

Industry 101

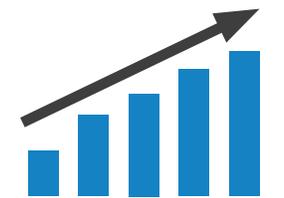
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Occupational therapists treat injured, ill, or disabled patients through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. They help these patients develop, recover, and improve the skills needed for daily living and working. Occupational therapists also may work in mental health settings, where they help patients who suffer from developmental disabilities, mental illness, or emotional problems. Therapists teach these patients skills such as managing time, budgeting, using public transportation, and doing household chores in order to help them cope with, and engage in, daily life activities.

receive most of their treatment in these settings. Occupational therapists with specialized knowledge in a treatment area also will have better job prospects.



TRENDS & INDUSTRY INFO



Occupational Therapy Industry

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of occupational therapists is **projected to grow 27%** from 2014 to 2024.

The need is expected to increase as the baby-boomer generation ages. Occupational therapists can help senior citizens maintain their independence by recommending home modifications and strategies that make daily activities easier.

Job opportunities should be good for licensed occupational therapists in all settings, particularly acute hospital, rehabilitation, and orthopedic settings, because the elderly



WORK ENVIRONMENT

Some occupational therapists, such as those employed in hospitals, work as part of a healthcare team along with doctors, registered nurses, and other types of therapists. They may work with patients who have chronic conditions, such as diabetes, or help rehabilitate a patient recovering from hip replacement surgery. Occupational therapists also oversee the work of occupational therapy assistants and aides.

Therapists may spend a lot of time on their feet while working with patients. They also may be required to lift and move patients or heavy equipment. Many work in multiple facilities and have to travel from one job to another.

FACTS & STATS

In May 2016, the median annual wages for occupational therapists in the top industries in which they worked were as follows:

Nursing care facilities
\$90,380

Home Healthcare services
\$90,290

Office of physical, occupational and speech therapists, and audiologists
\$83,820

Hospitals; state, local and private
\$81,710

Elementary and secondary schools; state, local, and private
\$71,480

Note: All Occupations includes all occupations in the U.S. Economy.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program

What can you do in OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?

RESUME & SKILLS NEEDED

Resume

Demonstrate your passion for people. Your resume should highlight interest in the the medical field. Include fieldwork and volunteer experiences in settings such as clinics, hospitals, therapy centers or care facilities. Include certifications, such as CPR, ACLS and BCLS.

Licensure

Licensure is required in all states. Requirements vary by state, but all must pass the national examination administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). Continuing education classes are required to maintain certification.

Experience

Becoming an Occupational Assistant is a great place to start. Occupational therapists must have at least a master's degree. Their degree field must be in occupational therapy and they will need a state license to practice. Other important training to have includes CPR and BCLS.

Graduate School

It takes roughly two years to complete a Master's degree in Occupational Therapy. Generally Master's degree candidates will learn about anatomy, patient care, and assistive technology in their field and social/medical conditions. During this time fieldwork is essential. This fieldwork can take place in nursing homes, rehab centers, schools or even private practices. It usually takes about 24 weeks on average to complete these field experiences. After your Master's program has ended, you will need to get licensed in the state you wish to work.

ON CAMPUS RESOURCES

- [Visit the UMD Pre Health Advising Office](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

- [American Occupational Association](#)

WHERE ARE ALUMS?

