

Occupations

The *Occupations* files provide specific information on over 475 occupations. The content is based on the US Department of Labor O*NET occupational information. Each occupational file focuses first on the characteristics of the occupation and then on the characteristics of the workers employed in the occupation. The last section includes similar occupations, programs of study needed to prepare for this occupation, and postsecondary schools that offer the programs.

What information is in the Overview?

The overview is a description of what workers do in an occupation. The first sentence gives you a summary of the workers' main tasks. The rest of the overview provides more detailed information about workers' tasks. For some occupations, the overview covers the different types of specialties within an occupation. For example, the overview for computer programmers presents information about people who create software that people interact with. This overview also discusses programmers who create software that only the computer interacts with.

What are Specific Work Activities?

The Specific Work Activities topic provides a list of activities performed by workers in an occupation. The length of the list can tell you something about an occupation. For example, biologists have a long list. In contrast, short-order cooks have a short list. Thus, the length of the list tells you whether workers repeat a few work activities over and over, or they move between many different tasks.

This topic is an easy way to scan occupations to see if the work activities that are performed are interesting to you. If you like a lot of variety in your job, then you might want to find occupations with longer lists. If you like to learn one thing and become very good at it, then you might look for occupations with shorter lists. Once you find occupations that sound interesting, read the Overview topic to learn how the work activities all fit together.

What are Common Work Activities?

The Common Work Activities topic is a list of tasks that done by workers in many different occupations. For example, forest technicians and potters do not seem like they would have similar tasks. However, their work activities lists indicate that they both need to communicate with people outside their work.

This topic gives you an easy way to compare occupations. When you read the work activities list, write down activities that sound interesting to you. Then when you are comparing two occupations, look to see if workers use the same work activities.

What information is in Work Setting?

The Work Setting topic describes an occupation's characteristics. This topic covers the conditions and settings that workers in an occupation are exposed to. This list also shows characteristics that a worker needs to do well in the occupation.

Information for this topic is separated into four categories. The first category covers interpersonal relationships. An example would be providing a service to others or dealing with customers. The second category covers physical working conditions. Are workers inside or outside? Are they somewhere cold? Is it noisy? Conditions that might be uncomfortable for workers are included in this topic. The third category covers how much organization or attention to detail is needed. The fourth category contains information about work schedules and travel. For example, this covers whether workers tend to work full time or part time. In addition, information about whether workers work unusual hours or travel frequently is included. Reviewing these four categories can help you decide if these items fit your image of an "ideal" occupation.

When reading this topic, think about how an occupation fits your work values. As you go through, write down values that are important to you and those that don't matter to you. For example, you may realize that you don't mind working weekends, but that you really don't want to work nights.

What are Physical Demands?

This topic describes the physical activities that workers do on the job. Common physical activities are standing, sitting, lifting heavy items, and using the hands or senses.

The first category lists physical activities that workers frequently do on the job. In this case activities that workers do at least half the time. The second and third categories list physical demands by how important they are to the job. Activities that are very important to someone's success on the job are in the "It is important" category. Activities that are less important are listed in the "It is not as important" category.

This topic may help you decide if an occupation will be challenging for you. In addition, it may show you what skills you may need to practice or learn.

What will I learn in Wages?

The Wage topic gives you a sense of how much money workers earn in an occupation. Two types of information are given about wages--the median wage and the wage range. The median wage is the amount above which half of all workers are paid and below which half of all workers are paid. This is similar to an average.

Nebraska median annual wages are reported for occupations. The Nebraska wage range has two numbers. One-tenth of workers earn less than the first number. One-tenth of workers earn more than the second number. So 80 percent have wages that are in this range. A typical Nebraska wage statement looks like this:

In Nebraska, the median wage for accountants and auditors is \$46,766 per year. Eighty percent of all accountants and auditors earn between \$30,400 and \$82,622 per year.

