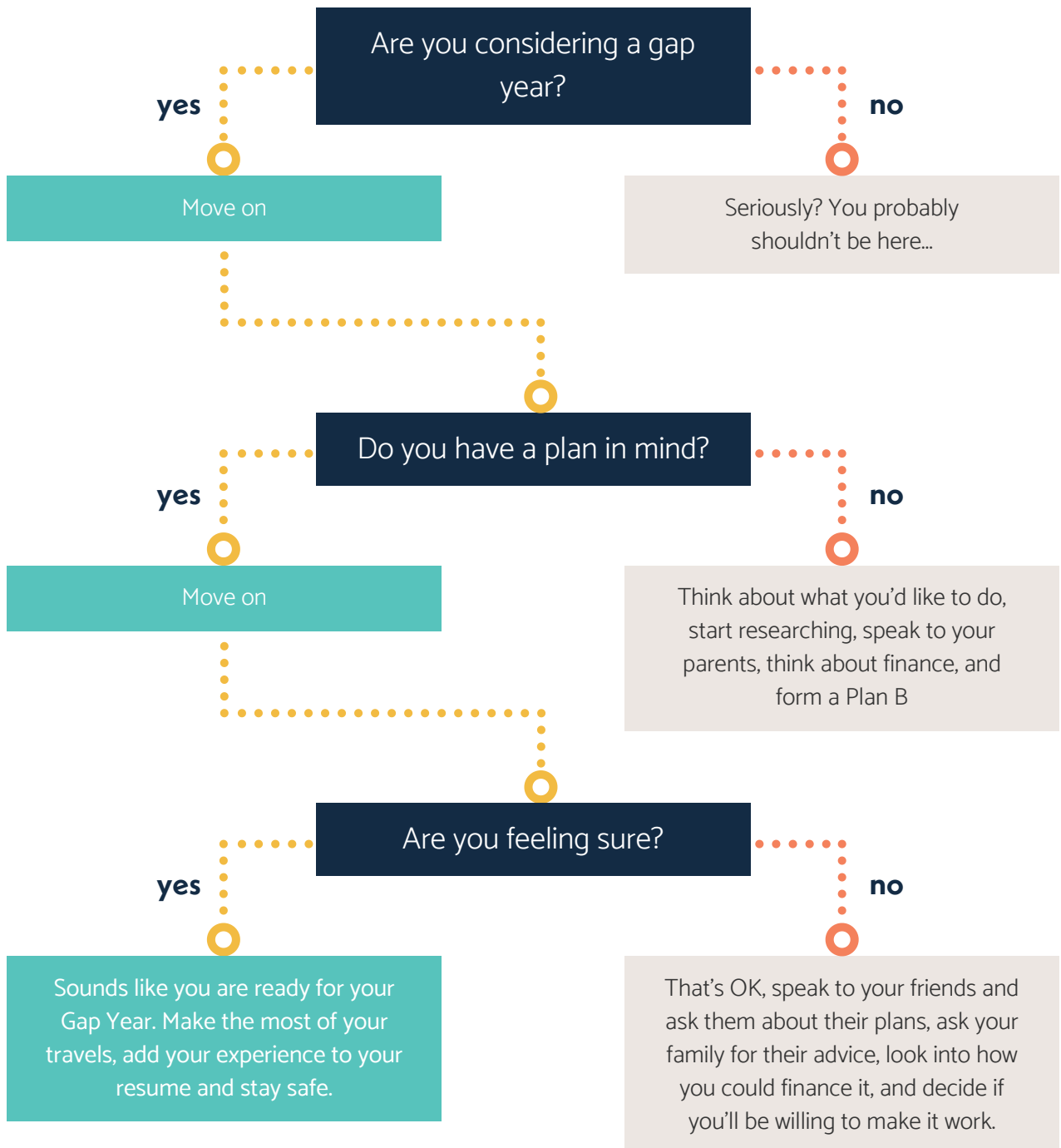
Do any of these sound like you?

- Yes, I resonate with most of these
- No, but I still want a gap year

Anyone can take a Gap Year and people take time out for all kinds of different reasons.

In this Guide we're going to break your options down into a few categories just to simplify matters.

is a gap year right for you?



plan your gap year

Before diving in and committing yourself to a Gap Year program, it's worth taking some time to figure out the basics and make sure you've got all your bases covered.

1

STEP ONE

Even if you have a plan in mind it's a good idea to research all your options. You don't want to miss out on an opportunity just because you didn't know it existed.

2

STEP TWO

Work out if a Gap Year is the best option for you. How will you afford it, do you have family support, can you defer any study plans or work?

