<http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/content/why-take-a-gap-year>

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10 Benefits of a Gap Year

[Why take a gap year](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/content/gap-year-after-high-school) between high school and college? That is just one of many questions you’re considering as you wrap up your high school experience, and there are many answers.

For starters, a gap year (or [bridge year](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/program-overview/)) can help you learn and appreciate a culture outside of the United States. It can better prepare you for college or boost your future employment potential.

It can also give you the time and experience to make tough decisions, like what you truly want to study or what career to pursue. And that’s just the beginning. Check out these 10 gap year benefits to create a fulfilling bridge year!

10 Gap Year Benefits | Why Take a Gap Year After High School

By choosing to take a bridge year, you’re choosing to expand your world.**Here are 10 benefits of a gap year**:

1. **Experience a different culture**. A vacation allows you to *see*a different culture. A gap year allows you to *live*it. You’ll spend nine months [fully immersed in a whole new world](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/updates/finding-love-in-a-foreign-language-family-community-people-and-culture/?nabe=4608649546170368:2).
2. **Learn a new language**. We live in an increasingly global society and what better way to pick up a new language — or sharpen an old one — than by immersing yourself with native speakers?
3. **Develop new life skills**. Hone your global competency, learn about entrepreneurialism and [improve your ability to communicate and adapt quickly](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/updates/my-apprenticeship/?nabe=4608649546170368:2) in the face of challenges.
4. **Discover a hidden passion**. Whether it’s photography, organic farming or international relations, a gap year can help you find dormant interests.
5. **Prep for college**. A gap year can teach you the [independence and maturity needed](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2015/06/23/want-to-help-kids-succeed-in-college-let-them-take-a-gap-year/) to make the most of college. Plus, [colleges show preference](http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2011/11/30/community-service-work-increasingly-important-for-college-applicants) to students who display commitment, passion, and perseverance to something bigger than themselves.
6. **Improve yourself**. You’ll be working alongside local residents on projects that matter to them, but you’ll also be learning and developing your own skills in the process. Sure, you’ll be making an impact, but you’re going to gain just as much, or more, from the experience as the local community.
7. **Live life to the fullest**. Spending a year in another country will bring adventures, stories and memories to last a lifetime. Follow along with our [current Fellows in the field](http://globalcitizenyear.org/fellows/)!
8. **Boost your job prospects**. Participating in a bridge year [displays the qualities many employers look for](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/alumni-2/?nabe=4608649546170368:2) in a prospect: courage, teamwork, curiosity, service, open-mindedness and a willingness to try something new. The grit you’ll acquire can be [a cornerstone to success](http://www.wired.com/2011/03/what-is-success-true-grit/).
9. **Break down classroom walls**. You’ve been sitting in classrooms for years. A bridge year gets you out of a desk and into the real world, and is a great way to recharge your battery before college.
10. **Have fun** **and make lasting friendships.**You’ll be an active member of a community teaming up with local professionals and networking with other Fellows. When you take a gap year, you’re joining a group of young people with aspirations and goals similar to your own.

Why take a gap year between high school and college? A better question is why *not?*[Learn more about Global Citizen Year](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/program-overview/) and the many gap year benefits available to you. If you’re ready to sign up, [start your application here](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/application/)!

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*Sources:*  
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*Wired: www.wired.com/2011/03/what-is-success-true-grit*

“10 Gap Year Benefits.” *Global Citizen Year*, Apr. 2015, [www.globalcitizenyear.org/content/why-take-a-](http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/content/why-take-a-)

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