If available, wages for Nebraska regions are presented. This chart includes hourly and annual median wages. The eight Nebraska regions include the following counties:

Balance of State: All counties except the Lincoln region (Lancaster and Saunders counties) and the Omaha region (Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties)

Central: Adams, Blaine, Buffalo, Clay, Custer, Franklin, Garfield, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Loup, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Phelps, Sherman, Valley, Webster, and Wheeler

Lincoln: Lancaster and Saunders

Mid Plains: Arthur, Chase, Cherry, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow, and Thomas

Northeast: Antelope, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Burt, Butler, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Dodge, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Platte, Polk, Rock, Stanton, Thurston, and Wayne

Omaha: Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington

Panhandle: Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, and Sioux

Southeast: Cass, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Richardson, Saline, Seward, Thayer, and York

National wage information is presented in an hourly value if the occupation has a high percentage of part-time workers. If most workers work full time, then median wages are given as a monthly value. The national wage range has two numbers. One-quarter of workers in the occupation earn less than the first number. One-quarter of workers in the occupation earn more than the second number. So, half of all workers have wages that are in this range. A typical national wage statement looks like this:

Nationally, the median wage for accountants and auditors is \$3,780 per month (\$21.82 per hour). Half of all accountants and auditors earn between \$2,990 and \$4,970 per month (\$17.23 and \$28.65 per hour).

If wages are significantly higher in Nebraska, it may be because there are not enough workers in that occupation. As a result, the workers in Nebraska can ask for higher wages. Similarly, if wages are significantly lower in Nebraska, it might be because there are too many workers. As a result, employers may pay workers less. There are other reasons why wages in Nebraska are different from the rest of the nation. Some states have a higher cost of living, so wages for most occupations in those states tend to be higher than average. Wages tend to be higher in cities than in rural areas so that factor also affects state averages.

The wages topic also presents information about how workers are paid. For example, some people are paid by the hour. Some workers receive tips in addition to their hourly wages. Yet other workers are paid a commission based on how much they sell. In addition, this topic covers non-wage benefits that workers receive. For example, these types of benefits are health insurance, paid vacation, sick leave, and retirement plans. It is important to consider these benefits when you are looking at pay. Some benefits, such as health care, are worth a lot of money. So you should carefully weigh a job that pays well but does not have benefits against one that has benefits but does not pay as well.

What is Employment?

The Employment topic gives the number of jobs in an occupation in a given year. This information is presented at the national, Nebraska, and Nebraska regional levels. The eight Nebraska regions include the following counties:

Balance of State: All counties except the Lincoln region (Lancaster and Saunders counties) and the Omaha region (Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties)

Central: Adams, Blaine, Buffalo, Clay, Custer, Franklin, Garfield, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Loup, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Phelps, Sherman, Valley, Webster, and Wheeler

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You can compare the size of the occupation in Nebraska to the nation. There also are five size categories for occupations in CIS: very small, small, medium, large, and very large. When investigating an occupation, you might consider its size. There are likely to be more job openings in large occupations, such as secretary, than in small occupations, such as historian.

In addition to the size of the occupation, this topic also lists major employers. This information gives you an idea of the type of company you might work for if you enter this occupation. In some occupations the government is a major employer. In other occupations, a large number of people are self-employed. Use this information to help you think about what type of company you might want to work for.

What information is in Outlook?

The Outlook topic tells you how rapidly an occupation is expected to grow in comparison to all other occupations at the national, Nebraska, and Nebraska regional levels. The eight Nebraska regions include the following counties:

Balance of State: All counties except the Lincoln region (Lancaster and Saunders counties) and the Omaha region (Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties)

Central: Adams, Blaine, Buffalo, Clay, Custer, Franklin, Garfield, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Loup, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Phelps, Sherman, Valley, Webster, and Wheeler

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This information is an estimate. No one can predict exactly how many jobs will be available. NCIS uses five statements to indicate the rate of growth:

Statement	% rate of growth between 2002 and 2012
Much faster than average	36% or more
Faster than average	21 to 35%
As fast as average	10 to 20%
More slowly than average	0 to 9%
Decline	Decrease 1% or more

The rate of growth of an occupation is determined by several factors. A few major factors are the state of the economy, competition, technological advances, and environmental rules.

When investigating an occupation, you should consider its outlook. Occupations that are growing faster than average are always promising. However, you should also look at the size of the occupation. An occupation that is very small, but growing rapidly may only have a few job openings each year. In contrast, an occupation that is large, but growing slowly may have a large number of job openings each year. It is good to know if an occupation is growing. But if the occupation isn't growing and you are good at it, there are still ways to get into the field.

