

What to Do With a Degree in Art

Alternative Careers By [Dawn Rosenberg McKay](#)

Do you love to paint or draw? Perhaps you love doing [graphic design](#) or animation? Or maybe fashion is your passion? You may have thought about majoring in art but got scared off by the tales you've heard about starving artists. Fear not! Studying art either at an art school or at a traditional college will prepare you for a professional [art career](#). Did you know that it can also prepare you for other occupations? In addition to the technical skills you will acquire while earning a Bachelor's of Fine Arts (BFA) degree, you will also strengthen your critical reasoning, problem solving, time management, communication and presentation skills.

After four years of completing assignments, you will have no problem working independently *or* collaborating with others as part of a team. All these skills will serve you well in an art career or in many [other occupations](#) if you decide you want to take a different path. Let's take a look at alternative careers that are good for college graduates with a degree in art.

Art Critic- Art critics are writers who evaluate art for newspapers, magazines, websites and other publications. Employers prefer to hire [job candidates](#) who have knowledge of the art world and that includes those who have a BFA. You must, of course, be able to express yourself well in writing.

Curator- Curators manage museums and related facilities. They often specialize in a particular subject matter, for example art. Their responsibilities include acquiring, storing and exhibiting collections. One usually needs at least a master's degree in his or her area of specialty or in museum management.

Teacher- Teachers educate students about various subjects. They first help them learn concepts and then they show their students how to apply them. College graduates who have degrees in art have many of the skills needed to teach children, including strong problem solving, time [management and communication](#) skills.

Art Instructor= Art instructors are self-enrichment teachers who help students learn or improve their artistic techniques. They lead classes or give private lessons that are not part of a required curriculum. Students want to learn for fun or self-improvement. Art instructors must demonstrate their expertise as artists but usually do not need formal training as educators.

Event Planner-[Event planners coordinate events](#) such as private parties, conventions, trade shows and business meetings. They choose locations, entertainment, caterers and decorations. If you combine an art major's ability to manage time, communicate well and work as part of a team with his or her artistic eye, it is easy to see why this could make a [good career choice](#) for an art major. While a degree in hospitality management isn't required, some employers prefer candidates who have one.

To make up for it, some who don't have one do internships or get part-time jobs in the hospitality industry.

Art Supplies Sales Representative- Art supplies sales representatives sell products on behalf of manufacturers and wholesalers. They demonstrate products and try to convince their clients their customers will want them. Since they currently use or have used art supplies, art school graduates have personal knowledge about them. This makes them more qualified to sell them than anyone else.

Fine Art Salesperson- Fine art salespeople sell photographs, paintings, sculptures, drawings and other pieces of art. They work in galleries and for other businesses that sell art to the general public and to collectors. As an art major, you learned how to describe your own work and that of others. You will be able to draw upon this ability to sell art.

Art Therapist-[Art therapists](#) are mental health professionals who use art and the creative process to help their clients deal with mental health issues. This occupation combines knowledge of visual art with the study of human development, therapeutic practice and psychology. Your BFA takes you at least part way there. You will need a master's degree in art therapy as well. Admission requirements often include prerequisite coursework in psychology and human development. If you did not take classes in those subjects as an undergraduate, you will have to do so before you can apply to graduate school.

Art Gallery Owner- Art galleries display the works of fine artists [including painters](#), sculptors and photographers. Many gallery owners display their own work in addition to the work of other artists. Your knowledge of art and your connections in the art world may contribute to your success as an entrepreneur. It is important, though, that you also be a good business person. You must be able to network, manage other people and keep track of financial matters.

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