

Pharmacy Careers in High Paying Work Environments

There are several options available for those individuals who are interested in [pharmacy careers](#). Working in a retail pharmacy is one of the most common choices for *pharmacy careers*, however, there are many other options for those who have obtained their PharmD degree and obtained licensure. Regardless of the work environment the annual salary for the pharmacist remains consistent with some factors that can affect their income, such as years of experience and the work environment itself.

Working as a Retail Pharmacist or Clinical Pharmacist

As a retail pharmacist you will work in pharmacy chains such as Walgreens, Rite Aid or CVS. The hours in this type of environment can be extensive, considering most of these stores are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Those planning on working in a retail pharmacy setting should be prepared to work every other weekend 12 to 14 hours a day. These retail pharmacies will typically employ two full time pharmacists who work 12 hour schedules that alternate with two days on and two days off.

As a clinical pharmacist you will work closely with physicians in order to determine appropriate medications and dosages for patients who have been admitted to a hospital.



Working in a long term care facility will involve caring for those patients that are terminally or chronically ill and the geriatric population. The pharmacist will work in this type of facility by monitoring medications the patients are taking and consulting their physicians regarding the patient's response to the medications. In this type of setting the pharmacist will not deal directly with the patients but will go off of the nursing staffs daily charting notes in order to obtain information regarding medication responses and the overall progress or decline of a patient's health.

Working as a nuclear pharmacist will involve measuring and delivering material that is radioactive and used in digital imaging and other types of procedures that are performed in hospitals and medical facilities. As a nuclear pharmacist you will be required to work early hours due to the nature of the radioactive materials. These materials will need to be delivered within a couple of hours of use or they can lose effectiveness.

The pharmacist that works in the home infusion and chemotherapy field will be responsible for mixing chemotherapy medications for cancer patients.

As a pharmaceutical benefits manager the pharmacist will work negotiating between corporations, health insurance companies and pharmaceutical companies.

Other Pharmaceutical Positions Options Available

As a pharmacist you can work on a contract basis while considering what type of position in the pharmacy industry you'd like to work for the long term. Working as a contract pharmacist can allow you to take as many or as little shifts as you'd like and will usually involve working on-call for hospitals, medical facilities or retail pharmacies. This type of position can also allow the pharmacist to experience many different types of work settings prior to committing to a long term position in that setting on a permanent basis.



Working an industry position or non-clinical position for those with a degree in pharmacology can involve options such as medical sales, regulatory medication positions in medical facilities and medical writing.

Education Requirements for the Pharmacist

A pharmacist is a licensed healthcare professional that is dedicated to improving the health of patients by educating them on drug use, common side effects and adverse effects in order to prevent illness and misuse. To become a pharmacist you will need to obtain two years of undergraduate coursework which will then be followed by four years of pharmacology school. As a pharmacist you will also need to obtain your license in order to work in this field.

As a pre-pharmacy student you will need to complete two years of college in order to be eligible for pharmacology school. Most students will obtain their bachelor's degree prior to enrolling in a pharmacology program, although this is not required.

The doctor of pharmacy degree is a field requirement that takes four years to complete and will prepare the student for the scientific, technical and patient-care aspects of this career field. The courses for this program will include toxicology, pharmacology laws and ethics, drug absorption, disease treatments, patient interaction, pathophysiology, biopharmaceuticals and medical chemistry. The program will also

incorporate clinical training hours through working as a pharmacy clerk. Working these clinical hours will allow the students to gain experience in a pharmacy setting under the supervision of the facilities lead pharmacist.

Those who have graduated from the PharmD program will be able to pursue additional training through residencies that can last one to two years and will allow the student to gain experience working directly with patients in a community style pharmacy or hospital. As a resident they can pursue training in general pharmacology or they can choose to specialize in a related field.

