

Top 30 fastest-growing jobs by 2020



If you're considering switching careers or are just starting to think about where to start yours, this is the list for you: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics projections of the 30 fastest-growing careers.

The [report estimates that 20.5 million new jobs](#) will be added by 2020, a 14.3 percent growth from 2010. However, some jobs will grow at a much faster rate during that period.

— *Compiled from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook and Career Guide to Industries*

30. Veterinarians

Projected increase in 2020: 35.9 percent

Number employed in 2010: 61,400

Median pay in 2010: \$82,040

Education/training: Veterinarians must complete a four-year post-grad program to receive a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. Before practicing, veterinarians must also be licensed by the state.

Job outlook: Pet owners are increasingly seeking nontraditional services, such as preventative dental care. Advances in the field are also allowing veterinarians to offer procedures common for humans, including hip replacement.

29. Pile-driver operators

Projected increase in 2020: 42.4 percent

Number employed in 2010: 41,900

Median pay in 2010: \$36,640

Education/training: High school diploma and, typically, three years of classroom and on-the-job training.

Job outlook: Construction equipment operators who can use a wide variety of equipment will have the best prospects.

28. Mental health counselors

Projected increase in 2020: 36.3 percent

Number employed in 2010: 120,300

Median pay in 2010: \$38,150

Education/training: Master's degree. Some states require public school counselors to have both counseling and teaching certificates and to have had some teaching experience.

Job outlook: Under managed care systems, insurance companies increasingly are providing for reimbursement of counselors as a less costly alternative to psychiatrists and psychologists.

27. Medical scientists, except epidemiologists

Projected increase in 2020: 36.4 percent

Number employed in 2010: 100,000

Median pay in 2010: \$76,700

Education/training: A PhD in the biological sciences typically qualifies people to research basic life processes or particular medical problems and to analyze the results of experiments.

Job outlook: Medical scientists have enjoyed rapid gains in employment since the 1980s—reflecting, in part, the growth of biotechnology as an industry.

26. Cost estimators

Projected increase in 2020: 36.4 percent

Number employed in 2010: 185,400

Median pay in 2010: \$57,860

Education/training: Bachelor's degree. Voluntary certification can be beneficial to cost estimators because it provides professional recognition of the estimator's competence and experience.

Job outlook: Employment of cost estimators, like that of many other construction workers, is sensitive to the fluctuations of the economy.

25. Stonemasons

Projected increase in 2020: 36.5 percent

Number employed in 2010: 15,600

Median pay in 2010: \$37,180

Education/training: High school diploma and apprenticeships.

Job outlook: The masonry workforce is growing older, and a large number of masons are expected to retire over the next decade, which will create many job openings.

24. Health educators

Projected increase in 2020: 36.5 percent

Number employed in 2010: 63,400

Median pay in 2010: \$45,830

Education/training: Entry-level health educator positions generally require a bachelor's degree from a health education program.

Job outlook: As health care costs continue to rise, health educators provide cost-effective ways to teach people how to live healthy lives.

23. Audiologists

Projected increase in 2020: 36.8 percent

Number employed in 2010: 13,000

Median pay in 2010: \$66,660

Education/training: Doctorate or equivalent required. Audiologists are regulated by licensure in all states.

Job outlook: As more baby boomers with hearing loss reach maturity, this field is expected to grow.

22. Bicycle repairers

Projected increase in 2020: 37.6 percent

Number employed in 2010: 9,900

Median pay in 2010: \$23,660

Education/training: Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees.

Job outlook: Faster than average.

21. Dental hygienists

Projected increase in 2020: 37.7 percent

Number employed in 2010: 181,800

Median pay in 2010: \$68,250

Education/training: Dental hygienists must get a state license to practice. A degree from dental hygiene school is also usually required.

Job outlook: The demand for dental services will grow because of population growth, older people increasingly retaining more teeth, and a growing emphasis on preventative dental care.

20. Physical therapists

Projected increase in 2020: 39 percent

Number employed in 2010: 198,600

Median pay in 2010: \$76,310

Education/training: The American Physical Therapy Association's accrediting body accredits entry-level academic programs in physical therapy. A graduate degree and state licensing are required.

Job outlook: Changes to restrictions on reimbursement for physical therapy services by third-party payers will increase patient access to services and, thus, increase demand. The increasing elderly population will drive growth in the demand for physical therapy services.

19. Brickmasons and blockmasons

Projected increase in 2020: 40.5 percent

Number employed in 2010: 89,200

Median pay in 2010: \$46,930

Education/training: High school diploma and apprenticeships.

Job outlook: The masonry workforce is growing older, and a large number of masons are expected to retire over the next decade, which will create many job openings.

18. Marriage and family therapists

Projected increase in 2020: 41.2 percent

Number employed in 2010: 36,000

Median pay in 2010: \$45,720

Education/training: A master's degree usually is required to be licensed or certified as a counselor.

Job outlook: Good, as it is more common for people to seek help for their marital and family problems than it was in the past.

17. Market research analysts and marketing specialists

Projected increase in 2020: 41.2 percent

Number employed in 2010: 282,700

Median pay in 2010: \$60,570

Education/training: Bachelor's degree. Job involves looking at market conditions in local, regional, or national areas to determine potential sales.

Job outlook: Well above average.

16. Medical secretaries

Projected increase in 2020: 41.3 percent

Number employed in 2010: 508,700

Median pay in 2010: \$30,530

Education/training: High school diploma. Most medical and legal secretaries must go through specialized training programs that teach them the language of the industry.

Job outlook: Above average employment growth in the health care and social assistance industry should lead to much faster than average growth.

