

Gap Year Planning Template

This free planning template is designed to help you structure a meaningful and productive gap year. It includes month-by-month activity planners, financial budgeting worksheets, and college deferral request guidance. Use it to create a clear, actionable plan that aligns with your goals and ensures a smooth transition to college.

Part 1: Month-by-Month Gap Year Planner

Use this 12-month planner to outline your goals, activities, and milestones.

Month 1-3: Foundation & Earning

- **Goals:** Secure stable income, establish a budget, set savings targets.
- **Activities:** Full-time job, internship, or apprenticeship. Begin tracking expenses.
- **Milestones:** Save \$3,000–\$5,000, open a high-yield savings account.

Month 4-6: Skill Development & Exploration

- **Goals:** Gain new skills, explore career interests, volunteer.
- **Activities:** Enroll in a course (online or in-person), volunteer locally, job shadow.
- **Milestones:** Complete a certification, log 50+ volunteer hours.

Month 7-9: Travel or Immersion Experience

- **Goals:** Cultural exposure, language learning, personal growth.
- **Activities:** Structured travel program, work exchange (e.g., WWOOF), or independent travel with a purpose.
- **Milestones:** Travel to 1–2 countries, complete a travel journal or blog.

Month 10-12: Re-entry & College Prep

- **Goals:** Prepare for college, finalize logistics, reconnect academically.

- **Activities:** Part-time work, online college prep course, complete FAFSA, secure housing.
- **Milestones:** Save an additional \$2,000–\$4,000, submit all college forms.

Part 2: Financial Budgeting Worksheets

Annual Income Projection

Source	Monthly Estimate	Annual Total
Job Income	\$2,000	\$24,000
Side Hustle	\$300	\$3,600
Gift Money	\$100	\$1,200
Total Income	\$2,400	\$28,800

Monthly Expense Tracker

Category	Budgeted Amount	Actual Spending
Rent/Utilities	\$500	
Food/Groceries	\$250	
Transportation	\$150	
Phone/Internet	\$80	
Entertainment	\$100	
Savings (College Fund)	\$800	
Total Expenses	\$1,880	

College Savings Goal Tracker

Month	Target Savings	Actual Savings	Notes
Month 1	\$800		
Month 2	\$800		

...	...		
Year-End	\$9,600+		Aim for \$10K–\$15K+

Part 3: College Deferral Request Guidance

Step 1: Research Policies

- Check your college’s website for “gap year” or “deferral” policies.
- Contact the admissions office to confirm if scholarships/financial aid are deferred.

Step 2: Draft Your Deferral Request

Key Elements to Include:

1. **Gratitude:** Thank them for your admission.
2. **Clear Request:** State you’re requesting a one-year deferral.
3. **Detailed Plan:** Summarize your structured gap year activities (refer to Part 1).
4. **Rationale:** Explain how this year will prepare you for greater success at their institution.
5. **Reaffirmation:** Reiterate your commitment to attend after the gap year.
6. **Contact Information:** Provide your phone and email.

Sample Deferral Request Outline

Dear [Admissions Office],

I am writing to formally request a one-year deferral of my admission to [University] for the [Year] academic year. I was thrilled to be accepted and remain deeply committed to attending.

During my gap year, I plan to [briefly describe key activities, e.g., work full-time to save for college, volunteer with AmeriCorps, and complete a coding bootcamp]. This structured experience will allow me to gain maturity, clarity in my academic interests, and financial preparedness.

I believe this gap year will enhance my ability to contribute meaningfully to the [University] community. I have attached a detailed plan outlining my activities and goals.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to confirming my enrollment for [Year+1].

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Step 3: Submit & Follow Up

- Submit your request by the college's deadline (usually May–June).
 - Follow up politely if you don't hear back within 2–3 weeks.
 - Once approved, confirm in writing and complete any required deferral forms.
-

Part 4: Accountability & Reflection

Monthly Check-In Questions

- What did I accomplish this month?
- Am I on track with my savings goals?
- What did I learn about myself or my career interests?
- What adjustments do I need to make for next month?

Gap Year Mentor/Accountability Partner

- Identify a trusted adult (family member, teacher, mentor) to meet with quarterly.
 - Share your progress using this template.
 - Discuss challenges and adjust plans as needed.
-

Part 5: College Re-Entry Checklist

- ✓ Confirm enrollment and housing for your start term.

- ✓ Complete FAFSA and any institutional financial aid forms.
 - ✓ Register for orientation and first-semester classes.
 - ✓ Join social media groups for your incoming class.
 - ✓ Schedule a meeting with your academic advisor (if possible).
 - ✓ Set up a budget for your first semester of college.
-

Download Instructions

1. **Save** this template as a PDF or editable document.
 2. **Print** copies for planning and tracking.
 3. **Share** with parents, mentors, or advisors for feedback and accountability.
-

Remember: A successful gap year is intentional, structured, and goal-oriented. Use this template to build a year of growth that prepares you for college and beyond.

For help crafting a compelling deferral request or personal statement, consider consulting trusted resources or writing services to ensure your plan is presented clearly and persuasively.