

Psychologist

Assess, diagnose and treat mental health problems. A long road to a doctorate, then good pay and real independence.

TYPICAL PAY

\$100,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$80k to \$150k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

6 to 11 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospitals, private practice, schools, universities

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
English, biology and math. Psychology is a science degree at most universities, so keep the sciences.
- 2 Honours psychology degree** 4 years
Four years. Get research experience in a professor's lab by third year and keep your GPA above 3.7. Grad school admission depends on it.
- 3 Doctorate (PhD or PsyD) in clinical or counselling psychology** 5 to 7 years
Typically 5 to 7 years, with a master's earned along the way. Coursework, research, a thesis and supervised practicum hours. Admission rates are often under 10%.
- 4 Internship** 1 year
A full-time, paid year in a hospital or clinic, usually the final year of the doctorate, matched through a national system.
- 5 EPPP (the national psychology licensing exam) and registration** 1 to 2 years
Write the EPPP, complete a period of supervised practice in most provinces, pass a provincial ethics exam, then register with your provincial college.

Pros and cons

- + High demand; waitlists are months long everywhere
- + Real autonomy, especially in private practice
- + Work that visibly changes people's lives
- 10 or more years of school, most of it low paid
- Grad school admission is brutal and depends on research experience
- Emotionally heavy: trauma, suicide risk, slow progress

Good to know

Psychologist versus psychiatrist

A psychiatrist is a medical doctor who can prescribe medication. A psychologist has a PhD or PsyD, does therapy and assessments, and cannot prescribe anywhere in Canada.

The exam is North American

The EPPP (the national psychology licensing exam) is the same test used in every US state and every Canadian province. It has about 225 multiple-choice questions.

Optional boosts

Neuropsychology. Forensic psychology. Child and adolescent. Assessments for insurers and lawyers.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Psychologists, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Canadian Psychological Association

ASPPB (Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards): EPPP registration fees

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/psychologist>



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