

# PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

Your portfolio may be used to apply to  
Jobs, Schools, Programs, Scholarships, Awards, Grants, Prizes, etc.

This is your master packet, which includes guidelines, check list & shopping list.

Input pages are a separate document on the website.

You may format similar forms on a computer.

Many of your questions will be answered if you read the guidelines before you begin.

Information provided on the Internet will be viewed as a scrolling document.

Print **ONLY** those pages to which you have added data.

Templates are NOT provided for Personal Essay, Recommendation Letters,  
School Acceptances or the Appreciation Statement.

Please follow instructions carefully and use the provided Content Check List, which includes  
directions for each section of the portfolio.

## *Portfolio*

### (Job, School, Scholarships, Awards, Grants, Prizes, etc.)

The portfolio is your history of your high school career (grades 9 through 12) as you would like it told to employers, schools, or scholarship review committees. The portfolio can be worked on throughout high school and is submitted in your senior year to your high school's career resource advisor. At a minimum, it should include the materials listed in this packet. You may add new information and documentation to the portfolio at any time during your senior year.

**Submitting a portfolio does not guarantee an award.** It also does not mean that you are applying for every scholarship available. The majority of scholarships have separate applications, and it is important for you to seek out those opportunities, complete the applications, and send partial or full copies of your portfolio for consideration.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Using a computer is recommended. The final document should be completed on a letter-quality printer and on white paper.
2. You should have at least three people proofread all material that you include in the portfolio. There should be no errors! Use spell-check!
3. Each page is to be enclosed in a non-glare plastic sheet protector, front side only. Use sheet protectors with an additional extender strip outside the normal 8.5" x 11" sheet (so you will not punch holes in documents). This will allow you to make cleaner copies. The copier will copy through the plastic.
4. Mark the beginning of each section with a press-on clear tab, except the title page, so that each review committee can easily find the information they are seeking. Use the section titles listed under "Contents Check List" (see attached). Do not place a page at the beginning of each section with the section title printed on the page.
5. Submit the portfolio in a three-ring binder with a hard cover. Try not to use a binder that is a loud color or that is over-sized for what you have included. (Do not use a three-inch binder if a one-inch binder will do.) Check with your school counselor to see if your school loans or sells binders to students.
5. Submit three copies of your portfolio in flat soft-cover binders with brads. Keep an additional copy for reference. Do not use plastic sheet protectors or tabs in the three copies. If a photocopy of your photograph is not clear, you may include an actual photograph in each copy.
6. Seniors, check with your career resource advisor for portfolio due dates.
7. When you receive a scholarship, award, or job interview remember to send a thank you note.
8. When you receive a scholarship, college award, college acceptance, or any other recognition please tell your career resource advisor.

# Contents Check List

Your portfolio should contain the following section titles, in this order:

- **Title Page (Do not tab this page.)**  
Include your name, the name of your school, year of graduation, and your picture. Recommended picture size is 2" x 3".
- **Student Information Sheet (Tab) (sample enclosed)**  
Be sure to read the certification statement at the bottom of the form, sign it, and have your parent(s)/guardian(s) sign it.
- **Personal Essay (Tab) (1.5 to 2 pages, double-spaced)**  
The personal essay may include a variety of topics. Examples include information about your family, where you have lived, your accomplishments, your future plans for your post-secondary education, why you chose your major, a role model, person or event that inspired you, your career goals, where you hope to live, and plans for financing your postsecondary education. Essay writing tips are available in your high school career resource center.
- **Academic Information (Tab)** Include a copy of your transcript (unofficial and updated), the latest GPA highlighted with a yellow marker. After your transcript, include "Current Classes and Test Scores" sheet. This must be followed by SAT and/or ACT, official score report(s). WorkKeys certificates as well as AP and TOEFL scores may be included. Please do not include ASVAB, Placement Testing, PLAN or PSAT scores.
- **Activities and Awards (Tab) (samples enclosed)**  
Include, in this order, the enclosed "School Activities," "Community Activities," "Work Experience," and "Recognition and Awards" sheets. In addition, in this section it is important that you include documentation or proof of activities, work experience, and awards (certificates, programs, newspaper articles, verification of employment, congratulatory letters, pictures of trophies or ribbons, etc.).  
**Include documentation from grades 9-12 only.**
- **Recommendations (Tab)**  
List the names and positions of the people who have written you letters. Include three letters (two from school staff members and one from a person outside of school), but no more than four. A "Request for Letter of Recommendation" worksheet is enclosed or can be found at the online website.  
  