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Alternative Associate's Degree Pharmacy Technician Programs

BY [PHARMACY CAREERS U.COM](#) STAFF IN [PHARMACY CAREERS, PHARMACY TECHNICIAN PROGRAMS](#) ON NOVEMBER 30, 2012 11:13 PM | [EDIT](#)

Pharmacy technician programs will teach students how to work alongside professional pharmacists, filling prescriptions, providing customer service and performing inventory management. Students interested in a career as a tech can enroll in associate degree or certificate pharmacy technician programs.

Enrollment Requirements and Certificate Program Information

Only a high school diploma or GED is required in order to become a pharmacy technician. However, there are some states and the majority of employers that will require or prefer those applicants that have completed a formal training program. The certificate pharmacy technician program can be found through vocational schools, community colleges and online universities. Degree programs will take two years to complete whereas the certificate programs will vary at one to two years for completion.





The certificate programs will usually cover medical terminology, fundamental pharmacology, drug regulations, patient documentation and recordkeeping. The student might also have the opportunity to complete an internship at local retail pharmacies, public or private hospital pharmacies and medical clinics. Advanced courses included in a program will involve pharmacy practice in specific industries, safety and sterilization practices, inventory and documentation procedures, legal dispensary and labeling requirements, proper drug handling and measuring methods, insurance, medical billing and coding, inventory control and documentation procedures.

Those students that are interested in pursuing the associates of specialized technology in pharmacy technology can learn that this degree is not offered at every college or university. An alternative to this type of degree is enrolling in the associate of applied science in pharmacy technology. This program will teach the skills that are necessary in order to become a certified technician.

This associate's degree program will typically take two years to complete, unless the student enrolls in an accelerated program which can be completed in 16 to 18 months. Students will learn how to prepare medications, create patient profiles, keep patient information up-to-date, take pharmacy inventory, and work with insurance companies regarding medication coverage for patients. Students will also come to know how a pharmacy actually functions, and the role the pharmacy technician will play when assisting the pharmacist. The technician's main goal in a pharmacy setting will be to complete as many tasks as possible in order to free up the time of the pharmacist so that they may better serve customers when giving consultations.

Graduates from this program will also have a better understanding of the legal limitations and responsibilities of the technician. By law a technician will not be able to provide consultation to a customer, regarding any questions they may have about their prescriptions and will be required to refer the customers to the pharmacist instead. Students that are interested in applying for a program will need to have a math and science academic background and have their CPR and First aid certification. Some programs might also require the students to pass a criminal background check or drug screening prior to being accepted.

Courses Included in the Program

In a technician program the students will complete both classroom and clinical study courses. Students will also participate in seminars as they learn more about working as part of a pharmacy team. Future techs can learn about specialized skills such as pharmacology, pharmacy law, accurately measuring and weighing medications, sterilization and safety and medical terminology.

Certification for pharmacy technicians is required by some states and while not mandatory in others, many students will still choose to obtain certification in order to increase their chances at finding employment or making a higher salary in their current position. Technicians can obtain certification through such organizations as the Pharmacy technician Board, which will only require the applicant to have their high school diploma and completion of a formal training program, with no past history of drug related crimes.

To maintain certification a pharmacy technician must provide proof of twenty hours of continuing education credits every two years after the initial certification.

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Pharmacist Degree and Training Programs

BY [PHARMACY CAREERS U.COM STAFF](#) IN [PHARMACIST DEGREE, PHARMACY CAREERS](#) ON NOVEMBER 30, 2012
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As a healthcare professional the pharmacist will follow physician instructions regarding different kinds of medications that need to be administered to a patient based on that patient's diagnosis. Pharmacists will commonly be employed in retail pharmacies, hospitals and medical clinics, or they can work in research labs, or government agencies. Students that are interested in earning a pharmacist degree will need to earn the *pharmacist degree*, also known as the [PharmD](#). Before working as a professional, the pharmacist will need to follow various licensing requirements.

