



Learn About the 10 Highest Paying Trade School Degrees

Description

The 21st-century employment landscape changed a lot. Attending a trade school is arguably the best route to get the best skills to land high-paying jobs.

When choosing a trade school degree, you'll want to consider other factors such as current available jobs and employment outlook for your chosen profession. With these factors in mind, here's a list of trade school degrees or certificate programs that help graduates land top pay.

#1 Air Traffic Control A.S. Degree (Median Annual Salary – \$124,540)

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As air travel increases, the need for safe management of air traffic also grows. Air traffic

controllers are the aviation professionals who monitor planes and communicate with pilots about when to take off and land safely in a given region. They analyze flight paths, issue flight path changes, and use radar equipment to direct aircraft movement. Air traffic controllers also coordinate all ground traffic for flight crew, maintenance, and baggage transport vehicles. Active listening, concise speaking, and on-demand operational analysis skills are needed for this job. If you believe that you have what it takes to work in the fast-paced world of an air traffic controller, you'll want to apply to an air traffic control degree program. A two-year, associate degree is the minimum that you'll need to get started in the air traffic control career field. The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Air Traffic Collegiate Training Initiative partners with 36 schools across the nation to deliver industry-approved training for tomorrow's air traffic controllers. During your air traffic control degree program, you'll study topics such as flight operations, navigation, and air traffic control technology. Some specific courses that you'll take include aviation weather, aviation regulations, aviation safety, and exploration of aircraft. Since you'll need to be certified by the FAA to work as an air traffic controller, your degree program prepares you to pass your certification exam. The FAA poses strict job requirements for air traffic controllers. Besides getting an associate degree in air traffic control through one of the FAA's approved programs, you'll be required to pass a medical exam, a security check, and a pre-employment test. You also must get an

official school recommendation and be hired with the agency before your 32nd birthday.

#2 National Elevator Industry Educational Program (Median Annual Salary – \$79,780)

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Due to Americans' collective preference to skip the stairs and take the elevator, elevator mechanics are in high demand nationwide. While you'll need an extensive set of technical and physical fitness skills to land this lucrative job, you won't need a four-year degree. Aspiring elevator mechanics step onto this career path through apprenticeship programs like the one that's offered by the National Elevator Industry Educational Program (NEIEP). The NEIEP is a school that works with trade associations, labor unions, and employers to recruit and train mechanical tradespersons. Its elevator mechanic apprenticeship program lasts for five years and covers all that you need to know about installing, maintaining, and repairing elevators. In the current NEIEP apprenticeship program, you'll have one year of probationary employment; the first six months include online coursework.

Some classes that you'll take are electrical system fundamentals, workplace safety, and introduction to mechanical systems. The last four years of your apprenticeship program involve on-the-job training and advanced electrical and mechanical courses. Many states require licensure for elevator mechanics due to public safety concerns. After completing the five-year NEIEP apprenticeship program, a graduate usually takes his licensing test and works as a full-fledged elevator mechanic. Learning while you work in a high-paying career field appeals to many people. However, NEIEP's recruitment process isn't an easy one. You must apply for the program, and the organization only takes applications at certain times of the year. You must be at least 18 years old and have a high school diploma or its equivalent to apply. After a successful application submittal, you'll be invited to take a mechanical aptitude test so that NEIEP can see if you're a good candidate for its program. An aptitude test score of at least 70 percent allows you to move on to the interview process. Veterans get preference for the NEIEP's apprenticeship program, and the International Union of Elevator Constructors (IUEC) is a key contact for former service members. The IUEC supports the Helmets to Hardhats program that helps former military members use their GI bill funds to get training in skilled trades.

#3 Dental Hygiene A.S. Degree (Median Annual Salary – \$74,820)

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If you've ever experienced the pain of infected teeth or gums, you'll appreciate the contributions that dental hygienists make to the field of dentistry. You probably know that many tooth and gum problems stem from poor oral hygiene and aren't surprised that there is a high demand for dental hygienists. However, the yearly salaries that these dental professionals command may surprise you. Dental hygienists do dental preventive maintenance. Besides professionally removing plaque and tartar from teeth, they educate patients about proper brushing and flossing methods. To prepare for a career in dental hygiene, you'll need at least an associate degree in the subject. Human anatomy, microbiology, dental radiography, and oral pathology are some of the courses that you can expect to take in a typical two-year, dental hygiene degree program. Upon graduation, you'll know about dental care techniques and treatments. You'll understand the industry's safety standards and laws. Employers at dental offices, public health clinics, and managed care facilities will also have confidence in your ability to manage and safeguard patient records according to national laws. Dental Hygiene A.S. degree programs come in conventional and online classroom formats. What this degree program offers in schedule flexibility, it makes up for in course rigor. To work as a dental hygienist, graduates must pass a licensing exam. Most educational programs are loaded with mathematics and science courses to prepare aspiring dental hygienists for that career-launching test. Most schools also require that you pass a background check as part of the program admittance process. When deciding on a dental hygiene school, there are a few elements that make some programs stand out from the rest. Choose one that's accredited by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). You'll need credentials from an approved CODA program to sit for your licensing exam. Dental hygienist programs that partner with dental clinics offer benefits that others do not. Hands-on training at a dental clinic prepares you to ace your licensing test and real-world dental care.

