

## **Life Beyond High School-Choosing a Career**

**By Joanna Tuck, Director of Guidance & Counseling**

Choosing a career is one of the most life-impacting decisions a young person will ever make. When choosing a college major or career, much thought should be given to selecting a field you are likely to enjoy while earning a respectable living at the same time. Consideration should be given to where you plan to live. Some jobs are more available and may pay much better in metropolitan areas than in rural areas, or salaries and employment opportunities can vary from state to state. I recommend that you select several areas of interest and do more research. What colleges/vocational schools offer your degree or trade choice? Where will you have to live to find a job? What will be your expected beginning salary? What course work/preparation do you need in high school?

College is not for everyone. There are many vocational jobs that pay higher salaries than careers with college degrees. The following information is provided to help you make the best choice for *you*.

The list is divided into four sections: (1) College degrees that statistics show do not pay off well financially and/or where jobs are scarce (2) Graduate College Degrees (Typically 5-10 years of college depending upon degree and field-Fields of Specialized Physicians at Higher Ends) (3) Bachelor College Degrees (Typically 4 Years) (4) Associates College Degrees or Technical School trade (Typically 2 Years or Less)

### **College Degrees that are not currently in demand and/or do not 'typically' pay well financially**

(Keep in mind that money isn't everything. The field of education made this list, but teaching is a very rewarding profession. Enjoying your job is extremely important in life. Also, a few successful people have earned considerable money in some of these fields. \*This information is based on general statistics.)

1. General Studies
2. Fine or Liberal Arts
3. Psychology
4. Sociology
5. Photography
6. Theatre/Drama
7. Anthropology (Study of Human Kind)
8. Art/Music
9. Interior Design
10. Human Development
11. Public Health
12. Theology/Religious/Biblical Studies
13. Hospitality and Tourism
14. Kinesiology (Study of Body Movements)
15. Criminal Justice
16. Horticulture
17. Recreation & Leisure
18. Public Education (School Teachers)
19. Athletic Training
20. Culinary Arts (Chef)
21. Animal Science
22. Broadcast Journalism
23. Child and Family Studies
24. Nutrition
25. Communications

## Graduate Degrees by Salary Potential (Full List)

Want to find out which graduate degrees lead to the highest pay? Find out which majors and focuses of study are best for earning potential.

Earning a graduate degree is a great investment in your future if you choose wisely. Some degrees pay you back, but others don't do much to increase your earning potential.

If the highest earning graduate degree looks familiar, you've probably seen our list of bachelor's degree majors ranked by salary potential. Petroleum engineering is the subject that tops both lists, though it's interesting to note that a master's degree in petroleum engineering earns a median mid-career salary of \$187,600, a mere \$10,000 more than a bachelor's degree in the same subject. No matter what degree level you obtain in petroleum engineering, you'll probably have an easy time finding a high-paying job.

A master's degree in nurse anesthesia leads to the second-highest mid-career median salary on our list (\$162,800) and the highest early career salary (\$140,900). Nurse anesthetists earn high salaries because they provide critical services to hospitals at lower costs than doctors performing the same duties.

The third highest salaries belong to workers who hold a PhD in computer engineering. These tech geniuses report earning \$150,000 after 10 years in the workforce.

The highest-earning MBA emphasis is strategy, with a median mid-career salary of \$145,000.

If you want to study law, your salary potential will vary wildly depending on where you attend law school, but JD alumni report a median mid-career salary of \$139,300, making a juris doctor the tenth most lucrative graduate degree.

Finally, the lowest salaries of grad school alumni belong to workers who hold a master's degree in early childhood education (\$46,300).

Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
1	Petroleum Engineering	Master's Degree	\$102,800	\$187,600	69%
2	Nurse Anesthesia	Master's Degree	\$140,900	\$162,800	87%
3	Computer Engineering (CE)	Doctorate Degree	\$108,100	\$150,000	N/A
4	Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE)	Doctorate Degree	\$103,200	\$145,100	64%
5	Strategy	MBA Degree	\$92,200	\$145,000	49%
6	Electrical Engineering (EE)	Doctorate Degree	\$99,100	\$141,400	66%
7	General & Strategic Management	MBA Degree	\$81,800	\$140,700	58%
8	Computer Science (CS)	Doctorate Degree	\$110,800	\$140,600	66%
9	Chemical Engineering	Doctorate Degree	\$91,900	\$139,300	63%
10	Juris Doctorate	Juris Doctorate (JD Degree)	\$66,100	\$139,000	42%
11	Entrepreneurship	MBA Degree	\$68,100	\$138,300	56%
12	Biomedical Engineering (BME)	Doctorate Degree	\$90,300	\$136,400	73%
13	Marketing Management	MBA Degree	\$63,000	\$135,300	53%
14	Computer Science (CS) & Engineering	Doctorate Degree	\$102,700	\$132,900	73%
15	Economics	MBA Degree	\$71,400	\$131,800	43%
16	Physics	Doctorate Degree	\$84,000	\$131,300	63%
17	Computer Science (CS)	MBA Degree	\$83,000	\$129,900	51%
18	Marketing & International Business	MBA Degree	\$61,700	\$128,200	35%

Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
19	Economics	Doctorate Degree	\$95,900	\$127,900	73%
20	Finance	MBA Degree	\$68,300	\$126,800	47%
21	Organic Chemistry	Doctorate Degree	\$77,500	\$126,700	62%
22	Business Management & Marketing	MBA Degree	\$61,000	\$126,600	53%
23	Marketing & Management	MBA Degree	\$64,000	\$126,200	50%
24	Mechanical Engineering (ME)	Doctorate Degree	\$87,400	\$125,600	66%
25	Business & Marketing	MBA Degree	\$59,000	\$124,800	46%
26	Electrical Engineering (EE)	Master's Degree	\$78,200	\$124,700	61%
27	Marketing (MKTG)	MBA Degree	\$59,300	\$124,200	48%
28	Computer Science (CS) & Engineering	Master's Degree	\$87,000	\$123,300	51%
28	Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE)	Master's Degree	\$78,700	\$123,300	61%
30	Corporate Finance	MBA Degree	\$77,000	\$122,800	N/A
30	Aerospace Engineering	Doctorate Degree	\$89,300	\$122,800	49%
32	Operations Research	Master's Degree	\$78,800	\$122,700	70%
33	Nuclear Engineering	Master's Degree	\$70,500	\$122,600	70%
33	Chemistry	Doctorate Degree	\$79,400	\$122,600	67%
35	Chemical Engineering	Master's Degree	\$73,900	\$122,100	55%
36	Mechanical Engineering (ME)	MBA Degree	\$80,600	\$122,000	58%
37	Computer Engineering (CE)	Master's Degree	\$82,300	\$121,500	55%
38	Applied Mathematics	Master's Degree	\$62,000	\$121,300	54%
38	Materials Science & Engineering	Doctorate Degree	\$89,400	\$121,300	67%
40	Statistics	Doctorate Degree	\$100,000	\$120,300	68%
41	Analytical Chemistry	Doctorate Degree	\$80,000	\$120,000	81%
42	Computer Science (CS)	Master's Degree	\$79,700	\$119,500	50%
42	Information Technology (IT)	MBA Degree	\$70,700	\$119,500	45%
44	Management Information Systems (MIS)	MBA Degree	\$68,300	\$118,700	46%
45	Biomedical Engineering (BME)	Master's Degree	\$66,800	\$118,400	85%
46	Systems Engineering	Master's Degree	\$76,700	\$117,600	67%
47	Information Technology Management	Master's Degree	\$62,500	\$117,300	55%

Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
48	Physics	Master's Degree	\$64,700	\$117,100	46%
49	Microbiology	Doctorate Degree	\$70,200	\$117,000	68%
49	Cell & Molecular Biology	Doctorate Degree	\$71,200	\$117,000	73%
51	Aerospace Engineering	Master's Degree	\$74,400	\$116,500	67%
52	Taxation	Master's Degree	\$58,200	\$116,400	29%
53	Engineering Management	Master's Degree	\$70,100	\$116,200	56%
54	Software Engineering	Master's Degree	\$79,100	\$115,900	48%
54	International Business	MBA Degree	\$58,300	\$115,900	51%
56	Operations & Supply Chain Management	MBA Degree	\$74,800	\$115,800	49%
57	Industrial Engineering (IE)	Doctorate Degree	\$81,100	\$115,500	86%
58	Information Systems (IS)	MBA Degree	\$58,800	\$115,200	39%
59	Operations Management (OM)	MBA Degree	\$71,700	\$115,000	59%
60	Accounting & Finance	MBA Degree	\$62,100	\$114,500	49%
61	Materials Science & Engineering	Master's Degree	\$70,000	\$113,900	60%
62	Economics	Master's Degree	\$61,600	\$113,600	41%
62	Biochemistry (BCH)	Doctorate Degree	\$81,500	\$113,600	85%
64	Finance	Master's Degree	\$62,200	\$113,400	40%
64	Telecommunications	Master's Degree	\$72,100	\$113,400	50%
66	Information Assurance	Master's Degree	\$66,200	\$112,900	45%
66	Civil Engineering (CE)	Doctorate Degree	\$74,000	\$112,900	87%
68	Human Computer Interaction	Master's Degree	\$82,500	\$112,700	36%
69	Business & Information Technology (IT)	MBA Degree	\$80,100	\$112,600	55%
70	Industrial Engineering (IE)	Master's Degree	\$69,200	\$112,000	53%
71	Mechanical Engineering (ME)	Master's Degree	\$70,000	\$111,500	60%
72	General Business	MBA Degree	\$61,600	\$110,000	49%
73	Statistics	Master's Degree	\$66,200	\$108,400	61%
74	Computer Information Systems (CIS)	Master's Degree	\$64,900	\$108,300	46%
75	Computer Information Systems (CIS)	MBA Degree	\$70,300	\$108,200	52%
75	Supply Chain Management	MBA Degree	\$70,500	\$108,200	45%

Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
77	Supply Chain Management	Master's Degree	\$62,400	\$108,000	62%
77	Business Administration	Doctorate Degree	\$78,600	\$108,000	73%
79	Project Management	Master's Degree	\$66,600	\$107,800	52%
80	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology	Doctorate Degree	\$76,100	\$107,600	80%
81	Information Systems (IS)	Master's Degree	\$65,900	\$107,500	41%
82	Information Security	Master's Degree	\$72,100	\$106,600	42%
83	Management Information Systems (MIS)	Master's Degree	\$68,200	\$106,500	49%
84	Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (ACNP) Studies	Master's Degree	\$87,300	\$106,400	86%
85	Business & Information Technology (IT)	Master's Degree	\$64,900	\$105,500	58%
86	Information Technology (IT)	Master's Degree	\$64,500	\$104,700	52%
87	Applied Statistics	Master's Degree	\$67,500	\$103,800	63%
88	Structural Engineering (SE)	Master's Degree	\$61,600	\$103,600	67%
89	Leadership	MBA Degree	\$62,300	\$103,000	56%
90	Geology	Master's Degree	\$56,600	\$102,700	63%
91	Civil Engineering (CE)	Master's Degree	\$58,700	\$102,600	65%
92	Organizational Development	Master's Degree	\$58,900	\$102,400	49%
93	Marketing & Communications	MBA Degree	\$48,000	\$101,700	46%
94	Food Science & Technology	Master's Degree	\$53,800	\$101,400	48%
95	Mathematics	Doctorate Degree	\$78,400	\$101,300	77%
96	Physician Assistant Studies	Master's Degree	\$84,400	\$101,200	83%
96	Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Studies	Master's Degree	\$90,200	\$101,200	86%
98	Construction Management	Master's Degree	\$59,600	\$101,000	67%
98	International Business	Master's Degree	\$53,100	\$101,000	33%
100	Business Administration	MBA Degree	\$58,100	\$100,900	54%
101	Environmental Engineering	Master's Degree	\$58,600	\$100,800	66%
102	Civil & Environmental Engineering	Master's Degree	\$58,300	\$100,200	75%
103	Accounting & Taxation	Master's Degree	\$59,500	\$100,000	38%
104	Environmental Management	Master's Degree	\$50,900	\$99,800	72%

Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
105	Adult Nurse Practitioner Studies	Master's Degree	\$85,900	\$99,500	84%
106	International Relations	Master's Degree	\$50,100	\$98,900	63%
107	Communication	MBA Degree	\$56,800	\$97,600	56%
108	Psychology	Doctorate Degree	\$66,000	\$96,900	83%
108	Health Care Administration	MBA Degree	\$63,700	\$96,900	80%
110	Industrial Psychology	Master's Degree	\$51,000	\$96,600	56%
111	Business & Marketing	Master's Degree	\$52,900	\$96,000	39%
112	Occupational Health and Safety	Master's Degree	\$61,300	\$95,700	75%
113	Mathematics	Master's Degree	\$60,300	\$95,400	61%
114	Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Studies	Master's Degree	\$84,000	\$95,200	85%
115	Clinical Psychology	Doctorate Degree	\$67,600	\$95,000	90%
116	Nurse Practitioner Studies	Master's Degree	\$85,500	\$94,600	83%
117	Business Administration	Master's Degree	\$57,500	\$94,400	58%
117	Biology	Doctorate Degree	\$67,000	\$94,400	77%
119	Health Care Administration	Master's Degree	\$59,500	\$94,300	84%
120	Nurse Midwifery	Master's Degree	\$81,800	\$93,600	85%
121	Epidemiology	Doctorate Degree	\$78,000	\$93,200	69%
122	Marketing & Management	Master's Degree	\$51,500	\$92,700	54%
123	Project Management	MBA Degree	\$60,000	\$92,100	59%
124	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology	Master's Degree	\$54,500	\$92,000	N/A
125	Geotechnical Engineering	Master's Degree	\$59,600	\$91,600	70%
126	Political Science (PolySci)	Master's Degree	\$48,700	\$91,400	49%
127	Accounting	MBA Degree	\$52,300	\$91,300	45%
128	Biotechnology	Master's Degree	\$56,100	\$90,900	66%
129	General Business	Master's Degree	\$51,300	\$90,800	62%
130	Physical Therapy	Doctorate Degree	\$68,500	\$90,700	N/A
131	Accounting	Master's Degree	\$54,900	\$90,200	36%
132	Health Care Management	MBA Degree	\$55,300	\$89,800	82%
133	Public Policy Analysis	Master's Degree	\$53,200	\$89,100	70%

Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
134	Chemistry	Master's Degree	\$52,600	\$88,500	67%
134	Nursing	Master's Degree	\$79,800	\$88,500	84%
134	Women's Health Nurse Practitioner Studies	Master's Degree	\$79,600	\$88,500	88%
137	Marketing & Communications	Master's Degree	\$46,000	\$88,400	55%
137	Networks & Telecommunications	Master's Degree	\$75,900	\$88,400	61%
139	Epidemiology	Master's Degree	\$53,900	\$88,200	80%
140	Organizational Management	Master's Degree	\$51,900	\$87,700	63%
141	Accounting & Finance	Master's Degree	\$55,200	\$87,600	49%
142	Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Studies	Master's Degree	\$81,700	\$87,300	87%
143	Management & Leadership	Master's Degree	\$57,300	\$86,300	65%
144	Food Science	Master's Degree	\$55,200	\$86,100	57%
145	Sociology	Doctorate Degree	\$65,500	\$86,000	83%
146	Human Resources (HR)	MBA Degree	\$44,900	\$85,800	58%
147	Human Resources (HR)	Master's Degree	\$50,600	\$85,600	50%
148	Accounting & Business	MBA Degree	\$51,700	\$85,400	56%
149	Biochemistry (BCH)	Master's Degree	\$47,600	\$85,300	68%
150	Environmental Science	Master's Degree	\$49,700	\$85,000	72%
151	Health Sciences	Master's Degree	\$60,000	\$84,900	73%
151	Business Management & Human Resources Management (HRM)	MBA Degree	\$49,700	\$84,900	61%
153	Landscape Architecture	Master's Degree	\$45,400	\$84,400	71%
154	Counseling Psychology	Doctorate Degree	\$62,500	\$84,200	89%
155	Education	Doctorate Degree	\$61,300	\$83,500	85%
156	Physical Therapy	Master's Degree	\$72,700	\$83,400	93%
157	Urban & Regional Planning	Master's Degree	\$51,100	\$82,300	59%
158	History	Doctorate Degree	\$51,300	\$81,800	N/A
159	Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	Master's Degree	\$49,600	\$81,400	42%
160	Human Resources Management (HRM)	Master's Degree	\$48,500	\$81,300	60%
160	Speech-Language Pathology	Master's Degree	\$64,300	\$81,300	91%

Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
160	Urban Planning	Master's Degree	\$51,100	\$81,300	68%
163	Microbiology	Master's Degree	\$43,000	\$81,100	78%
164	Occupational Therapy (OT)	Master's Degree	\$64,100	\$80,800	89%
165	Human Resources Management (HRM)	MBA Degree	\$48,500	\$80,700	65%
166	Accounting & Business	Master's Degree	\$56,100	\$80,500	50%
167	Organizational Leadership	Master's Degree	\$50,700	\$80,300	60%
168	Biology	Master's Degree	\$49,300	\$80,200	68%
169	Speech Pathology	Master's Degree	\$61,200	\$79,500	91%
170	Human Resources Development	Master's Degree	\$51,300	\$79,100	54%
171	Communication	Master's Degree	\$46,100	\$78,200	51%
172	Public Relations (PR)	Master's Degree	\$42,200	\$77,900	53%
173	Architecture	Master's Degree	\$45,700	\$77,800	56%
174	Leadership	Master's Degree	\$48,600	\$77,700	66%
174	Speech Pathology & Audiology	Master's Degree	\$65,800	\$77,700	90%
176	Journalism & Mass Communication	Master's Degree	\$43,100	\$77,300	50%
177	English Literature	Master's Degree	\$44,700	\$77,200	58%
178	Communication Sciences & Disorders	Master's Degree	\$56,700	\$77,100	88%
179	Public Administration	Master's Degree	\$46,800	\$76,700	69%
180	Public Health (PH)	Master's Degree	\$51,200	\$76,600	81%
181	Communicative Disorders	Master's Degree	\$60,900	\$75,500	95%
182	Educational Administration	Master's Degree	\$57,900	\$75,100	86%
183	Instructional Design	Master's Degree	\$54,600	\$74,500	63%
184	Nursing Education	Master's Degree	\$64,200	\$74,000	89%
185	Geography	Master's Degree	\$47,400	\$73,300	64%
186	Nonprofit Management	Master's Degree	\$44,600	\$73,200	86%
187	Journalism	Master's Degree	\$43,000	\$73,100	49%
188	History	Master's Degree	\$42,500	\$73,000	62%
189	Adult Education & Training	Master's Degree	\$46,000	\$72,500	67%
190	English Language & Literature	Master's Degree	\$45,500	\$72,000	71%



Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
191	Writing	Master's Degree	\$42,000	\$71,800	N/A
192	Educational Leadership	Master's Degree	\$54,200	\$70,900	85%
193	Psychology	Master's Degree	\$43,400	\$68,700	76%
194	Community Health Education	Master's Degree	\$42,300	\$68,000	94%
195	Educational Technology (EDT)	Master's Degree	\$48,700	\$67,600	69%
196	English Language	Master's Degree	\$43,000	\$65,600	60%
196	Nutrition	Master's Degree	\$49,500	\$65,600	73%
198	Fine Arts	Master's Degree	\$42,500	\$65,100	57%
199	Education	Master's Degree	\$43,900	\$65,000	75%
200	Art History	Master's Degree	\$39,700	\$64,900	59%
201	Applied Behavior Analysis	Master's Degree	\$51,200	\$64,300	85%
202	Clinical Psychology	Master's Degree	\$41,800	\$62,800	81%
203	Criminal Justice	Master's Degree	\$40,700	\$62,600	69%
203	Foods & Nutrition	Master's Degree	\$50,100	\$62,600	72%
205	Sociology	Master's Degree	\$45,300	\$61,700	67%
206	Creative Writing	Master's Degree	\$42,200	\$61,500	54%
207	Marriage & Family Therapy	Master's Degree	\$42,400	\$60,600	89%
208	Dietetics	Master's Degree	\$44,900	\$60,200	90%
209	Clinical Social Work (CSW)	Master's Degree	\$44,000	\$60,000	88%
210	School Counseling	Master's Degree	\$42,300	\$59,800	84%
211	Library & Information Science	Master's Degree	\$44,800	\$59,500	66%
211	Special Education	Master's Degree	\$42,600	\$59,500	89%
213	Curriculum & Instruction	Master's Degree	\$44,000	\$59,400	79%
214	Counseling Psychology	Master's Degree	\$41,500	\$59,300	84%
215	Anthropology	Master's Degree	\$44,400	\$58,900	55%
216	Library Science	Master's Degree	\$41,300	\$58,600	57%
217	Higher Education Administration	Master's Degree	\$42,100	\$57,400	73%
217	Social Work (SW)	Master's Degree	\$42,400	\$57,400	88%
219	Studio Art	Master's Degree	\$40,300	\$56,800	63%

Rank	Major	Degree Type	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary	% High Job Meaning
220	Theology	Master's Degree	\$45,100	\$56,300	87%
221	Pastoral Ministry	Master's Degree	\$47,000	\$55,500	95%
222	Elementary Education	Master's Degree	\$39,400	\$55,000	85%
223	Counseling	Master's Degree	\$40,100	\$54,700	85%
224	Exercise Science	Master's Degree	\$39,800	\$54,600	70%
225	Divinity	Master's Degree	\$42,400	\$53,800	92%
226	Religion	Master's Degree	\$41,000	\$53,700	82%
227	Mental Health Counseling	Master's Degree	\$40,000	\$52,300	88%
228	Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL)	Master's Degree	\$40,300	\$51,600	82%
229	Community Counseling	Master's Degree	\$39,400	\$51,400	91%
230	Human Services (HS)	Master's Degree	\$37,900	\$49,000	70%
231	Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology	Master's Degree	\$41,100	\$48,200	85%
232	Early Childhood Education	Master's Degree	\$36,700	\$46,300	85%

## Bachelor's Degrees by Salary Potential (Full List)

Major has an even bigger impact on future earnings than choice of school. Find out which majors pay you back, and which make it hard to pay back student loans. Did you know that what you study in college has an even bigger impact on your future salary than where you study it?

In terms of pure earning potential, engineering majors reign supreme. That isn't surprising - our current economy has created a great need for skilled engineers and rewards them handsomely, especially [petroleum engineering](#) majors, who earn a median early career salary of \$102,300 and a median mid-career salary of \$176,300. To put things in perspective, compare those stats to the second-highest earners on our list. [Chemical engineering](#) majors have the second-highest early career salary at \$69,600, and actuarial mathematics majors have the second-highest mid-career salary at \$119,600.

For the most part, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) majors dominate the list of top-earning college majors, but that doesn't mean you can't make a good living if you aren't a computer whiz or future electrical engineer. Humanities majors can make a solid living, especially when we compare mid-career salaries. [Philosophy](#) majors have the highest mid-career salaries amongst the humanities majors - \$84,000 after 10 years of experience. The critical thinking skills associated with humanities majors like [global and international studies](#), [English language and literature](#) and [history](#) can lead to a lucrative career, but it may take more time for those graduates to settle into a career than somebody with a technical degree.

The lowest-paying majors have to do with education and child development. It's not to say that the skills that child development majors learn aren't inherently valuable - taking care of and educating young children is a pretty basic societal need - but they aren't skills that we pay a lot for. As a result, [child development majors](#) only earn a median mid-career salary of \$36,400.

