

# Career

# Paths

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Consider which language and culture appeals to you most and the level of foreign language ability you will need to acquire for success in your career. Possible languages to study: Spanish, German, French, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Hebrew, Arabic, Iranian languages, Indic languages, and Turkic languages. Some languages will offer more job opportunities than other languages in various industries or geographic locales. Some are considered critical needs and will offer the most opportunities. Plan to attend a private language institute to learn additional languages and cultures.

### Government

**Example Career Paths:** Translation/Interpretation | Language analysis | Linguistics | Diplomacy | Civil service | Foreign service | Immigration/Naturalization | Customs | Intelligence | Security and protection | Law enforcement | Journalism/Broadcasting

**Potential Employers:** Federal government organizations | Intelligence and law enforcement agencies | Department of State | Homeland Security | Department of Defense | Department of Commerce | Agency for International Development (USAID) | Peace Corps, VISTA, Americorps | Library of Congress | Voice of America | US District Courts | United Nations

**Professional Associations:** [Foreign Policy Association](#) | [International Association of Conference Interpreters](#) | [National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators](#)

## Industry and Commerce

**Example Career Paths:** Translation/Interpretation | Banking/Finance | Sales | Customer services | Manufacturing | Logistics and transportation/Supply chain management | Engineering/Technical | Computer and software services | Research | Operations management | Consulting | Importing/Exporting | Administrative services | Advertising and marketing | Human resources | Law

**Potential Employers:** Banks and financial institutions | Import/Export companies | International companies | Manufacturers, including automobile | Retail stores | Environmental firms | Consulting agencies | Sports organizations | Telecommunications companies | Computer and software firms | Advertising agencies | Professional associations | Law firms

**Professional Associations:** [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages](#) | [Globalization and Localization Association](#)

## Travel and Tourism

**Example Career Paths:** Translation/Interpretation | Airline services | Management | Booking and reservations | Travel services/guidance | Ecotourism

**Potential Employers:** Tour and excursion companies | Travel agencies | Hotels/Motels | Resorts | Restaurants | Airlines/Airports | Cruise lines | Railroads | Bus lines | Car rental agencies | Convention centers | Chambers of commerce

**Professional Associations:** [American Society of Travel Advisors](#) | [International Air Transport Association](#)

## Interpretation/Translation

**Example Career Paths:** Interpretation (Simultaneous & consecutive) | Translation | Steganography | Lexicography

**Potential Employers:** Freelance | Educational services | Business services | Government agencies | Healthcare organizations | International organizations | Nonprofit and social service organizations | Courts | Publishers | Libraries

**Professional Associations:** [American Translators Association](#) | [International Federation of Translators](#) | [National Council on Interpreting in Health Care](#)

## Service and Education

**Example Career Paths:** Translation/Interpretation | Teaching | Tutoring | Educational administration | Linguistics | Civil service | Social work | Mission work | Library science | Health services | Counseling | Nonprofit or public interest law | Research

**Potential Employers:** K-12 schools, public and private | Universities/Colleges | Pre-schools | Professional language schools | English language institutes | Overseas dependents' schools | Foreign study exchange programs | Libraries | Adult education programs | Religious and volunteer organizations | International organizations | Law enforcement agencies | Social service agencies | Nonprofit organizations | Hospitals

**Professional Associations:** [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages](#) | [Association of International Educators](#) | [Council on International Educational Exchange](#) | [International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language](#)

## Arts, Media, Entertainment

**Example Career Paths:** Advertising and marketing | Translation/Interpretation | Journalism/Broadcasting | Photography | Writing | Publishing/Editing | Public relations | Performing | Film-making | Museum work | Fashion

**Potential Employers:** Museums | Foreign news agencies | Book publishers | Newspapers | Magazines | TV networks | Radio stations | Film companies | Recording companies | Internet media companies | Advertising firms | Design firms

**Professional Associations:** [European Association for Studies in Screen Translation](#)

## Preparing for your Career

- The government is one of the largest employers of people with foreign language skills. Consider studying a critical need language for the greatest number of opportunities.
- Complete an internship with a federal agency and maintain a high GPA to be a more competitive candidate.
- Learn government job application procedures. Plan to apply early and inquire frequently about job vacancies.
- Review special hiring authorizations to be hired and to advance more quickly.
- Participate in campus organizations and activities that promote interaction with international students.
- Attend a specialized school that teaches foreign languages for additional training.
- Live abroad and gain knowledge of politics and economics to prepare for a career in this field.
- Increase knowledge of geography, history, and international affairs.
- Join the armed forces as a way to get experience.
- Consider earning a graduate degree for more job opportunities.
- Supplement coursework with business classes or earn a business minor.
- Develop international competency by living and working abroad and by interacting with international students on campus.
- Get involved in student organizations and seek leadership roles.

This resource was adapted from What Can I Do With My Major.

For more, visit <https://web.uri.edu/career/wcidwmm/>

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What Can I Do With This Major? features 100 major profiles with information on common career paths, types of employers that hire in the field, and strategies to maximize opportunities. Scroll to the...

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