

Registered Nurse

Care for patients in hospitals, clinics and homes. In demand everywhere in Canada.

TYPICAL PAY**\$90,000**

a year, full time

PAY RANGE**\$62k to \$113k**

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY**4 years**

after high school

DEMAND**Very high**

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED**Yes**

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK**Hospitals, clinics, long-term care,
home care**

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Grade 12 English, biology, chemistry and a math. Strong marks matter, admission is competitive.
- 2 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN)** 4 years
Four-year university degree with clinical placements from year two. Some colleges offer it in partnership with a university.
- 3 Write the NCLEX-RN (the national nursing exam)** After graduation
The national licensing exam. Computer-adaptive, up to 5 hours. Most Canadian grads pass on the first try.
- 4 Register with your provincial college** A few weeks
Each province has its own nursing regulator. Registration lets you legally use the title RN.

Pros and cons

- + You will always find a job, anywhere in Canada
- + Strong union, pension and benefits
- + Real variety: emergency room (ER), pediatrics, surgery, community, research
- Physically and emotionally exhausting
- Nights, weekends and holidays are part of the deal
- Understaffing is common and burnout is real

Optional boosts

Critical care or ICU (intensive care unit) certification. Emergency nursing certification (ENC(C)). Operating room nursing. Nurse Practitioner.

Good to know

The biggest profession in health care

There were more than 350,000 registered nurses in Canada in 2025, by far the largest regulated health profession in the country.

Male nurses are rare but rising

Only about 1 in 10 Canadian registered nurses are men, though the share has been rising for two decades.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Registered nurses, wages (updated Nov 2025)

College of Nurses of Ontario: Becoming a nurse

College of Nurses of Ontario: Application and membership fees

NCLEX: Fees and payment

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/registered-nurse>



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