

Orthotist and Prosthetist

Design, build and fit artificial limbs and braces. Part clinician, part craftsperson.

TYPICAL PAY

\$81,110

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$46k to \$120k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

6 to 7 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Patient care facilities, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, fabrication...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Biology, physics, math and any shop or design class. This job is anatomy and engineering in equal parts.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
Any major, as long as you finish the science prerequisites: anatomy, physiology, physics, chemistry, statistics and usually psychology.
- 3 Master's degree** About 2 years
A program accredited by the National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education, which is the recognized accreditor under the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs. Usually around two years.
- 4 Residency** 1 to 2 years
A paid clinical residency of roughly a year per discipline. Doing both orthotics and prosthetics means two.
- 5 Certification exams** After residency
The American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics runs a written exam, a written simulation and a clinical patient management exam for each discipline.

Pros and cons

- + You make a physical object that changes someone's day
- + Rapid growth, so jobs are easy to find
- + Half clinical and half hands-on building, rarely boring
- Few accredited programs, so you will probably move to study
- Insurance paperwork eats a real share of the week
- Lab work means dust, resin fumes, heat and standing

Optional boosts

Both disciplines, not one. Pedorthics. Pediatrics and scoliosis bracing. Advanced prosthetics.

Good to know

The certifying board is older than most of the field

The American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics has been the national certifying and accrediting body since 1948, set up as artificial limb work moved from workshops into...

It is one of the fastest growing health jobs

The federal outlook flags this occupation as a bright one, meaning new openings are very likely and growth is rapid. Diabetes-related amputations and an aging population are the main reasons.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Orthotists and Prosthetists (29-2091.00)
American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics
National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education
Northwestern University Prosthetics-Orthotics Center

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/orthotist-prosthetist>



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