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
1	<a href="#">Petroleum Engineering</a>	\$102,300	\$176,300
2	<a href="#">Actuarial Mathematics</a>	\$60,800	\$119,600
3	<a href="#">Nuclear Engineering</a>	\$67,000	\$118,800

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
4	Chemical Engineering	\$69,600	\$116,700
5	Electronics & Communications Engineering	\$64,100	\$113,200
6	Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE)	\$66,500	\$113,000
7	Computer Science (CS) & Engineering	\$66,700	\$112,600
8	Computer Engineering (CE)	\$67,300	\$108,600
9	Aerospace Engineering	\$64,700	\$107,900
9	Electrical Engineering (EE)	\$65,900	\$107,900
11	Materials Science & Engineering	\$64,000	\$105,100
11	Physics	\$57,200	\$105,100
13	Computer Science (CS)	\$61,600	\$103,600
14	Statistics	\$54,900	\$103,100
15	Mechanical Engineering (ME)	\$62,100	\$101,600
16	Computer Science (CS) & Mathematics	\$63,200	\$101,400
17	Software Engineering	\$61,700	\$99,800
18	Business & Information Technology (IT)	\$56,900	\$99,100
19	Economics	\$51,400	\$97,700
20	Industrial Engineering (IE)	\$61,900	\$97,200
21	Applied Mathematics	\$54,300	\$96,500
22	Management Information Systems (MIS)	\$56,300	\$95,500

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
23	Government	\$45,100	\$94,400
24	Civil Engineering (CE)	\$55,100	\$93,400
25	Mathematics	\$50,300	\$92,900
26	Biomedical Engineering (BME)	\$59,600	\$92,200
27	Civil & Environmental Engineering	\$55,900	\$91,800
28	Architectural Engineering	\$57,000	\$90,400
28	Environmental Engineering	\$51,400	\$90,400
30	Aviation Management	\$48,100	\$90,000
31	Computer Information Systems (CIS)	\$52,400	\$89,900
32	Construction Management	\$54,000	\$89,600
33	Finance	\$50,900	\$89,300
34	Biotechnology	\$48,300	\$89,000
35	Operations & Supply Chain Management	\$51,300	\$88,900
35	Information Systems (IS)	\$53,500	\$88,900
37	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology	\$44,700	\$88,800
38	Telecommunications	\$46,600	\$88,400
39	Electrical Engineering Technology (EET)	\$58,900	\$88,200
40	Information Technology (IT)	\$51,100	\$86,500
41	Geology	\$46,200	\$86,200

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
42	Industrial Design (ID)	\$47,700	\$85,900
43	Information Security	\$53,400	\$85,800
44	International Business	\$46,100	\$85,400
44	Mechanical Engineering Technology (MET)	\$56,600	\$85,400
46	Accounting & Finance	\$51,400	\$85,300
47	Business Information Systems	\$59,800	\$85,100
48	Business & Marketing	\$44,300	\$84,100
49	Philosophy	\$40,700	\$84,000
50	Marketing Management	\$42,800	\$83,700
51	Supply Chain Management	\$54,800	\$83,600
52	Business Economics	\$48,000	\$83,400
52	Biochemistry (BCH)	\$42,600	\$83,400
54	Industrial Technology (IT)	\$53,200	\$83,300
55	Marketing & Management	\$44,000	\$82,900
56	Marketing (MKTG)	\$43,000	\$82,400
57	Chemistry	\$44,200	\$81,800
57	Occupational Health and Safety	\$51,600	\$81,800
59	Molecular Biology	\$44,100	\$81,700
60	Marketing & Communications	\$41,000	\$81,100

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
61	Project Management	\$52,500	\$80,900
62	Global & International Studies	\$39,100	\$80,600
63	Operations Management (OM)	\$52,900	\$80,500
64	International Relations	\$43,200	\$80,000
65	Pre-law	\$42,600	\$79,900
66	Sales & Marketing	\$45,200	\$79,800
67	Marketing & International Business	\$44,500	\$79,600
68	Fashion Design	\$41,100	\$79,500
69	Linguistics	\$41,800	\$79,300
70	Networks & Telecommunications	\$50,300	\$79,200
71	Business Management & Marketing	\$43,500	\$78,900
72	Political Science (PolySci)	\$42,800	\$78,500
73	Food Science	\$45,400	\$78,400
74	Advertising	\$41,100	\$77,500
75	Biology & Chemistry	\$40,900	\$77,100
76	Architecture	\$42,600	\$77,000
77	Civil Engineering Technology (CET)	\$49,700	\$76,900
78	Food Science & Technology	\$44,100	\$76,500
78	English Literature	\$40,600	\$76,500

