

Occupations in Demand 2026

Build Your Own Path

ALL OF THESE OCCUPATIONS ARE PROJECTED TO HAVE JOB OPENINGS IN THE COMING YEARS

LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL:

No high school diploma or equivalent.

Occupation Title	2024 Employment	Average Annual Job Openings	2025 Annual Median Wage
Fast Food and Counter Workers	58,335	14,263	\$35,402
Stockers and Order Fillers	44,484	7,698	\$42,432
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	41,749	7,397	\$42,682
Retail Salespersons	49,297	7,160	\$36,962
Cashiers	36,823	6,544	\$34,986
Waiters and Waitresses	22,965	4,726	\$34,882
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners**	25,882	3,926	\$38,605
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	26,235	3,594	\$44,158
Cooks, Restaurant	18,839	3,144	\$39,125
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	17,245	2,515	\$36,088
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	15,716	2,410	\$36,982
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	15,928	2,301	\$44,408
Bartenders	11,939	2,121	\$34,923
Construction Laborers**	16,367	1,593	\$51,438
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	4,444	1,209	\$35,256
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria**	7,133	1,145	\$43,056
Animal Caretakers	5,726	1,120	\$36,317
Amusement and Recreation Attendants	3,954	1,081	\$34,778
Dishwashers	6,175	1,056	\$36,400
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	9,137	920	\$51,251

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA:

Completion of high school or an equivalent program.

Occupation Title	2024 Employment	Average Annual Job Openings	2025 Annual Median Wage
Office Clerks, General	28,297	3,175	\$49,400
Customer Service Representatives	23,153	2,802	\$47,278
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	21,194	2,607	\$37,532
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	23,902	2,503	\$51,022
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	14,856	2,405	\$46,114
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	21,487	2,312	\$90,272
Receptionists and Information Clerks	14,517	1,974	\$40,643
Carpenters**	21,942	1,889	\$62,962
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	16,445	1,812	\$50,627
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General**	17,231	1,786	\$52,499
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	18,113	1,674	\$49,088
Security Guards	11,724	1,564	\$44,928
Light Truck Drivers	13,032	1,559	\$46,821
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	12,242	1,404	\$46,862
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	15,342	1,399	\$68,723
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	6,025	1,282	\$51,126
Social and Human Service Assistants	11,015	1,249	\$50,003
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	13,125	1,233	\$70,200
Childcare Workers	6,546	1,146	\$37,294
Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	11,075	1,145	\$65,333

POSTSECONDARY TRAINING:

Some education beyond high school is typical. These occupations require training from career schools or community colleges that usually lasts one or two years.

Occupation Title	2024 Employment	Average Annual Job Openings	2025 Annual Median Wage
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers**	27,113	2,984	\$62,650
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	24,723	2,720	\$51,251
Nursing Assistants**	14,307	2,217	\$49,774
Medical Assistants**	12,343	1,837	\$51,314
Real Estate Sales Agents	15,406	1,422	\$49,109
Dental Assistants	5,525	813	\$59,363
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	7,990	715	\$58,261
Massage Therapists	3,923	549	\$85,218
Real Estate Brokers	5,919	547	\$72,446
Computer User Support Specialists	9,089	523	\$62,795
Chefs and Head Cooks	3,880	514	\$61,984
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	3,623	496	\$36,774
Pharmacy Technicians	4,734	480	\$52,603
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	4,492	422	\$78,645
Insurance Sales Agents	5,333	404	\$62,088
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers**	3,891	403	\$64,418
Manicurists and Pedicurists	2,655	327	\$36,982
Library Technicians	1,906	316	\$48,214
Phlebotomists	2,215	316	\$48,859
Firefighters	3,856	316	\$75,358

ASSOCIATE DEGREE:

Completion of a two-year college program will give you the education typically needed for these jobs.

Occupation Title	2024 Employment	Average Annual Job Openings	2025 Annual Median Wage
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	7,020	938	\$40,414
Construction Managers	6,893	634	\$129,022
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	4,930	494	\$65,707
Graphic Designers	3,651	290	\$65,520
Dental Hygienists	3,662	278	\$121,514
Biological Technicians	2,442	272	\$48,984
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	2,878	261	\$101,878
Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technologists and Technicians	2,310	207	\$79,498
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	1,656	191	\$50,294
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	2,799	176	\$102,232
Physical Therapist Assistants	827	151	\$71,490
Interior Designers	1,275	135	\$65,998
Respiratory Therapists	1,747	120	\$98,738
Food Science Technicians	756	114	\$50,170
Commercial Pilots	915	114	\$115,352
Education and Childcare Administrators, Preschool and Daycare	1,521	113	\$55,536
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1,392	101	\$111,155
Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers	745	96	NA
Civil Engineering Technologists and Technicians	941	90	\$88,525
Agricultural Technicians	522	90	\$40,206

BACHELOR'S DEGREE:

Completion of a four-year college program is typical to enter these occupations.

Occupation Title	2024 Employment	Average Annual Job Openings	2025 Annual Median Wage
General and Operations Managers	42,610	3,738	\$100,422
Registered Nurses	46,378	2,828	\$127,358
Project Management Specialists	18,975	1,541	\$101,858
Software Developers	21,353	1,407	\$138,944
Accountants and Auditors	16,217	1,330	\$82,618
Management Analysts	13,310	1,314	\$102,710
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	13,218	1,284	\$84,136
Human Resources Specialists	11,121	1,010	\$75,400
Buyers and Purchasing Agents	8,073	839	\$75,338
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	12,838	829	\$77,855
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	6,945	758	\$71,552
Computer and Information Systems Managers	8,193	693	\$181,522
Medical and Health Services Managers	6,285	686	\$138,050
Financial Managers	7,424	636	\$149,968
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	9,866	605	\$81,759
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	6,354	573	\$64,480
Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	4,314	527	\$57,054
Marketing Managers	5,752	509	\$158,538
Sales Managers	6,169	497	\$130,166
Training and Development Specialists	4,937	485	\$71,635

ADVANCED DEGREES:

Extensive skills, knowledge, and experience are typically needed for these occupations, including at least one year of college coursework beyond the completion of a bachelor's degree.

Occupation Title	2024 Employment	Average Annual Job Openings	2025 Annual Median Wage
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	4,264	412	\$128,286
Lawyers	8,691	300	\$145,371
Nurse Practitioners	2,642	269	\$148,533
Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors	3,196	259	\$76,024
Education Administrators, Kindergarten through Secondary	3,870	249	\$131,412
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	2,346	244	\$73,778
Rehabilitation Counselors	1,932	229	\$54,059
Physical Therapists	3,480	187	\$107,266
Pharmacists	3,933	184	\$167,544
Physician Assistants	2,096	182	\$153,192
Librarians and Media Collections Specialists	1,676	165	\$77,397
Marriage and Family Therapists	1,252	145	\$82,056
Education Administrators, Postsecondary	2,101	144	\$111,530
Speech-Language Pathologists	1,859	136	\$107,058
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	1,802	123	\$102,253
Occupational Therapists	1,605	103	\$109,762
Veterinarians	1,742	88	\$105,706
Career/Technical Education Teachers, Postsecondary	1,126	81	\$81,453
Art, Drama, and Music Teachers, Postsecondary	1,062	80	\$76,829
Acupuncturists	1,158	72	\$65,354

** Apprenticeships are available, or may be required for this occupation. NA – not available

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