3

STEP THREE

Narrow down your options and work out how much money you're going to need and where you're going to get it from.

4

STEP FOUR

Planning on going to uni after your Gap Year? Check if you can defer your courses for 12 months (or more) so you'll have a spot to come back to.

5

STEP FIVE

Get any paperwork or documents together that you're going to need and apply for the program or position you'd like. If you're travelling then ensure you've got passport, visa and other requirements organised.

6

STEP SIX

Work out your budget and start saving. As you plan, keep studying and use your Gap Year as a goal to work towards.

overseas gap years

Whether you've always dreamt of interrailing across Europe, hiking in South America, driving Route 66 in the USA; or you'd love to travel to third world countries and volunteer on projects, immerse yourself in another culture and learn a new language fluently, there are lots of options to consider.

If you just want to travel and have adventure, you can make independent plans or book with organised tours.

You'll get to:

- see the world
- build your networks
- gain skills like independence, resilience, determination, organising, planning and budgeting

Lots of Gap Year providers are aware that students are nervous about putting down a deposit but also anxious to make plans for late 2022 and 2023, but they are keen to reassure students that they're still planning programs for lots of destinations, including the UK and New Zealand.

Make 110% sure before you book that they will definitely refund your money if something goes wrong.

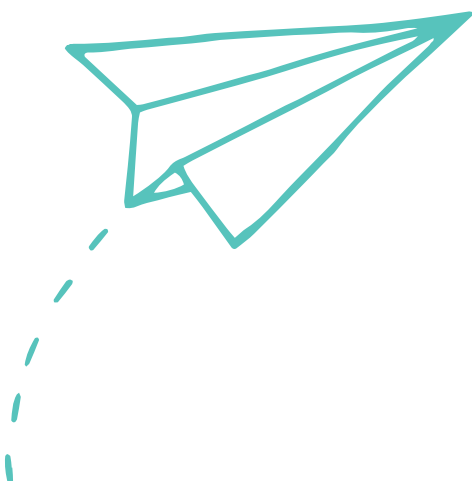
Don't forget that exploring your own backyard here in Australia can be equally rewarding, adventurous and inspiring and you can still get a long way away from home.

It's really important that you:

- choose a reputable company
- read ALL the fine print
- make sure you have insurance that will cover all elements of your trip from flight delays and lost luggage, to illness or injury (it's well worth the money for peace of mind)
- check the [Australian Government recommendation for travelling](#), safety, vaccinations, Visa and ID requirements before you book and again before you travel

Here are a few companies that are currently offering overseas trips:

- [Letzlive](#)
- [WEP](#)
- [Southern Cross Cultural Exchange](#)
- [AIFS](#)
- [EF Australia](#)
- [Student Exchange Australia New Zealand](#)



working gap years

Unless you're one of the lucky ones, chances are you're going to need to consider working during your gap year. This could look like casual or part-time work when you need it, or periods of full time employment where you save as much as you can. Some Gap Years include work as an integral part - such as working at the ski fields for a season, or working in a US Summer Camp.

Spending a year working might not be the first thing you think about when you're considering a year out. But for many it's a necessity and there are certainly plenty of benefits to consider too.

You'll get to:

- Learn new skills
- Build valuable networks
- Experience different jobs
- Earn money
- Make your resume dazzle
- Get professional references

There are plenty of ways you can find work. Some Gap Year specialists provide internship programs, you can apply for jobs yourself (find them on [SEEK](#), Indeed, local newspapers, networking, or even on social media). Or you can sign up to an agency who will find opportunities for you as well.

If you're planning on working, you might like to:

- Create or update your resume
- Write tailored cover letters for each application
- Practise your interview skills
- Make sure you have a Tax File Number
- Set up a Bank Account

Here's just a few job ideas to consider:

- [Defence Force](#)
- [Ski Season](#)
- [Teaching English](#) or tutoring
- Life guard
- [Au Pair](#)
- Tour Guide or outdoor adventure worker
- Resort work or Hospitality
- [Yacht Hostie](#) or Deck Hand
- [Internships](#)
- Blogger
- [Fruit picking](#) and other [seasonal workers](#)



volunteer gap years

Volunteering can be a really great way to make a real impact with your Gap Year.

You could learn a lot about yourself, gain skills, immerse yourself in different cultures and make a positive impact on communities and individuals in genuine need of volunteer support.

Whether you're keen to explore the world, make a difference to someone's life, or take a break from study or a career, volunteering offers plenty of positives:

- Step outside of your comfort zone
- Develop your global perspective
- Become more independent
- Learn new skills
- Meet like minded people

Many organisations specialise in running volunteer programs for Gap Year seekers. If you choose to go this route you'll need to pay to take part in the program and costs vary a lot, so do your research and plan how you'll get the money together.