#4 Diagnostic Medical Sonography A.S. Degree (Median Annual Salary – \$67,080)

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Scientists often credit advancements in medical technology for the longer life spans of today's population. One example of this is found in the field of diagnostic medical sonography. You can't treat an ailment if you don't know that it exists. Medical sonographers use imaging devices to detect anomalies in the human body or confirm normal conditions. You'll need a two-year Associate of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography degree to operate the imaging equipment for diagnostic medical tests. This degree program includes basic course work in math, human anatomy, physics, and medical terminology. During your first semester of studies, you'll also take classes in communication and medical ethics to prepare you for interaction with patients in clinical settings. Specialized imaging and sonography training make up most of the remaining course work in these

programs. Sonography degree graduates learn how to get, view, and assess medical images. They acquire in-depth knowledge in physics and physiology. Most students complete medical sonography degree programs in two years or less. You can find diagnostic medical sonography programs in both traditional classroom and online formats. While most degree-seekers in other subjects enjoy the convenience of online courses, many sonography students choose to take classes on school campuses. Medical sonography requires its practitioners to have hands-on training and applied skills. You'll most often gain those skills through in-person, laboratory-style classes. If you choose an online medical sonography degree program, make sure that it includes some experiential learning opportunities in a lab setting or as part of an internship. Diagnostic medical sonographers use imaging technology in a variety of healthcare situations from detecting blood clots in an active senior to checking in on a developing baby in her mother's womb. It's no wonder that this job is one of the fastest growing occupations in the nation.

#5 Aviation Maintenance Technology A.S. Degree (Median Annual Salary – \$63,060)

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Things are looking up for job-seekers who graduate with aviation maintenance technology degrees. This is a two-year degree program that prepares you to troubleshoot, repair, and do preventive maintenance on airplanes. As air travel continues to play an important role in global logistics and leisure travel, aviation maintenance technology will take center stage in the industry. Employment as an aviation maintenance technician at airlines, aircraft manufacturers, and government agencies require formal education, credentials, and experience. The two-year aviation maintenance technology degree allows you to gain everything that you'll need to enter the aircraft maintenance career field. Besides course work in aviation systems, physics, and mathematics, you'll gain the knowledge to pass the FAA's Airframe and Powerplant certification exam. Most FAA-sponsored

degree programs include hands-on courses or internships in real-world settings that help you to gain the experience that employers want from their top employment candidates. Some specific courses that you can expect to take in an aviation maintenance technology degree program include aviation electrical and instrument systems, aircraft composite structures, and powerplant line maintenance. Aviation maintenance is heavily regulated to protect the safety of pilots, crew, and passengers. As a result, most aviation maintenance degree programs include classes about repair station operations, aircraft regulations, and technical report writing. While there are many aviation maintenance degree programs from which to choose, only FAA-approved programs will open the door to an aviation maintenance career. The military offers an alternate path for entry into aviation maintenance. Its aviation maintenance technicians undergo intense training, get valuable on-the-job experience, and sit for industry-recognized certification exams that result in credentials that can be used for civilian employment later.

#6 Home Inspection Certificate Program (Median Annual Salary – \$59,700)

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A retired couple falls in love with a vintage home in their new community. It's the right size, character, and price for their budget. They didn't get to be well-heeled retirees by throwing their money away. The couple wants to know more about the home's history and structure before they sign a contract. They call a home inspector to give them insight into the condition of the home's wiring, pipes, and foundation. This couple is not alone, and people just like them help to grow the demand for qualified home inspectors. A certificate in home inspection is the key to getting work in this field. During a home inspection training program, you'll take classes about residential construction interiors, exteriors, and structures. You'll learn how to assess the condition of residential electrical, plumbing, and heating and cooling systems according to industry regulations. Some courses get you ready to do challenging

home inspections via instruction about using drones to get aerial pictures of roofs for safer, more accurate assessments. You can complete most home inspection training programs in two years of part-time study or eight months of full-time study. Finding the right home inspection training program can be hard. Accreditation is an important attribute of a legitimate home inspection training program. An accredited home inspection training program has been evaluated by an independent industry organization to make sure that its courses are appropriate and of high quality. In most states, you'll need a license to conduct home inspections as an independent contractor for home buyers, financial institutions, and insurance companies. A good home inspection program needs to prepare you to take your licensing exam. You also need to check the credentials and experience of the course instructors because they can't teach what they don't know.

