

Engineering Technologist

Engineering work without the engineering degree. Two to four years of college, then drawings, testing and site work.

TYPICAL PAY

\$64,950

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$44k to \$99k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Engineering and construction offices, job sites, testing labs, utili...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Math through at least algebra and trigonometry, plus any drafting, shop or computer-aided design class the school offers.
- 2 Associate degree in engineering technology** 2 years
Two years at a community or technical college. Civil, electrical, mechanical and environmental are the common branches.
- 3 First job** Straight after graduation
Drafting, surveying support, materials testing, inspection or estimating, usually under a licensed engineer.
- 4 Certification** Ongoing
Work-based certification levels from the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies. Each level needs experience plus an exam.
- 5 Optional bachelor's degree** 2 more years
A four-year engineering technology degree, often finished part-time while working, opens supervisory and design roles.

Pros and cons

- + Working and earning two years after high school
- + Very low debt compared with a four-year engineering degree
- + Real skills that transfer between employers and states
- A pay ceiling that a licensed engineer does not have
- Growth in the field is slow, so openings are limited
- Field work is outdoors in heat, cold and mud

Good to know

Accreditation has a separate door for technology

ABET (the accreditor for engineering and technology degree programs) runs four commissions, and engineering technology has its own. It covers associate and bachelor's degrees, while the engineerin...

Certification is stacked in levels

The National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies certifies in areas like fire alarm systems, concrete and asphalt testing and highway inspection, and most programs run through several level...

Optional boosts

Construction materials testing. Highway construction inspection. Fire alarm systems and water-based systems layout. Electrical power testing.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Civil Engineering Technologists and Technicians (17-3022.00)
National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying: engineering exams
National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies
ABET, the accreditor for engineering and technology degree 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/engineering-technologist>



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