Before the Fair

Most of the outcome is decided before you walk in the door.

Know what you are asking for

Recruiters sort every conversation by one question first: internship or full time? Decide before you go, and say it in your first sentence.

Summer internship

- You are not expected to have much experience. Companies are betting on potential.
- Lead with coursework, projects, labs, activities, and any job that shows work ethic.
- Find out: is it paid, is housing included, and do interns get full-time offers?

First full-time job

- Companies are filling next year's new-grad class right now.
- Lead with internships, co-ops, research, and your senior project.
- Know your graduation date, earliest start date, and where you will relocate.

Start early

Fall is the main hiring season, and STEM majors get recruited early. Some firms fill most of next year's spots before winter break. September gives you the most choices.

Build a target company list

- **Who is coming?** Circle every company on the employer list that hires your major.
- **Who hires people like you?** Where did classmates intern? Who sponsors your student organizations?
- **Where could you live?** Most internships do not include housing.
- **Do real research:** open jobs, their early-career program, one recent project.
- **Track it:** company, contact, date, what you learned, next step.

Get your materials ready

- **Resume:** phone, email, custom LinkedIn URL, degree, graduation date, every job. Bring printed copies.
- **LinkedIn:** recognizable photo, school and degree, "Open to Work" set to internship or full time, with locations.

Your 30-second introduction

Name, major, graduation date, what you want, where, and one relevant experience.

"I'm a junior in civil engineering graduating in May 2028. I'm looking for a summer internship in land development, ideally in Maryland or Virginia. Last summer I worked on a survey crew."

Your questions

☐ What does your internship program look like, and what do interns actually work on?

☐ What does the first year look like for a new grad? How is training handled?

☐ Do interns have a path to full time after graduation?

☐ What do you like most about working here?

☐ I'm very interested. What is the next step, and how should I follow up?