#7 Drafting and Design A.A.S Degree (Median Annual Salary – \$55,550)

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When it comes to real estate development, architects and general contractors get all the attention. However, there are lesser-known design tradespersons who help to translate designs into building specifications for construction crews. These people are drafters, and they get the needed skills to do their jobs through associate degree programs in drafting and design. Drafting and design degree programs prepare students to make technical drawings of building structures, electrical systems, plumbing, and mechanical components for residential and commercial properties. Since sustainability is a requirement for many modern building projects, you'll likely learn how to depict photovoltaic systems within your building diagrams. Specific courses that you can expect to take during a drafting and design degree program include engineering concepts and methods, introduction to

geographic information system, engineering graphics, and computer aided design. You can choose to specialize in areas of drafting and design such as mechanical drafting, architectural drafting, and graphic design. With this degree you'll find work in multiple sectors such as construction, urban planning, and manufacturing. Outstanding drafting and design programs offer work-study projects or internships that help you to gain real-world experience. Look for ones that have job placement programs.

#8 Plumbing Technology A.S. Degree (Median Annual Salary – \$53,910)

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If you're like everyone else, you take running water, flushing toilets, and heated rooms for granted. Plumbers are the tradespeople who make these modern necessities possible for homes and businesses across the globe. Plumbers install and repair the pipes that bring water and gas to buildings. Getting a two-year, associate degree in plumbing is the first step to landing a job in this field. Plumbing degree programs cover the installation and maintenance of plumbing lines and fixtures, water pumps, and sewer lines. You'll also take classes about heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. Most plumbing degree programs include these specific courses: – Plumbing technology – Electricity fundamentals – Occupational safety – Plumbing fixture installation While it's logical to think that you can only take a plumbing degree program in a classroom

setting because of the hands-on nature of the subject, there are online plumbing degree programs. The appeal of these degree programs is convenience and flexibility since they feature mobile-friendly and interactive learning platforms that allow you to learn when and wherever you want. Most people opt for traditional classroom training when it comes to getting a plumbing degree. Many schools offer hybrid courses that allow you to take plumbing theory via online platforms and to attend class in person for hands-on training. Plumbing degree programs usually take two years or less to complete. You'll need a state license to practice plumbing, and good plumbing degree programs include courses and projects that prepare you for your licensing exam. Check the licensing exam elements for your state to see if your chosen plumbing degree program covers those topics.

#9 Petroleum Technology A.S. Degree (Median Annual Salary – \$53,300)

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While the demand for alternative energy is growing, fossil fuel-based systems still dominate the world's industrial landscape. The oil sector needs skilled persons to help find and extract oil, gas, and mineral deposits to fuel the world's cars, ships, and aircraft. An associate degree in petroleum technology will get you started on this career path. During a petroleum technology degree program, you'll take courses in petroleum geology, geophysics, and petroleum and natural gas chemistry. Your program will also cover topics such as environmental safety, oil drilling, and principles of well control. When deciding on a petroleum technology degree program, choose one that has lots of industry partners. Some schools have built-in networks and affiliations that make finding jobs easier for their graduates than for graduates of other schools.

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#10 Paralegal Studies A.A. Degree (Median Annual Salary – \$50,940)

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Legal codes are meant to protect the innocent, punish guilty people, and bring remedies for injustices. Law offices that handle large case loads often rely on paralegals to help lawyers with legal research, court document preparation, and other administrative duties. While there isn't a national standard for paralegal work, industry organizations such as the National Association of Legal Assistants and the National Federation of Paralegal Associations have set worth de facto career success criteria for paralegals over the years. While you can learn the legal concepts for paralegal work in a job setting, most law offices only hire a paralegal who has completed at least a two-year, associate degree in paralegal studies. They often prefer candidates who also have paralegal certifications, and most paralegal degree programs offer classes that prepare you to take certification exams. In these

degree programs, you'll learn about court proceedings, trial exhibit preparation, and case research. Some specific courses that you can expect to take in a paralegal studies program include contract law, civil litigation, and ethics. Most paralegal degree programs also cover these common legal specialties: – Real estate law – Corporate law – Labor law – Education law – Intellectual property law While job growth rates for paralegals are expected to be much faster than average when compared to other occupations in the United States, just having a paralegal degree isn't always enough to get a job in the legal field. Good paralegal degree programs include internships. Besides offering valuable experience, these internships provide you with networking opportunities at local law offices.

Final Words

While no one can predict economic conditions with exact accuracy, you can position yourself to take advantage of opportunities if you have the right training and credentials. The described degree, certification, and apprenticeship programs allow you to gain marketable, ready-to-use skills for the current and future job market. They deliver high returns on time and financial investments that are hard to get from traditional four-year, university degree programs.

Category

1. Education

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