In addition to obtaining the PharmD degree the pharmacist will need to pass two tests that are administered by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. An applicant will also be required to complete a certain number of clinical hours before being eligible to receive their certification. Students will need to find pharmacist degree programs that provide clinical hours in settings such as community pharmacies, hospitals and other types of medical facilities so they'll be more informed about potential employment opportunities upon graduation.

Degree Program Options for Pharmacology and Residencies

The bachelor's degree in pharmaceutical sciences is an undergraduate program that is interdisciplinary in nature which includes courses in medicine, chemistry, pharmaceuticals and pharmacology. Students will work in a classroom setting as well as the school's labs and will also be participating in internships with research labs or pharmaceutical companies. To qualify for the bachelor's program the student will need to have their high school diploma, high SAT scores, and passing admission scores.

Coursework for this undergraduate program will include extensive studies of basic science, general chemistry, microbiology, organic chemistry, pharmaceuticals, medicinal chemistry and biochemistry.

After completion of the bachelor's degree program, students that are interested in becoming a pharmacist will need to enroll in the four year doctor of pharmacy program after they have obtained a minimum of two years in an undergraduate degree program.



Some of the foundational courses in pharmacology practices will include medical dosages, pharmacotherapy, health management, dosage forms and pharmacology law. The clinical experience program is a major part of the pharmacology student's education. During the first two years of school a student will take the course introductory pharmacology practice experiences, where a student will develop the essential skills needed for consulting patients, performing screenings and administering immunizations. During the last two years of the program the student will take the advanced pharmacology experiences course, which places the student in different types of patient care settings under the supervision of the lead pharmacist. These clinical experiences will allow students to work in different areas of the pharmacy which can include in-patient, electives and ambulatory operations.

Working Residencies after a Program

Pharmacists that are interested in working in different types of clinical settings will need to consider completing a fellowship or residency program prior to applying for a clinical position. The fellowships and residencies are programs that will train a pharmacist for work in a specialty field or for administrative work. Specialties in pharmacology will include informatics, community care, nuclear pharmacology and medical drug interaction research. These programs can last one to two years and will include research on drug therapy or other pharmacology related topics.

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Selecting the Best Pharmacy Technician School

BY [PHARMACY CAREERS U.COM STAFF](#) IN [PHARMACY CAREERS, PHARMACY TECHNICIAN SCHOOL](#) ON NOVEMBER 30, 2012 11:06 PM [EDIT](#)

As a pharmacy technician you will work assisting the pharmacist in duties such as customer service, filling prescriptions and inventory control. Those interested in working as a tech will need to enroll in a certificate or degree program at an accredited *pharmacy technician school*. These schools will feature options for two different types of associate's degree programs and the basic certificate programs.

How to Choose a Pharmacology Program

Some states will not require formal training in order to work as a pharmacy technician, however, by completing a training program you'll have more experience in the field as opposed to new employees that require on the job training and you'll therefore be more valuable to potential employers who will save money that's used for training programs.



Some pharmacy technician schools will offer information sessions for potential students in order for the applicant to determine if a technician program is right for them before they commit to enrolling in a program. The sessions will cover such topics as cost versus benefits, overall job duties, course curriculum and pharmacy technician certification options and responsibilities. Often admission tests can be administered by the school during one of these sessions or it can be required before a student enrolls in order to evaluate a student for acceptance into the program.

Many of these schools will offer programs that will include internships that can help to prepare a student for immediate employment once they have completed the required courses. Through affiliations with local pharmacies a student is able to gain experience in the field by performing such duties as inventory control, recordkeeping, medication counting and physician order transcription. Every school will differ in this area as some will offer more lab time as opposed to more time spent in the field.

Pharmacy Technician Courses for Degree and Certificate Programs

Applicants for pharmacy tech programs will need to be 18 years of age and have their high school diploma or state equivalent. Students will need to complete an admissions application and provide school transcripts for the admissions department to review.

Training for this program can be found through degree or certificate programs, both of which will include field and classroom training. The associate's degree program covers traditional courses which will include classes in social and behavioral science, mathematics, natural science and general elective classes. Students can also expect courses in anatomy, medication absorption, medical terminology, medical laws and ethics and medication dosage effects.