It is best to use adults who know you well. You should include teachers and high school staff members, employers, and community leaders and family friends. Give each person adequate time to write your letter (at least 2-3 weeks) and remember to show your appreciation with a thank you note.
- **Financial Information (Tab) (sample enclosed)**  
To estimate your costs, refer to resources in your CRC, Internet ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) or specific schools. Included is a "Hidden College Costs" sheet for you to consider. You must plan costs and resources for one year. Do not include any dollars you expect to borrow. Use the enclosed "Budget" sheet. Make additional copies if you are applying to more than 3 schools.  
  
It is acceptable that your parent(s)/guardian(s) write their own statement giving general information about family finances, financial need, or unusual or exceptional circumstances. Place this statement behind the budget sheet.
- **School Acceptances (Tab)**  
When you first submit your portfolio, list the school to which you are applying. This acts as a placeholder. Later, as acceptance letters arrive, include them in your portfolio behind the school list.
- **Other Information (Optional) (Tab)**  
Use this section to demonstrate anything that is significant in your life, yet did not fit into any previous sections. Do not use it to make your folder "thicker." Many students do not include an "Other Information" section at all because their materials were all mentioned and documented previously in the portfolio. Your resume may be included in this section.
- **Appreciation Statement (Tab)**  
This is a short statement showing appreciation to those who took the time to review your portfolio. Be sure to sign the statement using black ink.

# Student Portfolio Shopping List

This list can be used in preparing to make a portfolio during your high school freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior year. Your completed portfolio is submitted, in your senior year of high school, to the career resource advisor at your school. Check with your advisor for your school's due date.

The following is a suggested list of materials needed to assemble your portfolio. Consider sharing the cost with a friend if it is cheaper to purchase a large quantity.

- **Three-ring binder, hard cover** Use the size that is appropriate for the materials in the portfolio. (Don't use a 3" binder when a 1" binder will do.) Color: blue, black, gray, burgundy, etc. It needs to look professional. Your career resource advisor can tell you if your school sells binders.

NOTE: If you are doing the portfolio as a class assignment, you will submit only the three-ring binder to your Teacher. The required copies will be made when you are a high school senior (see below.)

- **Paper**  
Use good quality white paper. It should be used consistently throughout the portfolio. Use the same paper for mounting materials on and as backing for two-sided documents.
- **Plastic sheet protectors**  
Sheet can be purchased at stores that carry office supplies, or online. School may have some in stock for purchase check with the school secretary or counselor. Must be pocket type. The non-glare finish works the best. Photocopies can be made of the original document through the plastic. Make sure there is an extender strip on the left side so you don't have to punch holes in the original document.
- **Index Tabs**  
You will need to refer to the "Student Portfolio Contents" page in the guidelines packet to determine how many tabs you will need to buy. Clear, self-adhesive index tabs with paper inserts are preferred. The tabs must extend past the portfolio contents. Protector sheets with tabs pre-made on the side with paper inserts are acceptable. Do not use numbered tabs with an index.
- **Yellow highlighter**  
Not only will items highlighted in yellow draw attention, they will also photocopy without leaving a black mark. Other colors will leave a dark mark when photocopied.
- **Flat binders**  
When you submit your original portfolio to your career resource advisor, as a high school senior, you will need to check with your career resource advisor as to the number of copies to make. The copies must be in flat soft-cover binders with brads. Color-matching the original portfolio is not required. Although not required, binders with a clear front will allow the reader to see the cover page of your portfolio. (Be sure to keep a copy of your portfolio at home for future reference. Do not punch holes in this copy, the holes will show when copied.)