



SALARY CENTER

The Next 10 Highest-Paying Jobs in the US

by Ben Murray

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There is a storied group of people out there known to be laughing all the way to certain financial institutions. And while it may come as no surprise that these high-income types enjoy their trips to the bank, you might be interested to learn that when these folks see each other on the street, dragging their loot, the greeting is often the same:

◆Doctor.◆

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How did we get this inside information? The government told us. In an effort to provide Monster readers with the 10 jobs the Department of Labor says are likely to pay you enough to bankroll a diamond mine, we found out eight of the 10 jobs were in the [medical field](#). Realizing our list was helpful only to people with an inclination for diagnosing diseases, we backpedaled and started over.

We quickly found that the people just outside the top 10 were employed in much more varied fields, offering more options to those looking to use a top-10 list to find work in a fortune-building profession.

According to the May 2003 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, provided by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the top 11 to 20 highest-paying professions in the US and their mean average salaries are:

1. Lawyers: \$107,800
2. Podiatrists: \$106,430
3. Engineering managers: \$99,710
4. Computer and information systems managers: \$95,230
5. Optometrists: \$95,060
6. Natural sciences managers: \$93,990
7. Air traffic controllers: \$93,240
8. Marketing managers: \$92,190
9. Sales managers: \$91,840
10. Law teachers, postsecondary: \$91,420

Could You Get a Job on This List?

While many of these jobs require a virtual lifetime of industry-specific study, the prerequisites for becoming an air traffic controller are not rooted in academics. The majority of controllers are employed by the Federal Aviation Administration, which screens and trains controllers at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City.

Applicants for these jobs are selected through the [federal civil service system](#) and are generally required to have a four-year degree or some college and supplemental work experience. People with experience as a pilot or navigator often have an edge in this business, according to the BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook.

Also, if you're good with atoms but hate competing for jobs, there is a shortage of workers in nuclear engineering, says Emmy Roos, a member of the board of directors at the American Nuclear Society. According to Roos, nuclear engineering student enrollments -- undergraduate and graduate combined -- have declined from 3,400 to 1,300 in the last 20 years.

Advanced degrees aren't always required of marketing and sales managers either, although an MBA has been known to help.

The Actual Top 10

If you're still aiming higher than 11 through 20 on the compensation list, here are the actual top 10 highest-paying jobs in the US, and good luck performing your first hernia operation.

1. Surgeons: \$190,280
2. Anesthesiologists: \$184,880
3. Obstetricians and gynecologists: \$180,660
4. Internists, general: \$160,130
5. Pediatricians, general: \$143,300
6. Chief executives: \$140,580
7. Family and general practitioners: \$139,640
8. Psychiatrists: \$139,300
9. Dentists: \$131,210
10. Airline pilots, copilots and flight engineers: \$129,880

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