

Topics to consider as a SENIOR

1. Loans

Student loans are an area that most college seniors and graduates will be forced to give attention to upon graduating. For many student loans, repayment schedules will after the 6-month grace period has concluded. Student loans should have a heavy focus as interest will be accruing and will be one of the biggest monthly expenses for graduates. Use the resources to learn more about student loans, good repayment options, and how much to budget monthly to get out of student loan debt fast.

- a. [Take over your loans from a cosigner](#)
- b. [Repay your loans](#)

2. Independent Taxes

Until this point, most students have filed their taxes as dependents with their parents, so they did not have much work to do. Now, older students and recent graduates will be looking for or currently in their first job that will push them past the income threshold for being a dependent child. This means that you will have to either file them yourself or pay someone to do it for you. They are not hard to do on your own but there are a lot of extras that you do not want to miss out on when you file. Most importantly, you will need any W-2's from your employer, 1099's from any investments/other incomes, and 1098's from any colleges/universities. These resources will show you what specific mistakes to avoid while filing your taxes, so you receive the maximum amount of benefits.

- a. [Don't make these tax mistakes](#)
- b. [IRS site to find free online services to file taxes](#)
- c. [What you need to file taxes](#)

3. Retirement - 401(k), Roth IRA

It is never too early to begin thinking about retirement. In fact, many of you probably have already had exposure to retirement vehicles such as a 401(k) and a Roth IRA (Individual Retirement Account). The main difference is that a 401(k) is offered through an employer, whereas a Roth IRA is a vehicle that you start on your own at any time. Both have contribution limits but will greatly benefit you in the long run. These accounts allow you to invest the funds you have earned through working, in an account that is specifically set aside for when you retire. These accounts feed on the beauty of compounding growth so the sooner you start, the more you will have in the long run. These resources will go more in depth on what the different retirement vehicles are, how to open an account, and how much you should be contributing.

- a. [401\(k\) Basics](#)
- b. [How much to contribute](#)
- c. [Where to open a Roth IRA](#)

4. Cost of Living

Graduating college is the biggest time to move to a different part of the country. Whether it be for work, family, or fun, it is important to know what you are getting into. The cost of living varies significantly depending on where you are in the country or even the world. These tools will help you find out what the cost of living is in new cities and how much you would need to earn in income to maintain the same standard of living.

- a. [Calculate cost of living in two different locations](#)
- b. [Calculate international cost of living](#)

5. Employee Benefits

One of the biggest mistakes that new jobseekers make is not looking at the benefits they will or will not receive at a new job. These benefits can total up to an additional 30% of your income! You would not want to miss out on that, now would you? These resources will go in depth into the 25 different components that can appear in a benefits package such as 401(k) matches, gym memberships, health insurance, and vacation days. It is important to evaluate these factors when looking into different job offers. They can be the deciding factor between two extremely appealing positions.

- a. [25 different components that can make up a benefits package](#)
- b. [Find average salaries for any position all around the country](#)
- c. [Access Calvin Jobzology for more job resources](#)

6. Money Management After College/General Financial Planning

Arguably the most important part of transitioning into work after college is how you will manage your money. It is important to create a budget so you know what kinds of new expenses you will be facing such as loan repayments, mortgages, insurance, or new costs of living. Many young professionals make the mistake of thinking they are making so much money now when they are not factoring new expenses in and are reckless in their spending. It is never a bad idea to find a financial advisor that you trust to help you along the way as well. These resources will show you the benefits of having a financial advisor, how to create a budget, and how to avoid many common money mistakes.

- a. [What financial advisors can do for you](#)
- b. [Avoid these common money mistakes](#)
- c. [Learn how to create your own budget](#)

7. Grad School

For those of you that are leaning towards Graduate School as the next step after undergrad, there are also many factors that need to be considered. In most scenarios, it is true that the wage gap is much higher for those that have a masters or higher degree compared to a bachelors. There are many ways to pay for grad school effectively that do not require you to take out massive student loans. The resources below dive into what the real cost of grad school is and a variety of to help you earn your graduate degree without sinking yourself in debt.

- a. [Financial aid for grad school](#)
- b. [The cost of grad school](#)
- c. [Grad school ROI calculator](#)
- d. [Paying for international grad school](#)

8. Building Credit/Credit Cards

Having good credit is more important than you think. It helps when you want to take out car loans, mortgages, and credit cards. Maintaining and building a good credit history helps you get lower rates and higher lines of credit. These resources will help you learn more about the basics and importance of credit, what makes up your credit score, and the best ways to build your credit.

- a. [The importance of credit](#)
- b. [5 components of your credit score](#)
- c. [Tips for building good credit](#)

9. Home Buying/Mortgages

For most of college, many of us were home renters. Transitioning after college, eventually, many of us will be homeowners. There are many factors that go into home buying. It is important to know all of the components and expenses that go into the home buying process. These resources will give you the knowledge you need to buy your first home.

- a. [First time home buying guide](#)
- b. [How to buy a house](#)