

GET THE JOB

Consider Learning a Trade

These jobs are always in demand, profitable and very rewarding.

Not every career requires a degree from a four-year university. In fact, some of the most varied and sought-after positions are skilled trades learned through technical schools and apprenticeships. You can build a great career with no student debt.

About 30 million jobs in the United States that pay an average of \$55,000 per year don't require bachelor's degrees, according to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce. CEW also reports that a higher level of education doesn't necessarily translate into a higher salary. In Texas, for example, workers with associate degrees in chemical technology had median earnings of \$75,500 in 2020, compared to \$50,600 in median earnings for bachelor's degree holders in the state.

Training for some of these in-demand roles can begin in high school, where the basics of woodworking or auto repair might be taught. Apprenticeships are available upon graduation. Others may attend a trade school or technical college for more advanced lessons.



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Many veterans leave the service with transferable skills that allow them to directly enter the workforce. They may also take advantage of veteran benefits that provide additional training or teach adaptive skills to transition into the civilian workforce.

Those who are willing to

work with their hands and complete this training, serve apprenticeships and earn certification emerge with a sturdy career that provides services that are always needed. Most also have substantial pay rates, sometimes into six figures. Key areas of need include electricians, plumbers and construction technology:

PLUMBERS

To earn a license, plumbing technicians must attend a year of training at a technical school and then begin an apprenticeship. They'll learn about more than pipes and drains. Modern plumbing includes cool tech like tankless water heaters, smart applianc-

es and WiFi-powered leak detection systems. You'll exit training with a job that is always in demand.

CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY

As with plumbing, construction jobs are now defined by huge advancements in computerization. In keeping, one of the fastest-growing trades is the relatively new field of construction technology. These workers are versed in all of the latest smart-enabled systems, with skills ranging from installation to troubleshooting and repairs. With a focus on everything within the digital footprint of modern spaces, workers in this field needed additional training. It will take two to three years before technologists earn certification, followed by a paid apprenticeship.

ELECTRICIANS

Anyone with an interest in this field and a high-school degree or equivalent can begin technical school training to become an electrician. You'll receive training in the fundamentals of this field, from traditional wiring to programmable systems used in residential, industrial and commercial settings. Two years of school is typically required, followed by an apprenticeship before electricians earn the required licensing.