

Mechanical Engineering Technologist

Build, test and fix the designs engineers draw. Two to four years of school, hands on the hardware.

TYPICAL PAY

\$74,510

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$48k to \$106k

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

Factories, test labs, prototype shops, engineering offices

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Algebra, trigonometry and physics. Shop, robotics or auto class matters more here than it does for engineers.
- 2 Associate degree in engineering technology** 2 years
Two years at a community college or technical college. Enough to start work as a technician.
- 3 First job or an apprenticeship** Year 1
Test technician, manufacturing technician or quality technician. A registered apprenticeship pays you the whole way instead.
- 4 Optional four year technology degree** 2 more years
Purdue's Mechanical Engineering Technology degree covers statics, dynamics, strength of materials, thermodynamics, fluid power, industrial controls and machine elements, and can be finished in three years.
- 5 Senior technologist** 5 or more years in
You own a process, a test cell or a product line and sign off on other people's work.

Pros and cons

- + Two years to a real engineering job
- + Among the cheapest routes into the field
- + Hands on hardware instead of only documents
- Employment is projected to stay flat, not grow
- A ceiling that engineers do not have, without more school
- Plants close and the work moves with them

Good to know

Technology degrees have their own accreditor

ABET (the accrediting body for engineering degrees in the United States) runs four separate commissions. Engineering technology programs at associate and bachelor's level are accredited by a differ...

One survey title, two different jobs

The federal wage survey reports mechanical engineering technologists and technicians as a single occupation. That is why one published median covers both a two year technician role and a four year techn...

Optional boosts

Metrology and inspection. Industrial controls and automation. Welding or machining certification. Finite element analysis basics.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Mechanical Engineering Technologists and Technicians (17-3027.00)

ABET: accreditation, including the Engineering Technology Commission

Purdue Polytechnic: Mechanical Engineering Technology degree

American Society of Mechanical Engineers

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/mechanical-engineering-technologist>



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