Certificate programs that are available for this field can be completed in one to two years and will also include an internship in a professional pharmacy setting and courses in drug interactions, medication absorption, anatomy, pharmacology laws and ethics and patient documentation.

After completion of either program the student will need to take certification exams through an accredited organization such as the [PTCB](#), in order to obtain their licensure for this profession. To qualify for recertification the technician will need to earn twenty hours of continuing education every two years for license renewal.

As a professional the technician can work in a number of environments such as retail pharmacies, dental offices, scientific research and development labs, private or public hospitals and medical clinics.

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Pharmacist Schools and the Programs they Offer

BY [PHARMACY CAREERS U.COM STAFF](#) IN [PHARMACIST SCHOOLS](#), [PHARMACY CAREERS](#) ON NOVEMBER 30, 2012 11:01 PM [EDIT](#)

A pharmacist is a healthcare professional who specializes in the distribution of medications. A student that is interested in working in a pharmacy setting will need to earn their doctor of pharmacy degree in a four year program through [pharmacist schools](#). When selecting pharmacist schools the student will need to look for programs that feature residency options and programs that are accredited by the Council for Pharmacy Education.

How to Find the Right Pharmacy Program Based on Specialty

The education program for the pharmacist will consist of four years after the student has completed a two year undergraduate studies program. After graduating from the program, the student will be required to take the pharmacist certification exam in order for the pharmacist to legally find employment in this field.



In pharmacology school many students will choose to have a specialty in a subdivision of pharmacology, such as healthcare administration, pharmaceutical administration, pharmaceuticals or medicinal chemistry. Not every school will include all specializations so the student will need to ensure the school of their choice will include programs in their career path of interest.

An in-depth look at Pharmacology Programs: Courses and Internships

During the four year pharmacology program the student will be participating in several residencies during their final year of education. This can require the student to travel in order to find a suitable place to work their residency. A student who does not wish to commute will need to find a school that has affiliations with local private or public hospitals, medical centers or retail pharmacies. The type of residency the student will participate in will also depend on their area of specialty and can include working in cardiology departments and infectious disease and critical care units.

The pharmacology courses will examine the effects prescribed medications will have on different systems in the body. A student will learn about the effects on the endocrine, central nervous and cardiovascular systems in addition to how medications are used to treat diseases such as cancer.

The pharmacist ethics course will teach students about ethics and laws that govern the profession. Students can expect to learn about the different drug agencies such as the drug enforcement administration, the federal drug administration and state pharmacy boards. Students will also learn how they can comply with the standards that are set forth by these different agencies.

The pharmacist and healthcare course will allow students to explore the roles of pharmacists in the health care industry. The class will also cover the relationships between patients and the pharmacist as they relate to insurance.

During the pharmacist internship course students will be allowed

to gain hands on experience through summer internships, or full year internships, depending on each individual school.

The biological statistics course teaches students the difference between dangerous and effective doses of medication and how to understand statistics and their relation to medications. The course will also cover mathematical computations that are needed in order to serve patients appropriately and advanced techniques used such as hypothesis testing, regression testing and variance analysis.

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Pharmacy Technician Test and Continuing Education

BY [PHARMACY CAREERS U.COM STAFF](#) [PHARMACY CAREERS, PHARMACY TECHNICIAN TEST](#) NOVEMBER 30, 2012 10:57 PM [EDIT](#)

Not every state will require the pharmacy technician to have certification for this field; however, a pharmacy technician can choose to voluntarily earn their certification in order to increase their chances of finding employment. Currently you can take the *pharmacy technician test* through two different organizations: the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board or the National Health Career Association. Here we will find out what the exam requirements are and also learn how you can maintain your certification as a pharmacy technician once you have completed the exam.