15. Interpreters and translators

Projected increase in 2020: 42.2 percent

Number employed in 2010: 58,400

Median pay in 2010: \$43,300

Education/training: Although a bachelor's degree is often required for jobs, majoring in a language is not always necessary.

Job outlook: Demand will remain strong for translators of frequently translated languages, such as Portuguese, French, Italian, German, and Spanish.

14. Glaziers

Projected increase in 2020: 42.4 percent

Number employed in 2010: 41,900

Median pay in 2010: \$36,640

Education/training: Usually 3 years of classroom and on-the-job training are required to become a skilled glazier.

Job outlook: As manufacturers of glass products continue to improve the energy efficiency of glass windows, architects are designing more buildings with glass exteriors.

13. Physical therapist aides

Projected increase in 2020: 43.1 percent

Number employed in 2010: 47,000

Median pay in 2010: \$23,680

Education/training: Physical therapist aides are not licensed and do not require higher education, though a high school diploma is usually required. Training is completed on the job.

Job outlook: Long term, this occupation will be in demand because the number of people with disabilities or limited function is expected to grow.

12. Occupational therapy assistants

Projected increase in 2020: 43.3 percent

Number employed in 2010: 28,500

Median pay in 2010: \$51,010

Education/training: Occupational therapist assistants must attend a school accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education in order to sit for the national certifying exam for occupational therapist assistants.

Job outlook: The growing elderly population is particularly vulnerable to chronic and debilitating conditions that require therapeutic services. These patients often need additional assistance in their treatment, making the roles of assistants and aides vital.

11. Diagnostic medical sonographers

Projected increase in 2020: 43.5 percent

Number employed in 2010: 53,700

Median pay in 2010: \$64,380

Education/training: Registration and associate's degree required.

Job outlook: Ultrasound imaging technology is expected to evolve rapidly and spawn many new sonography procedures, enabling sonographers to scan and image areas of the body where ultrasound has not traditionally been used.

10. Meeting, convention, and event planners

Projected increase in 2020: 43.7 percent

Number employed in 2010: 71,600

Median pay in 2010: \$45,260

Education/training: Many employers prefer applicants who have a bachelor's degree, but this is not always required.

Job outlook: Opportunities will be best for individuals with a bachelor's degree and some meeting planning experience. A Certified Meeting Professional, or CMP, accreditation is also viewed favorably by potential employers.

9. Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters

Projected increase in 2020: 45.4 percent

Number employed in 2010: 57,900

Median pay in 2010: \$26,740

Education/training: Employer apprenticeships or technical schools and community colleges.

Job outlook: A growing emphasis on water conservation will require retrofitting. New construction is also spurring growth.

8. Physical therapist assistants

Projected increase in 2020: 45.7 percent

Number employed in 2010: 67,400

Median pay in 2010: \$49,960

Education/training: Physical therapist assistants are required by law to hold an associate degree.

Job outlook: Changes to restrictions on reimbursement for physical therapy services by third-party payers will increase patient access to services and, thus, increase demand.

7. Reinforcing iron and rebar workers

Projected increase in 2020: 48.6 percent

Number employed in 2010: 19,100

Median pay in 2010: \$38,430

Education/training: Employer apprenticeships, on-the-job training.

Job outlook: Many job openings will stem from the need to replace experienced ironworkers who leave the occupation or retire. The number of job openings can fluctuate depending on economic conditions and the level of construction activity.

6. Veterinary technologists and assistants

Projected increase in 2020: 52 percent

Number employed in 2010: 80,200

Median pay in 2010: \$29,710

Education/training: Most entry-level veterinary technicians have a 2-year associate degree from an American Veterinary Medical Association-accredited community college program. All states require passing a credentialing exam following coursework.

Job outlook: Veterinary technologists will enjoy excellent job opportunities due to the relatively few graduates from 4-year programs — about 500 annually.

5. Carpenters

Projected increase in 2020: 55.7 percent

Number employed in 2010: 46,500

Median pay in 2010: \$25,760

Education/training: High school or less training required. On-the-job training is typical.

Job outlook: Carpenters with specialized or all-around skills will have better opportunities for steady work than carpenters who can perform only a few relatively simple, routine tasks.

4. Brickmasons, blockmasons, stonemasons, tile and marble setters

Projected increase in 2020: 60.1 percent

Number employed in 2010: 29,400

Median pay in 2010: \$27,780

Education/training: Apprenticeships usually are sponsored by local union-management joint apprenticeship and training committees, local contractors, or trade associations.

Job outlook: New concerns over the costs of heating and cooling buildings of all types has led to a need to train construction workers of all types, including brickmasons, blockmasons, and stonemasons, in the emerging field of green construction.

3. Biomedical engineers

Projected increase in 2020: 61.7 percent

Number employed in 2010: 15,700

Median pay in 2010: \$81,540

Education/training: A bachelor's degree in engineering is required for almost all entry-level engineering jobs.

Job outlook: The aging of the population and a growing focus on health issues will drive demand for better medical devices and equipment designed by biomedical engineers.

2. Home health aides

Projected increase in 2020: 69.4 percent

Number employed in 2010: 1.02 million

Median pay in 2010: \$20,560

Education/training: Home health aides are not required to have a high school diploma; they receive most of their training on the job from experienced aides or nurses.

Job outlook: There is a growing demand for home services among the elderly and pressure to contain health costs by moving patients home sooner. Most employers only hire on-call hourly workers and do not offer benefits.

1. Personal care aides

Projected increase in 2020: 70.5 percent

Number employed in 2010: 861,000

Median pay in 2010: \$19,640

Education/training: Some states only require on-the-job training; other states may require formal training that can be completed at community colleges, vocational schools, home health care agencies, and elder care programs.

Job outlook: Rapid job growth is expected because of the projected rise in the number of elderly people, who are increasingly relying on home care.