What are Hiring Practices?

The Hiring Practices topic can help you learn what employers prefer or require when they hire someone for a job. This topic is helpful when you are preparing for an occupation or a job interview. In addition, this topic tells you what formal training or licensure requirements are required. If there are requirements, then you may learn more about them by reading the Preparation or the Licensing topic(s). The Hiring Practice topic may also list characteristics that employers look for, such as good hand eye coordination. Another area that may be included is the way employees are hired, such as through union halls.

What will I learn in Advancement Opportunities?

The Advancement Opportunities topic gives you information about where most people start in this occupation. It also explains what type of positions you may advance to with more training or more experience. In some occupations workers can advance by staying in the same position but receiving higher wages. For example, a manager may advance by moving to another company rather than staying within the same organization.

Advancement is a good section to read when you are preparing for an interview. Sometimes interviewers ask you the question "What are your goals for the next five years?" By reading this section you can get an idea of what position(s) you want to pursue in the future.

What information is in Skills and Abilities?

The goal of the Skills and Abilities topic is to depict the skills workers need to do the occupation. This section uses the skills that employers look for when they hire someone for a job. However, each employer looks for more of one skill or less of another.

Skills and abilities are listed in seven categories:

Communicate

Reason and Problem Solve

Use Math and Science

Manage Oneself, People, Time, and Things

Work with People

Work with Things

Perceive and Visualize

All these categories appear in some occupations, but other occupations contain only some of these categories. This is because categories appear only if they apply to the occupation. For example, in most occupations you may need to listen to others and ask questions. Thus the *Communicate* category will be listed. In some occupations, such as sketch artist, communication is a very important skill. Thus the list of skills in the *Communicate* category is long. In contrast, communication skills are less important for furniture finishers. For this occupation, a list of communication skills does not even appear.

The more skills listed in a category, such as *Communicate* means the occupation requires more skill in reading, writing, or listening. If there are no skills listed, it does not mean that furniture finishers do not need to know how to communicate. It does mean that furniture finishers use those skills less than half of the time. If you enjoy using your communication skills, then look for occupations that have a long list under the *Communicate* category.

What can I learn from the Knowledge topic?

The *Knowledge* topic lists the areas of experience and training that are needed for the occupation you are researching. The knowledge areas that are listed are all important to the occupation. These items are ordered by how important they are to the occupation.

Dental hygienists for example, must have knowledge in dentistry, biology, and education. Some knowledge areas, such as dentistry, may be learned through formal training. However, other knowledge areas may be gained through volunteering or internships.

What can I learn from the Preparation topic?

The *Preparation* topic describes the education, training, and experience you need to prepare for work in an occupation. This section covers the types of formal and informal training programs you should take. In addition, this section covers the amount of experience you need to enter an occupation. To learn more about some of the formal training programs, click on the "Programs of Study" button.

Keep in mind that there are several ways to prepare for most occupations. If you already have a degree in another area, it might transfer over to your new occupation of interest.

What is in the Helpful High School Courses topic?

As the title indicates, this topic lists high school courses that may help prepare you for work or additional training in an occupation. The courses are grouped in clusters so that related courses are together. This list is comprehensive and you should not feel that you need to take all the courses. Instead you should take the courses that are most interesting to you. If you like a course, take others in its cluster. If you are interested in going into an occupation, then take courses from several of the clusters in the list. This way you can determine if the occupation involves information or skills you like. You can use this list when creating your high school course plan. For example, by referring to this list you can get a sense of the number and difficulty of courses you should take in English, math, or science.

What should I know about Licensing / Certification?

For some occupations you must be licensed in order to legally practice your profession. Sometimes a national agency grants the license. More often a state agency grants the license. Certification and registration are other ways for others to recognize that you are a qualified and competent worker. Unlike a license, certification and registration are sometimes optional.

When an occupation has licensing, certification, or registration requirements, that information is in this section. CIS gives a general list of requirements that applicants must meet. In addition, CIS gives information about which agency to contact for more information.

What can I learn from the References topic?

The References topic lists free or low-cost publications you can send away for or read on the Internet to get more information about careers. These publications are created by professional organizations. This topic also lists a few reference books that you are likely to find in your school or local library. Many of these publications are also available on the Internet so the addresses for these sites are included.