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
80	Accounting	\$46,500	\$76,300
81	Information Technology (IT) & Systems	\$51,400	\$76,200
82	Marketing & Mass Communications	\$39,800	\$75,000
83	American Studies	\$42,400	\$74,900
84	General Business	\$45,600	\$74,800
84	Information Technology Management	\$53,400	\$74,800
86	Microbiology	\$41,900	\$74,500
86	Speech Communication	\$43,100	\$74,500
88	Industrial Psychology	\$43,500	\$74,400
89	Nursing	\$56,900	\$73,600
90	Environmental Studies	\$38,500	\$73,300
90	Technical Management	\$46,800	\$73,300
92	Hotel Management	\$42,500	\$73,200
93	Business Administration	\$45,500	\$73,100
94	Organizational Communication	\$41,500	\$73,000
95	Business Management & Human Resources Management (HRM)	\$40,800	\$72,700
95	Environmental Science	\$42,000	\$72,700
97	Film Production	\$39,800	\$72,300
97	History	\$40,500	\$72,300

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
99	Biology	\$40,700	\$72,000
100	Journalism	\$39,000	\$71,300
101	Health Sciences	\$38,300	\$71,200
102	Computer Networking Systems	\$48,500	\$70,900
102	Forestry	\$40,700	\$70,900
104	Communication	\$41,000	\$70,600
105	Urban Planning	\$45,100	\$70,500
106	Geography	\$41,500	\$70,200
107	Religious Studies	\$35,700	\$70,000
108	Journalism & Mass Communication	\$39,900	\$69,700
108	Broadcast Journalism	\$36,100	\$69,700
110	Agriculture	\$40,900	\$69,600
111	English Language & Literature	\$38,500	\$69,500
112	Accounting & Business	\$45,500	\$69,400
113	Accounting & Management	\$47,600	\$69,300
113	General Science	\$43,200	\$69,300
113	Landscape Architecture	\$42,700	\$69,300
116	Classics	\$40,100	\$68,900
117	Public Administration	\$40,000	\$68,500



Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
118	Hotel & Restaurant Management	\$41,400	\$68,200
119	Interior Architecture	\$39,500	\$68,100
120	Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	\$41,800	\$67,900
121	Zoology	\$39,000	\$67,600
122	German Language	\$42,400	\$67,500
123	Organizational Leadership	\$42,100	\$67,400
124	Radio/Television & Film Production	\$39,600	\$66,900
125	Human Resources (HR)	\$40,400	\$66,200
126	Public Relations (PR)	\$38,600	\$65,800
127	French Language	\$40,800	\$65,400
128	Criminology	\$37,900	\$65,100
128	Human Resources Management (HRM)	\$40,700	\$65,100
130	Film, Video & Media Studies	\$37,500	\$64,900
131	Art History	\$39,100	\$64,800
132	English Language	\$39,300	\$64,600
133	Mass Communication	\$39,700	\$63,600
134	Health Information Management	\$41,600	\$63,400
135	Sports Medicine	\$37,300	\$62,700
136	Health Care Administration	\$39,800	\$62,100

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
137	Organizational Management	\$43,200	\$62,000
137	Visual Communications	\$39,300	\$62,000
139	Psychology	\$37,300	\$61,800
140	Broadcast Communication	\$33,600	\$61,600
141	Graphic Design, Illustration	\$37,300	\$61,500
142	Hospitality Management	\$38,500	\$61,200
143	Humanities	\$39,700	\$61,100
144	Music Performance	\$36,800	\$60,900
145	Interior Design	\$37,100	\$60,600
146	Advertising & Graphic Design	\$39,100	\$60,500
147	Hotel & Restaurant Tourism	\$41,200	\$60,400
148	Sociology	\$38,600	\$60,300
149	Medical Technology	\$47,800	\$60,200
150	Creative Writing	\$37,100	\$60,100
150	Fashion Merchandising	\$40,000	\$60,100
152	Clinical Laboratory Science	\$48,000	\$59,900
152	Hospitality & Tourism	\$35,600	\$59,900
154	Foods & Nutrition	\$39,100	\$59,800
154	Radio & Television	\$38,000	\$59,800

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
156	Kinesiology	\$37,400	\$59,700
157	Multimedia & Web Design	\$43,400	\$59,500
158	Liberal Arts	\$37,000	\$59,400
158	Theater	\$37,300	\$59,400
160	Drama	\$35,800	\$59,300
161	Restaurant & Food Service Management	\$38,400	\$59,200
162	Dietetics	\$44,000	\$59,100
163	Sports Management	\$38,000	\$58,900
164	Criminal Justice	\$35,900	\$58,800
165	Behavioral Science	\$38,400	\$58,700
166	Animal Science	\$35,100	\$58,500
167	Graphic Communication	\$39,500	\$58,100
167	Anthropology	\$37,300	\$58,100
169	Graphic Design	\$38,400	\$57,800
170	Art & Design	\$36,800	\$57,700
170	Exercise & Sports Science	\$36,000	\$57,700
170	Art	\$37,600	\$57,700
173	Fine Arts	\$38,500	\$57,600
174	Music Teacher Education	\$33,300	\$57,500

