

Behavior Analyst

Work out why a behavior happens, then change the conditions around it. Six to eight years of school, mostly working with children.

TYPICAL PAY

\$117,750

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$47k to \$157k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

6 to 8 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Autism clinics, schools, family homes, hospitals, private practice

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Psychology if your school offers it, plus biology, statistics and English. Volunteer with children or adults with disabilities; it matters more than you think.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
 Psychology, education or human development are the usual majors, but any degree works if you take the required behavior analysis courses later.
- 3 Registered Behavior Technician job** Weeks to start
 A 40 hour training, a competency assessment and an exam let you work directly with clients under supervision, usually while you study.
- 4 Master's degree with the right coursework** 2 years
 The Behavior Analyst Certification Board requires a graduate degree plus a specific sequence of behavior analysis courses. Programs accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International are the safe choice.
- 5 Fieldwork, exam, license** 1 to 2 years
 1,500 supervised hours on the concentrated track or 2,000 on the standard track, then the Board Certified Behavior Analyst exam, then your state license.

Pros and cons

- + You can see the change you make, week by week, in your own data
- + Strong demand and jobs in almost every city
- + You earn in the field from your first year of training
- The paperwork and insurance authorizations are relentless
- Emotionally heavy work, including aggression and self injury
- Six to eight years and real tuition before you are certified

Optional boosts

Early intensive intervention. Severe behavior and crisis work. School consultation. Organizational behavior management.

Where these numbers come from

O*NET OnLine: Psychologists, All Other, the group behavior analysts are counted in Behavior Analyst Certification Board: becoming a Board Certified Behavior Analyst
 Behavior Analyst Certification Board: certification handbook
 Association for Behavior Analysis International: accredited programs

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/behavior-analyst>

Good to know

The field is young

Applied behavior analysis grew out of the work of the psychologist B. F. Skinner and became a named field in the late 1960s. The board that certifies practitioners was only founded in 1998, which is why the job...

Insurance law built the job market

Demand for behavior analysts grew fastest after states began requiring health plans to cover autism treatment. The credential existed for years before there were many jobs attached to it.



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