



# WORKING WITHOUT A BACHELOR'S DEGREE Can Pay Off

Feel like the absence of a **bachelor's degree** on your resume is forcing you to settle for a second-rate job? With today's myriad opportunities to earn **certificates** and **associate degrees**, you can change your career, your salary, and your life in just a short amount of time.

Check out these five high-paying **careers** -- no bachelor's degree required!

## 1. Dental Hygienist

Employment of dental hygienists is projected to grow much faster than average for all occupations through 2014, ranking among the Bureau of Labor Statistics' list of fastest-growing occupations.

To practice in a dental office, hygienists must earn an associate degree or certificate from a school accredited by the American Dental Association Commission of Dental Accreditation. A base of biology, chemistry, and math courses are advised, and program coursework will include clinical, laboratory, and classroom instruction.

*Median annual earnings: \$58,350.*

## 2. Nursing-Associate Degree

Nursing is a large health care career with space for people with varying amounts of training. Licensed practical nurses, for example, need only around one year of training at a degree program from a vocational school or community college, completed online or on-campus. Licensed practical nurses' duties include feeding and bathing patients, recording patients'

vital signs, applying dressings, and giving injections. The best employment opportunities for license practical nurses should be in areas outside traditional hospitals, such as home health care services. Registered nurses need more schooling, but they also have more job responsibilities and higher salaries than licensed practical nurses. Registered nurses generally have completed bachelor's degree programs or associate's degree programs. The nursing path you choose will depend on your goals for your career.

*Median annual earnings: \$35,000 - \$52,330.*

## 3. Diagnostic Medical Sonographer

Also known as ultrasonographers, diagnostic medical sonographers can specialize in obstetrics and gynecology, abdominal or breast sonography, or neurosonography.

A strong background in math and science is recommended, as associate degree coursework will include anatomy, physics, and physiology. A good bedside manner enables the sonographer to explain complex procedures to patients and reassure those who fear the health matters the testing may reveal.

*Median annual earnings: \$52,490.*

## 4. Forensic Science Technician

You've seen the TV shows -- these professionals collect and analyze physical evidence and document laboratory methods and findings. Computer skills and attention to detail are crucial as collection and

processing of materials must be spot-on to safeguard evidence.

Forensic science technicians should develop a strong base in math and science as preparation for their associate degree, typically earned in applied science or science-related technology. Coursework will include laboratory work and hands-on learning. Once in the field, technicians can choose to specialize in a certain type of analysis or examination.

*Median annual earnings: \$44,010.*

## 5. Radiography

If you're looking for a health care job with good hiring prospects, look no further than radiography. Radiographers produce and analyze patients' x-ray films to diagnose medical problems. In addition to preparing patients and operating equipment, radiologic technologists keep patient records and adjust and maintain equipment. They also may prepare work schedules, evaluate purchases of equipment, or manage a radiology department.

Some radiographers specialize in computed tomography (CT), and are sometimes referred to as CT technologists. Radiographers also can specialize in Magnetic Resonance Imaging as an MR technologist. MR, like CT, produces multiple cross-sectional images to create a 3-dimensional image. Unlike CT, MR uses non-ionizing radio frequency to generate image contrast. Another common specialty is mammography.

*Median annual earnings: \$48,170.*

