

Name: _____

Directions: Read the following article and complete the questions that follow.

Hands-On Jobs That Pay Well and Require Less Than a Bachelor's Degree

By Publisher | Published January 30, 2017 | Last Updated February 21, 2020

- 1 Hands-on jobs are great for people who want to see direct results from their hard work. With that kind of job, you can feel like you've really achieved something at the end of each day. That's probably why so many people who have practical careers report that they feel passionate, happy, and engaged in their jobs. Working with your hands can be fun, creative, and intellectually stimulating. And being responsible for fixing and building things, solving problems, or helping people can leave you feeling fulfilled and accomplished.
- 2 Choosing a hands-on career can also result in greater job security. That's because many jobs in this category can't be **outsourced**. For example, communities are always going to need auto mechanics, nurses, and police officers. Those jobs can't simply go overseas. Additionally, many practical occupations don't require you to spend years in school preparing for them. In fact, a lot of hands-on jobs that pay well only require one or two years of training. So it may not take you very long to prepare for an active career that provides a lot of opportunities.
- 3 Health care and the skilled trades are definitely two of the best sectors to find hands-on jobs that pay well, but they aren't the only ones. Other great sectors include beauty, design, media arts, technology, law enforcement, animal care, and the culinary arts.
- 4 Check out the categories below to discover jobs that allow you to work with your hands. Find out what the annual pay range is for each position based on May 2018 data from the [Occupational Employment Statistics](#) program. And take a look at the number of new job openings that are projected for the decade from 2018 to 2028 due to employment growth, according to occupational projections data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Health and Veterinary Care

1. [Dental Hygienist](#)

People who are interested in high-paying hands-on jobs may want to consider careers as dental hygienists. With as little as two to three years of post-secondary schooling, you can start carrying out a number of tasks that involve working with patients and assisting dentists. A typical day could have you performing oral exams, cleaning and caring for teeth, and taking and developing x-rays. Although dental hygienists may have a few administrative responsibilities, the largest part of the work is hands-on in nature.

- **Annual pay range**—\$51,930 to \$101,820 or higher
- **New job openings**—23,700
- **Typical entry-level education**—Associate degree

2. [Nurse](#)

Do you think it's even possible to prepare for a good-paying, in-demand, hands-on healthcare job in less than two years? Well, it certainly is if you'd like to enter the field of nursing. In just a short amount of time, you could gain the skills and certifications needed to become a licensed practical nurse (LPN) or registered nurse (RN). Both types of nurses directly care for patients in various medical settings, but RNs tend to have higher-level responsibilities. As a result, they often earn higher pay. The advancement opportunities in nursing are often excellent, so a lot of people start by becoming LPNs and then move up the career ladder as they gain more education and experience.

- **Annual pay range for registered nurses**—\$50,800 to \$106,530 or higher
- **Annual pay range for licensed practical and vocational nurses**—\$33,680 to \$62,160
- **New job openings for registered nurses**—371,500
- **New job openings for licensed practical and vocational nurses**—78,100
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary diploma

3. Veterinary Technician

Try to think of a better way to spend your days than working directly with animals. If you can't, then you may want to consider a career as a veterinary technician. A short one- to two-year program can get you ready to work alongside vets in order to care for pets and other animals of all types and sizes, from hamsters to horses. Your daily responsibilities could include administering emergency first aid, assisting during surgeries and other procedures, collecting lab samples, giving medications, performing lab tests, providing nursing care, and taking x-rays. You may find a number of job possibilities at vet clinics, animal hospitals, and other animal care settings.

- **Annual pay range**—\$23,490 to \$50,010 or higher
- **New job openings**—21,100
- **Typical entry-level education**—Associate degree

4. Paramedic

Place yourself on the front lines of the emergency medical field by becoming a paramedic. Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) often enjoy meaningful careers in which they provide the first point of care in emergency situations. In a quick paramedic training program, you'll likely learn how to manage an emergency scene, assess shock, give rescue breathing, provide IVs, and offer other life-saving treatments in order to care for patients until you reach the hospital. This is definitely a field to consider if you want a hands-on occupation that is purposeful and valuable.

- **Annual pay range**—\$22,760 to \$58,640 or higher
- **New job openings**—18,700
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate

Skilled Trades, Technology, and Law Enforcement

5. Police Officer

One of the highest-ranking hands-on jobs is police work. You can take on an active role in law enforcement in order to catch lawbreakers and help keep your community safe. You may spend your days patrolling the streets or investigating specific crimes. Many police officers join specialized units that

are responsible for handling crimes like money laundering, drug trafficking, murder, or fraud. And, as long as you meet the criteria, it doesn't take long to become a police officer. Upon doing so, you may enjoy many interesting possibilities related to beginning and advancing your career.