You should consider contacting these groups or visiting their websites. These groups can provide you with more information about what it is like to work in a particular occupation. In addition, some organizations have information about schools, scholarships, and majors.

What are the "Other Related Information" topics? How do I use these topics?

1. Related Occupations is a list of occupations in CIS that have similar tasks to those in the occupation you are exploring. The list you will see is only a small part of all the occupations in CIS. Double click on an occupation title to view information about the occupation. When using some of the Related Information topics you may exit Occupations. Use the Back button to return to what you were investigating.
2. Related Programs of Study is a list of the training programs you could study after high school to prepare for the occupation you are exploring. Some programs of study in the list are obvious, direct ways to prepare for an occupation. Other programs of study may be less direct ways to prepare for the occupation, but are still training options you can consider. This list is only a small group of all the programs of study in CIS. Double click on a program of study title to view its information.
3. Related Self-Employment Information is a link to a file about running your own business. This link appears in all occupations in which 10 percent or more of the workers in the occupation are self-employed. Double click on the title to view information about self-employment.
4. Related Military Occupations is a list of military occupations in CIS. The list you will see is only a small part of all the military occupations in CIS. This list contains the military occupations that are most like the CIS occupation you are currently exploring. These occupations are related because the workers in them do similar tasks. This topic will show up only when there is a related military occupation. A few CIS occupations do not have any related military occupations. Double click on a military occupation title or to view information.
5. America's Job Bank is a national job bank that you access through the Internet. This job bank contains job openings for all states. These are not all job openings in the United States, just a small number of them. These listings include both full- and part-time jobs. In addition, the job listings cover all levels of education and experience. When you choose the America's Job Bank topic, you will see one or more occupation titles in the window. Choose the occupation title that is most closely related to the occupation you want to search for. Double click on that occupation title to access the job bank listings. You will see a

window that lists job listings, if there are any, for that occupation in your state.

CIS is set up to access the job listings for your state; however, you can check the job listings for other states too. Click the "Refine Search" button at the bottom of the screen. Then click the "More Location Options" button. This will take you to a page where you can enter up to three states in which to search for job listings.

6. The Nebraska Schools section includes the names of postsecondary schools in Nebraska that offer education and training programs that would prepare you to work in the occupation you are investigating. The list of schools includes only those that offer degrees in related programs of study.

What can I learn from a Real World Interview?

These are interviews with people who are working in the occupations you're investigating. The interviewees talk about what they like and dislike about their jobs. They also tell about how they got into their occupation. Finally, they give advice about how to enter the occupation. About 100 of the occupations in CIS have a Real World Interview.

In CIS there are two ways to know whether an occupation has a Real World Interview. One, in the list of occupations, look for the icon of two talking people. Two, while exploring an occupation, look for the Real World Interview topic. This topic is not in the Windows and Macintosh versions of CIS.










What is an Occupation Video?

The videos show workers on the job. Pay attention to how the workers are dressed, their work area, and the tasks they are doing. The videos also have a narrator who talks about the occupation. You may hear the narrator or see on screen the words the narrator is reading. About 350 of the occupations in CIS have a video with the narration and captions in English. About 250 of those occupations have a video with the narration in Spanish. Each of the videos is between one and two minutes long.

In CIS there are three ways to know whether an occupation has a video. One, in the list of occupations, look for the video camera icon. Two, while exploring an occupation, look for the Video topic. Third, while exploring an occupation, look at

the video camera icon at the bottom of the screen. If the word "video" next to the camera is black, then the occupation has a video. If "video" is in gray, the occupation does not have a video. Internet CIS does not use this last option.

Frequently Asked Questions

-  What is an occupation?
-  How do I find information in occupations?
-  What should I keep in mind when choosing an occupation?
-  How do I use CIS to choose an occupation?
-  What information does a CIS occupation file contain?
-  What occupations are growing? What occupations are decreasing?
-  How do I find a school that will prepare me to enter an occupation?
-  How do I pay for my education after high school?
-  Where does the occupation data come from?

Compare Occupations

1. Go to the Occupations Index
2. Click on "Compare Occupations"
3. Select two occupations you want to compare