Earning your Certification through the PTCB and NHCA

The certification exam through the [PTCB](#) and NHCA will allow the pharmacy tech to perform their duties in a more effective manner with professional pharmacists, by providing effective and safe patient service and care. Pharmacy technician certification can be achieved through specific requirements such as being 18 years of age, having a high school diploma or equivalent, having no past felonies, no misdemeanors in the past five years and obtaining a passing grade on the technician exam. Both the NHCA and the PTCB exams are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, also referred to as NCCA.



These exams will assess the student's ability to perform duties in a pharmacy setting and requires the student to apply on either organizations website, in order for the organizations to determine if the applicant meets testing requirements. Should the student meet the requirements they will receive a list of testing sites in their area. The cost for the exam is 130\$ and will focus on such areas of the profession as reading and transcribing physician orders, how to prepare insurance claim forms, how to manage a pharmacy' inventory, establishing and maintaining a patient's profile, and how to measure, count, weigh and pour medications. The tests will consist of both multiple choice and essay questions, with a total of three hours available to complete the exam.

How to Maintain Certification with Continuing Education

In order to maintain your certification as a pharmacy technician you will need to complete 20 hours of continuing education every two years, which can include re-taking the certification exam. Some hours of continuing education will need to be devoted to pharmacy law or by completing in-service projects. These projects are work assignments that do not involve the technician's routine duties in the pharmacy. The tech will need to make arrangements with their pharmacist for this type of CE credit. You can also find free continuing education options online through such organizations as the Council for Pharmacy Education, also referred to as the ACPE. Home study or online study courses in medication distribution, math, pharmaceutical science, inventory control, pharmacology therapy and biology can be counted as two hours towards your continuing education with each course.

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Pharmacy Technician Certification through Formal Training

BY [PHARMACY CAREERS U.COM STAFF](#) IN [PHARMACY CAREERS, PHARMACY TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION](#) ON NOVEMBER 30, 2012 10:53 PM [EDIT](#)

As a pharmacy technician you will work under the supervision of a lead pharmacist and will be responsible for preparing and administering medication. Not all states require **pharmacy technician certification**; however obtaining the pharmacy technician certification will significantly increase your chances when it comes to finding employment after completing a formal training program.

Certificate and Degree Programs for the Pharmacy Technician

The certificate program for the pharmacy tech can be completed in one to two years and will teach students how to fill prescriptions, interact with patients and mix, weigh and measure medications. Student will also learn how to work closely with pharmacists and how to refer patients to pharmacist consultations, should they have questions regarding their prescription. Common education requirements prior to enrolling in a certificate program will include being the minimum age of 18 and having a high school diploma or state equivalent.



Courses for this program will include anatomy, physiology, drug absorption, pharmacology ethics and laws, pharmacy procedures, drug interactions, medical terminology and medical transcription. During your enrollment in this program you can participate in an internship program, working and learning under the supervision of a professional pharmacist, gaining valuable field experience. As an intern you will observe the pharmacist at work, assist in counting medications and take inventory of drugs stored in the pharmacy.

Some colleges and universities will also offer an associate's degree program for the pharmacy technician which will include a one year internship in a pharmacy setting during the final year of the program. Associate's degree programs can be more commonly found at online universities for this specific career field. Courses for this program will include drug interactions, adverse effects, medication dispensation, pharmacology basics, anatomy, medication absorption rates, medical terminology, chemistry, biology and medical law and ethics.

Since a pharmacy technician will need to interact with patients and other medical health professionals they will need to have good customer service and communication skills. They will also need to have good spelling, have basic computer skills and be detail oriented.

Earning your Certification in this Field

Pharmacy technician requirements will vary by state so it's important for the student to know whether they are required to have certification before pursuing employment. Voluntary certification is also available for this field and can be helpful when trying to find employment. The two organizations that offer the pharmacy technician certification are the PTCB, also known as the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board and the NHA, or National Health Career Association. In order to be eligible for the certification exam the applicant will need to have their high school diploma and proof of completion from an accredited pharmacy technician certificate program, or two years of work experience in the pharmacology industry.

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