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
175	Health Care Management	\$43,400	\$57,400
175	Physical Education Teaching	\$36,300	\$57,400
177	Spanish Language	\$37,600	\$57,200
178	Social Science	\$39,700	\$57,000
179	Business & Healthcare Management	\$40,000	\$56,600
179	Interdisciplinary Studies (IS)	\$38,400	\$56,600
181	Nutrition	\$41,700	\$56,400
181	Public Health (PH)	\$38,300	\$56,400
183	Music	\$37,500	\$55,400
184	Culinary Arts & Culinary Management	\$33,900	\$55,300
185	Paralegal Studies	\$35,100	\$55,200
186	General Studies	\$36,700	\$54,600
186	Education	\$38,100	\$54,600
188	Photography	\$37,500	\$54,300
189	Studio Art	\$36,000	\$54,000
190	Exercise Science	\$34,400	\$53,400
191	Theology	\$36,800	\$51,600
192	Culinary Arts	\$31,900	\$50,800
193	Biblical Studies	\$34,900	\$48,500

Rank	Major	Early Career Salary	Mid-Career Salary
194	Human Development	\$36,900	\$48,300
195	Horticulture	\$35,200	\$47,700
196	Recreation & Leisure Studies	\$35,800	\$47,100
197	Therapeutic Recreation	\$34,500	\$46,900
198	Special Education	\$34,500	\$46,800
199	Social Work (SW)	\$32,800	\$46,600
200	Pastoral Ministry	\$36,300	\$46,000
201	Athletic Training	\$35,000	\$45,900
202	Elementary Education	\$33,600	\$45,500
203	Human Services (HS)	\$33,800	\$41,300
204	Early Childhood & Elementary Education	\$32,300	\$40,400
205	Child & Family Studies	\$31,200	\$38,600
206	Early Childhood Education	\$29,700	\$38,000
207	Child Development	\$32,200	\$36,400

## Top Paying Vocational Careers

While furthering your education can have a positive effect on your paycheck, you don't have to put yourself through 4 years or more of higher education in order to bring home a decent salary. Following, is a list of the top 8 best vocational careers, ranked according to their median annual salary. The median salary refers to the amount at which half the people in the respective workforce earn more and half earn less. \*\*\*The figures were taken from the statistics issued earlier this year by the US Bureau of Labor.

Most of the jobs listed in our countdown only require an Associate's degree (2 years of study) or a degree from a technical school. Curious to see which the highest paid vocational jobs are? Let's take a look at the countdown.

#### **No. 8: Electrical and Electronics Repairman**

Median annual salary: \$57,400

Required education: training at a vocational or technical school or an Associate's degree

Job description: Electrical and electronics repairmen are in charge with maintaining and repairing electrical equipment used by household or companies.

#### **No. 7: Commercial Pilot**

Median annual salary: \$57,700

Required education: training completed at an FAA certified flying school with or without an Associate's degree

Job description: It takes a lot of hard work and training to become a commercial pilot, but the paycheck and benefits are certainly worth it. Commercial pilots are in charge with piloting aircrafts destined for transporting passengers or cargo.

#### **No. 6: Nuclear Medicine Technologist**

Required education: a certificate or Associate's degree in nuclear medicine

Job description: Nuclear medicine technologist work alongside radiologists or physicians and they handle, prepare, or administer a variety of radioactive materials.

#### **No. 5: Fashion Designer**

Median annual salary: \$62,600

Required education: training with a specialized school or an Associate's degree

Job description: Fashion designers can either work alongside experts in the field or venture into the world of fashion on their own. The only job task at hand is creating original clothing and accessories.

#### **No. 4: Dental Hygienist**

Median annual salary: \$62,800

Required education: completing a dental hygiene program or an Associate's degree

Job description: Dental hygienists work alongside dentists. They perform X-rays and dental exams, but they also conduct certain preventive treatments, such as fluoride treatments or teeth cleaning. In addition, a dental hygienist is also usually in charge with education patients on oral hygiene.

### **No. 3: Nuclear Technician**

Median annual salary: \$65,500

Required education: Associate's degree in applied sciences

Job description: Nuclear technicians are required to manage and operate equipment used for various tests and researches in the nuclear field. In addition, they often assist nuclear engineers or physicists with their work. Sometimes, their job responsibilities involve measuring radiation levels.

### **No. 2: Radiation Therapist**

Median annual salary: \$66,200

Required education: undergoing a certification program or an Associate's degree in radiation therapy

Job description: A radiation therapist is in charge with conducting treatments prescribed by oncologist or radiologist, usually for patients with cancer. Apart from administering the treatment, a radiation therapist is also required to prepare radiation doses and handle medical equipment.

### **No. 1: Computer Specialist**

Median annual salary: \$68,570

Required education: specialized training at a technical school or an Associate's degree

Job description: Computer specialists manage computer hardware, software, and systems. Their exact job description varies from one company to another and may entail anything from technical support and Web design to managing network security or computer databases.