- **Annual pay range**—\$35,750 to \$101,620 or higher
- **New job openings**—34,500
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate and police academy training
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate or diploma

6. Heavy Equipment Mechanic

Get your hands dirty by servicing and repairing heavy-duty machinery and equipment. Along with engines, you'll also work on fuel and brake lines, hydraulics, electrical components, and other systems and components of heavy machines like tractors, bulldozers, and railway engines. Heavy equipment mechanics perform a lot of field work, so you'll likely travel around to worksites like farms, oil fields, coal mines, rail yards, and construction and logging sites. You could work as an independent contractor, for a company, or with the government (e.g., by servicing fleets and military equipment).

- **Annual pay range**—\$33,910 to \$76,600 or higher
- **New job openings**—5,500
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate

7. Electrician

Almost all of the work completed by electricians is hands-on. Additionally, electrical work is one of the best-paid skilled trades with a high demand for qualified workers. Many aspiring electricians start out by taking a short trade school program in order to develop essential skills. From there, they complete an apprenticeship that eventually leads to achieving journeyman certification. Before you know it, you could be installing, servicing, and repairing electrical systems in residential, commercial, or industrial settings.

- **Annual pay range**—\$32,940 to \$94,620 or higher
- **New job openings**—74,100
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate

8. Computer Support Technician

The information technology (IT) field offers many incredible opportunities, but computer support is likely one of the best hands-on options. In today's connected world, it's important for computer systems and networks to run optimally. Computer support technicians play a crucial part in making sure that happens. When a computer or network crashes, they jump in to get it back up and running as quickly as possible. Many technicians specialize in either user or network support. But, depending on the size of your organization or the scope of your role, you may get to work in both areas. You can start preparing for those roles by completing a short computer technician program.

- **Annual pay range**—\$38,270 to \$105,770 or higher
- **New job openings**—70,900
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary diploma or associate degree

9. Welder

By using your hands and powerful welding equipment, you can manufacture metal products and structures of all types and sizes. Many different welding processes and methods are used for tasks like manufacturing cars and ships, building electronics, and constructing roads and bridges. A short training program can teach you how to use those methods, as well as how to read blueprints and maintain and repair welding equipment. Learning those vital skills can prepare you for hands-on careers in sectors like aerospace technology, automobile manufacturing, construction, mining, and shipbuilding.

- **Annual pay range**—\$28,560 to \$63,740 or higher
- **New job openings**—14,500
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate

10. Automotive or Diesel Mechanic

When people talk about hands-on jobs, mechanical work is often one of the first things that's brought up. Plus, with the number of cars and trucks on the roads today, it's no surprise that auto and diesel mechanics are in such high demand. You can prepare yourself for one of those positions and become a certified mechanic in only about two years. That's a small investment to make for a chance at getting a practical job you'll love. You can develop your expertise with either gas or diesel engines and learn how to use the latest tools and technology to service and repair many different makes and models of vehicles.

- **Annual pay range**—\$23,420 to \$72,180 or higher
- **New job openings**—13,800
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate

Design, Media Arts, Beauty, and Culinary Care

11. Sound Engineering Technician

Your love for music, combined with your interest in technology, could make sound engineering an awesome career choice. You'll typically work in studios or at live events to take care of everything to do with sound. That could include setting up and taking down equipment, controlling sound quality and volume levels, recording audio, synchronizing audio to video, and converting recorded content into digital formats for distribution. You'll likely need to know how to maintain and repair your equipment, and you may be responsible for lighting as well. Some of the top industries for sound engineering technicians are motion picture and video production, sound recording, radio and TV broadcasting, and the performing arts.

- **Annual pay range**—\$25,680 to \$117,600 or higher
- **New job openings**—200
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate or diploma

12. Chef

Can you picture yourself using your hands and tapping into your passion for cooking to create mouthwatering meals in a professional setting? If so, then consider the exciting possibility of becoming a

professional chef. In less than two years, you can obtain the culinary skills needed to start out in a commercial kitchen. By gaining some experience, you could work your way up to a head chef position. Or you could open your own restaurant and put your innovative and creative ideas into practice every day.

- **Annual pay range**—\$26,320 to \$81,150 or higher
- **New job openings**—15,400
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate or diploma

13. Makeup Artist

Imagine a job in which you get to use your creative flair for makeup application every single day. That's exactly what you'll do as a makeup artist. Working with the most current professional cosmetics, you can apply makeup to clients in any number of settings. Although a lot of makeup artists work in places like beauty salons, many others travel around and work on-site at fashion shows, TV and movie productions, and photo shoots. Others also offer mobile services for celebrities or bridal parties. There are many career possibilities in the fun and exciting world of makeup artistry.

(Note that the information below is for makeup artists who work in the theatrical and performance industries.)

- **Annual pay range**—\$22,460 to \$130,710 or higher
- **New job openings**—300
- **Typical entry-level education**—Post-secondary certificate