Or you could contact those who work on the ground to see if there's any opportunities that exist with them. You may not have to pay - but you'll need to get yourself there (wherever "there" may be) and of course you won't be earning whilst you're there.

Check the history of organisations before signing up to programs and handing over money. Plus, it pays to read up about the destinations you'll be headed to - make sure they're safe and that you have an idea of what to expect when you arrive.

Here's a few places to start:

- [Volunteering Australia](#)
- [GoAbroad](#)
- [Australian Red Cross](#)
- [Farm Army](#)
- [Australian Marine Conservation](#)
- [Mission Australia](#)
- [GVI Australia](#)



learning gap years

On your Gap Year, the chances are high (unless you become a serious couch potato), that you'll be learning no matter what you do. But if you'd like to dedicate yourself to some study, on your own terms and that'll just take 12 months or under, there are plenty of choices to satisfy every passion.

If you have ever been tempted to do a short course or intensive workshop program.

Perhaps you'd love to deep dive into a hobby and get the chance to see if it's a potential career in the making for you or just have some fun.

If you're not sure about uni and you'd like to do a VET qualification to get a taste of a course you're thinking of doing.

Or maybe, you'd just love to learn a new skill. A Gap Year could be the perfect time to do any or all of the above.

Learn a language, take a patisserie course, learn to ride a horse, refurbish a vintage car, embrace your inner interior designer, get landscaping skills, get your pilots license.

The options are endless.

Check out some of these links for inspiration and ideas.

- Learn a new language with [Babbel](#) or [DuoLingo](#)
- [Courseseeker](#)
- [MySkills](#)
- [Aviation Australia](#)
- [Civil Aviation Australia](#)
- [Horse Safety Australia](#)
- [Le Cordon Bleu Australia](#)

Don't underestimate where your passion could lead you. You could end up writing an award winning novel, heading off to the next Olympics, or inventing a life saving device.



gap year finances

Even if you're already working and plan to live at home rent-free and keep working for the next 12 months, you'll need a financial plan. Because without one you could fritter away all your hard-earned salary and not may not be able to achieve your goals at the end of your Gap Year.

Travel, study, and most Gap Year Programs have costs associated with them. You'll need to figure out how much it's going to cost you overall (include the smallest details because they all add up), then figure out how you're going to be able to afford your Gap Year.

If your parents or other family are helping you out - great. You still need to know what costs you're going to incur then plan a budget to make sure your money will last as long as it needs to.

Try to avoid getting into debt for a Gap Year. Paying back the costs with interest could set you back once your time out is over.

There are three steps you'll need to go through for your gap year:

plan

Work out what you want to do and where you want to go. You need these details so you can work out how much everything will cost.



budget

Once you know how much you need, write a clear budget that lists every item. You'll need to know how you're going to pay for everything!



save

You'll know how much you need, so set some goals and start saving. A contingency plan could be a good idea, just in case you don't manage to save enough.



gap year budget

expenses		
item	cost	
Passport & Visas		
Vaccinations		
Insurance		
Tickets / Fuel / Car hire other travel costs		
Luggage / Backpack		
Essential clothing & footwear		
Adaptors, chargers, camera, money belt		
Phone plan, travel postal address		
Toiletries, medications		
daily living costs		
Food and drink		
Accommodation / Rent		
Transport / Fuel / Parking		
Tours / Activities / Entertainment		
Miscellaneous / Other (detail on reverse)		
savings		
Total Amount needed:	Savings so far:	Savings to make:
\$	\$	\$

covid and gap years

The last few years have been tough and changed a lot of our plans.

Luckily not only are humans resilient, but we're also great at adapting. That means that lots of organisations are changing the models they use to cater for domestic Gap Year experiences right here in Australia, or working closely within the international limitations to offer you programs that are available overseas too.

We'd recommend that if you have your heart set on an international Gap Year then:

- Find out what's possible (options, deferring uni or other study)
- Make a plan
- Stay up to date with any potential changes
- Definitely have a back-up plan in mind
- Be prepared to postpone your dream Gap Year but don't give up on it
- Get excited - Gap Years are still possible, even in a pandemic!

We have spoken with Australian Gap Year providers and they have all suggested that if you have a Gap Year in mind then you should get in touch to see what is possible. You may need to plan in advance (even more than normal) and be prepared to do some leg work, but there's no reason why you can't plan a Gap Year for 2023.

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WITH FUTURES THEY LOVE



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