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What's the Difference Between a BA and a BSc Degree?

A bachelor's degree is the **most common choice** for high school grads. Most programs offer either a BA (Bachelor of Arts), or a BSc (Bachelor of Science). But some, like psychology and economics, **offer students a choice between a BA or BSc degree**.

How do you know which is **the right option for you?**

What is a Bachelor of Arts (BA)?

BAs are often focused on “soft” skills, like **communication, critical thinking, and value judgments**. Arts degrees focus on qualitative assessments—subjective experiences and feelings. In a BA, expect lots of **reading, writing, and discussions** with classmates.

Importantly, a BA isn't always a degree in art! You don't need to pick up a paintbrush to earn a BA, which includes subjects in the humanities. Alongside fine arts, you'll find BAs in programs like **history, media culture, and literature**.



What is a Bachelor of Science (BSc)?

BScs are often focused on “hard” skills, like **research and analysis, technical competence, and logic**. Science degrees focus on quantitative assessments—taking measurements and crunching numbers to form insights. In a BSc, expect lots of **computation, math and stats, and lab reports**.

A BSc doesn't necessarily make you a scientist, but it can help you develop the technical and data-gathering chops you'll need to work in research. You'll adopt a scientist's mindset, interrogating data and your own assumptions. BSc programs include things like **physics, environmental engineering, and biology**.



What programs offer the option to choose a BA or BSc?

Here's a few of the most popular programs offered on **both the BA and BSc sides**. Different schools will have different lists, so be sure to **investigate your options** before making a decision.

- Anthropology
- Economics
- Education
- Geography
- Psychology

How do I decide on a BA or BSc?

1. Your interests

Take some time to **reflect on your natural aptitudes** and the things you like the best. Really! Having a driving passion that animates you will make pursuing years of school work much easier. If you **take a personal interest in the material**, you'll be more inclined to stick through the tough periods.

So, spend a few moments interrogating your own preferences. Are you drawn to **interpretive, subjective thinking**, or do you prefer more **organized, logical perspectives**? At heart, are you an **artist or a scientist**?

2. Your career goals

Ideally, your **career path will relate to your interests** in some way. If you want to work as a research scientist, well, a BSc is a natural fit. Prefer to facilitate connections between people? Maybe a BA's the better pick. When it comes to employment, though, most of the time, **hiring managers won't care whether you have a BA or BSc**—so long as your skills and attitude make you right for the role.

3. Options available at the schools that interest you

Each school has its own list of programs, and won't necessarily offer a BA or BSc in any particular area. Some research-intensive schools will be loaded with BScs, while arts-focused institutions will have plenty of BAs. Keep in mind, though, that **BScs often involve lab work** that can't be easily done from home—unlike the essays and discussion groups common to BAs. So, **if you want to study online**, some programs will be a better choice than others. Touch base with the schools that interest you if you're not sure of the right move.

So, BA or BSc? Go for the option that makes the most sense to you. Be **open and communicative** with your school, family, and friends—if you're struggling, you can make a change. **Trust your instincts**, and good luck!

