**15 Best-Paid Jobs in America** 

**What jobs pay the most?**

It's that time of year when the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics crunches through reams of data on 800 different jobs to tell us how much Americans earn and which jobs pay the most and least.

If you're well established in a career, the news is merely voyeuristic -- a matter of looking over your colleagues shoulders to see what they might earn. But if you're young and seeking work -- or older and retooling -- the annual occupational wage data might suggest where to focus your energy.

Of course, the jobs that pay the most are also the hardest to get. The 10 largest occupations account for more than 20% of the nation's 127 million jobs, according to the BLS. But only one of the 10 largest occupations paid more than the national average wage of $44,410. That one positon: Registered nurse, which pays an average wage of $67,720.

It's far easier to get a job as a waiter or fast-food worker, which account for nearly 5 million positions, but pay less than $10 an hour and make up some of the [America's worst paid positions](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/saving-money/blog/devil-details/10-worst-paid-jobs-in-america/4604/).

Earning a really lucrative income is likely to require lots of schooling. An analysis of the government data shows that the top-paid professions in America are dominated by positions that require a medical degree -- although there are [27 jobs that don't require a medical degree](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/saving-money/blog/devil-details/27-six-figure-jobs-that-dont-require-an-md/4607/). What jobs pay the most -- and how much is that exactly?

1. Surgeon..........................$225,390

2. Anesthesiologist............$220,100

3. Oral surgeon...................$214,120

4. Obstetrician/gyn.............$210,340

5. Orthodontist....................$200,290

6. Internist...........................$189,490

7. Other physicians..............$180,870

8. Family doctor...................$173,860

9. Chief Executive.................$173,350

10. Psychiatrist.....................$167,610

11. Pediatrician.....................$165,720

12. Dentist (specialist)..........$162,190

13. Dentist (general)..............$158,770

14. Podiatrists.......................$133,410

15. Lawyer.............................$129,440

<http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505144_162-36944601/15-best-paid-jobs-in-america/?tag=mwuser>

**10 Worst-Paid Jobs in America**

Mamas don't let your babies grow up to be cashiers or food service workers. There are millions of jobs in these professions, but their average wages are paltry, amounting to less than half the pay of the average American worker, according to just-released data by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

While the [highest-paid jobs in the country](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/saving-money/blog/devil-details/15-best-paid-jobs-in-america/4601/) are concentrated in the medical field (though there are dozens of [jobs that pay six figure incomes](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/saving-money/blog/devil-details/27-six-figure-jobs-that-dont-require-an-md/4607/) in a wide array of professions), America's lowest-paid positions are predominantly in retail and food service.

The average American earns $44,410 annually, according to the latest BLS ranking of some 800 positions. Most of these jobs, on the other hand, pay less than $20,000 annually.

What are the nation's worst-paying jobs, according to a MoneyWatch analysis of this government data?

1. Fast food cooks.........................................$18,540

2. Food preparation and serving.....................$18,610

3. Dishwashers...............................................$18,680

4. Shampooers................................................$19,140

5. Cafeteria/coffee shop counter attendant....$19,280

6. Bartender's helper........................................$19,320

7. Restaurant hostess......................................$19,600

8. Amusement/recreation attendant................$19,750

9. Cashiers......................................................$19,810

10. Ushers/ticket-takers................................$20,290

The moral of this story? Give a waiter a break -- and a big tip.

To you, adding a dollar or two to your tip isn't going to have a noticeable impact on your bill. But to that waiter, waitress, hostess, valet or usher, a big tip can vastly impact their hourly wage.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505144_162-36944604/10-worst-paid-jobs-in-america/?tag=mwuser>

**27 Six-Figure Jobs that Don't Require an MD**

If you want to [earn the big bucks, become a doctor](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/saving-money/blog/devil-details/15-best-paid-jobs-in-america/4601/) -- or so says the Bureau of Labor Statistic's just-released listing of employment and wages.

But you're not so into science or the gazillion extra years of school and training it takes to become a surgeon? Buck up. There are lots of six-figure jobs that don't require a medical degree.

Once a year, the BLS takes a look at 800 different jobs and breaks down how much each position earns on average. This year, 27 of the 43 best-paid positions in America did not require that you become a doctor of either medicine or dentistry. (Of course, 15 did and dominated our listing of [highest paying professions, which you can find here](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/saving-money/blog/devil-details/15-best-paid-jobs-in-america/4601/). The only doctor that didn't show up on that listing: Optometrists, who earn $106,750 on average.)

There are a few things to note about the BLS data, however. First, their figures exclude income reported by those who are self-employed either as sole proprietors or partners. As a result, the salary figures for lawyers and accountants are likely to reflect company lawyers and bookkeepers, rather than their more high-paid counterparts at partnerships like Ernst & Young or Gibson, Dunn. Were these executives included, they could certainly give the doctors and surgeons on the Top 15 listing a run for their money.

Then, too, the BLS data doesn't reflect bonus, commission or contingent pay -- such as stock options -- so chief executives probably earn more, as do brokers and insurance salesmen. That said, if you want a steady job, with a six-figure income, here's where the BLS says you can find one:

1. Chief executive officer........................$173,350

2. Lawyer.................................................$129,440

3. Natural Science manager.....................$129,320

4. Petroleum engineer..............................$127,970

5. Architecture/engineering manager......$125,900

6. Computer systems manager................$123,280

7. Marketing manager..............................$122,720

8. Financial manager................................$116,970

9. Airline pilot/flight engineer.................$115,300

10. Sales manager....................................$114,110

11. Industrial psychologist.......................$114,040

12. General operations managers.............$113,100

13. Physicist.............................................$112,020

13. Air traffic controller............................$110,280

15. Pharmacist..........................................$109,380

16. Human Resources manager................$108,600

17. Law professor.....................................$107,990

18. Political scientist................................$107,930

19. Judge..................................................$105,390

20. Public relations/fundraising mgr........$104,390

21. Postsecondary health instructor..........$103,960

22. Computer research scientist...............$103,150

23. Managers (all)...................................$102,160

24. Computer hardware engineer............$101,600

25. Nuclear engineer...............................$101,500

26. Purchasing manager..........................$100,600

27. Mathematician..................................$100,260

If you want detailed career advice on [how to handle tough interview questions](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/career-advice/blog/on-job/how-to-answer-the-5-toughest-interview-questions-youll-face/624/) and the sort of [social media mistakes](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/career-advice/blog/on-job/linkedin-4-biggest-mistakes-youre-probably-making/613/) that could cripple your chances, be sure to check out [Amy Levin-Epstein's wonderful On the Job](http://moneywatch.bnet.com/career-advice/blog/on-job/?tag=col2;blogroll) blog.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505144_162-36944607/27-six-figure-jobs-that-dont-require-an-md/?tag=mwuser>