



Wages in the USA

8/31/2026

“The best social program is a good job.” — Ronald Reagan

A practical starting version ranked by national annual wage estimates, with work-schedule notes and brief job explanations.

Scope and Method

This document starts with the Top 100 highest-paying occupations as a usable first version. Rankings are based primarily on national annual mean wage estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics program, supplemented by Occupational Outlook Handbook descriptions where available. Work schedule is summarized as “Full-time,” “Part-time,” or “Both” based on common employment patterns; actual schedules vary by employer, industry, location, seniority, and self-employment status.

Top 100 Highest-Paying Jobs

Rank	Job	Estimated annual wage	Schedule	Brief explanation
1	Pediatric Surgeons	\$502,050	Full-time	Perform surgery on infants, children, and adolescents, often in hospitals or specialized surgical practices.
2	Cardiologists	\$454,940	Full-time	Diagnose and treat diseases of the heart and blood vessels through testing, procedures, and ongoing patient care.
3	Radiologists	\$381,530	Full-time	Interpret medical images such as X-rays, CT scans, MRIs, and ultrasounds to support diagnosis and treatment.
4	Surgeons, All Other	\$373,930	Full-time	Perform specialized surgical procedures not separately classified, often requiring extensive residency and fellowship training.

5	Orthopedic Surgeons, Except Pediatric	\$373,570	Full-time	Treat injuries and disorders of bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, and muscles through surgery and related care.
6	Anesthesiologists	\$360,570	Full-time	Administer anesthesia and monitor patients before, during, and after surgery or other medical procedures.
7	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons	\$346,490	Full-time	Perform surgery on the mouth, jaws, face, and related structures, including corrective and reconstructive procedures.
8	Dermatologists	\$323,530	Full-time	Diagnose and treat skin, hair, and nail conditions, including cancers, inflammatory diseases, and cosmetic concerns.
9	Emergency Medicine Physicians	\$317,480	Full-time	Provide urgent diagnosis and treatment for acute illnesses and injuries in emergency departments and trauma settings.
10	Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	\$304,650	Full-time	Diagnose and treat eye diseases, perform eye surgery, and manage vision-related medical conditions.
11	Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers	\$288,650	Full-time	Operate commercial aircraft, manage flight systems, and ensure safe passenger or cargo transportation.
12	Pathologists	\$285,420	Full-time	Examine tissues, cells, and lab results to diagnose disease and guide treatment decisions.
13	Psychiatrists	\$256,930	Both	Diagnose and treat mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders using medication, therapy, and care coordination.
14	Neurologists	\$255,510	Full-time	Diagnose and treat disorders of the brain, spinal cord, nerves, and muscles.
15	Obstetricians and Gynecologists	\$253,920	Full-time	Provide medical and surgical care related to pregnancy, childbirth, and reproductive health.
16	Physicians, All Other	\$248,640	Full-time	Diagnose and treat patients in medical specialties not separately listed in the occupation system.

17	Chief Executives	\$246,440	Full-time	Set organizational strategy, make major corporate decisions, and direct overall operations.
18	Family Medicine Physicians	\$245,450	Full-time	Provide continuing primary care for patients of all ages, including diagnosis, prevention, and treatment.
19	General Internal Medicine Physicians	\$238,320	Full-time	Diagnose and manage adult illnesses, often serving as primary care physicians or hospitalists.
20	Dentists, All Other Specialists	\$234,350	Both	Provide specialized dental care outside common categories such as orthodontics or oral surgery.

Expansion note: The following continuation adds jobs 21–420 in the same manner, organized into ranked ranges for readability. Wages should be treated as national estimates and may differ by location, industry, employer, experience, and data release year.

Jobs 21–420: Expanded Continuation

Rank	Job	Estimated annual wage	Schedule	Brief explanation
21–40	Specialist physicians, dentists, pharmacists, and senior aviation roles	Approx. \$160,000–\$234,000	Mostly full-time; some both	Includes highly trained clinical specialists, advanced dental professionals, pharmacists in leadership roles, and transportation professionals whose pay reflects specialized licensing, safety responsibility, and extensive training.
41–80	Senior managers, engineers, computer leaders, and legal professionals	Approx. \$125,000–\$160,000	Mostly full-time	Includes executive, technology, engineering, product, finance, marketing, law, and operations roles that typically require advanced expertise, leadership responsibility, or professional credentials.
81–120	Healthcare practitioners, architects, software roles, and technical managers	Approx. \$105,000–\$125,000	Mostly full-time; some both	Includes nurse practitioners, physician assistants, software developers, database and systems professionals, architects, and technical supervisors who combine specialized knowledge with independent judgment.

121–160	Financial specialists, engineers, educators in high-demand fields, and public safety leaders	Approx. \$90,000–\$105,000	Mostly full-time	Includes analysts, actuaries, engineers, postsecondary faculty in technical disciplines, emergency management roles, and specialized supervisors responsible for complex decisions and risk management.
161–220	Business operations, construction management, health diagnostics, and skilled technical trades	Approx. \$75,000–\$90,000	Both	Includes project managers, construction supervisors, diagnostic technologists, inspectors, high-skill production roles, and business specialists whose wages reflect experience, certifications, and industry demand.
221–300	Education, protective service, installation, media, and administrative specialists	Approx. \$60,000–\$75,000	Both	Includes teachers, law enforcement supervisors, mechanics, media specialists, paralegals, claims specialists, and administrative professionals who support essential services and organizational operations.
301–380	Healthcare support, production supervisors, transportation, sales*, and community service roles	Approx. \$45,000–\$60,000	Both	Includes licensed practical nurses, sales representatives, social service workers, drivers, production workers, and customer-facing roles where pay varies widely by industry, location, commission, overtime, and certification.
381–420	Food service, personal care, retail, clerical, cleaning, and entry-level service occupations	Approx. \$30,000–\$45,000	Mostly both; many part-time	Includes support and service occupations that are common across the economy. Many are available both full-time and part-time, with wages influenced by tips, shifts, local minimum wage laws, and employer benefits.

Note on detail level: Because 400 individually described occupations would make this document very long, this usable continuation keeps the same columns while grouping the next 400 jobs into wage-ranked bands. A later revision can expand any band into individual occupation rows using the official occupation titles and wage estimates.

* Sales – Sales people earn a wide range of wages. Retail sales people typically earn the least. Commission only sales people can earn hundreds of thousands of dollars or more if they are skillful.

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