

Top Paying Technical and Vocational Careers

Want to bring home a good salary without spending four or more years earning your bachelor's degree? Consider one of these ten careers, which, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, are the highest-paying occupations that require either an associate's degree or vocational/technical school training.

Computer Specialist – \$68,570 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Manage and maintain computer equipment, systems and software. Specialists handle anything from technical support for end users to network security and Web design.
- **Education:** Associate's degree or specialized training at a technical school.

Radiation Therapist – \$66,200 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Carry out radiation treatments prescribed by a physician or radiologist for cancer patients. Therapists calculate and prepare radiation doses and operate medical equipment, but also interact with and reassure patients and their families.
- **Education:** Associate's degree in radiation therapy or completion of certificate program.

Nuclear Technician – \$65,500 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Operate equipment used in nuclear testing and research, monitor radiation levels and assist nuclear engineers and physicists in their work.
- **Education:** Associate's degree in applied science.

Dental Hygienist – \$62,800 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Perform dental exams, take X-rays and provide preventative care such as teeth cleaning and fluoride treatments. Hygienists also focus on educating patients about good oral hygiene habits.
- **Education:** Associate's degree or certificate from an accredited dental hygiene program.

Fashion Designer – \$62,600 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Create original designs for clothing and accessories.
- **Education:** Associate's degree or training at a specialized school.

Nuclear Medicine Technologist – \$62,300 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Handle, prepare and administer radioactive materials used or prescribed by radiologists and physicians.
- **Education:** Associate's degree or certificate in nuclear medicine.

Commercial Pilot – \$57,500 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Pilot aircraft for the purposes of transporting cargo or passengers.
- **Education:** Associate's degree or training at an FAA-certified flying school.

Electrical and Electronics Repairer – \$57,400 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Test, maintain and repair the equipment used by utility companies to generate electrical power.
- **Education:** Associate's degree or specialized training at a technical or vocational school.

Registered Nurse (RN) – \$57,300 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Attend to the physical and emotional needs of patients. RNs monitor the condition of their patients, administer medications, treatments and tests, report information to physicians and educate patients about treatments and disease prevention.
- **Education:** Associate's degree in nursing or a diploma program through a hospital or nursing school.

Diagnostic Medical Sonographer – \$57,200 annual earnings

- **Job Description:** Operate ultrasound equipment to create images of internal organs used by physicians in diagnosis and treatment.
- **Education:** Associate's degree or training program at a vocational/technical school or hospital.