

Pharmacy Technician

Fill prescriptions, run the counter and keep the pharmacy moving. Under a year of training for a regulated health job.

TYPICAL PAY

\$45,750

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$36k to \$61k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Chain and grocery pharmacies, hospitals, mail order centers, com...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
 A diploma or equivalency is the baseline for registration in most states.
- 2 Register with your state board** Weeks
 Many states, Texas among them, have a technician trainee registration you hold while you learn, including fingerprinting and a criminal history check.
- 3 Training** 6 to 12 months
 Either a recognized education program of a few months to a year, or at least 500 hours of supervised work experience on the job.
- 4 Pass the certification exam** One sitting
 90 multiple choice questions in about two hours, covering medications, law, sterile and nonsterile compounding, and dispensing.
- 5 Full registration and work** Year 1 to 2
 Convert to a full technician registration with your state board and renew it on schedule.

Pros and cons

- + Working in health care within a year, with almost no debt
- + Regulated and portable, with demand in every town
- + A real look inside pharmacy before you commit to the degree
- Retail pay starts low for the responsibility involved
- Standing all shift with a queue that never quite ends
- You absorb the anger about prices and insurance

Good to know

You can qualify without a course

The Pharmacy Technician Certification Board accepts two routes to the exam: finishing a recognized training program, or at least 500 hours of supervised work experience. That second route means an e...

The exam is short and cheap

The Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam is 90 multiple choice questions, 80 of which are scored, and takes about two hours. The fee is \$129, which covers both the application and the sitting. Compare t...

Optional boosts

Sterile compounding. Hazardous drug handling. Medication history technician. Billing and prior authorization.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Pharmacy Technicians (29-2052.00)
 Pharmacy Technician Certification Board: Certified Pharmacy Technician requirements and fees
 Texas State Board of Pharmacy: applicant information
 Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education: program accreditation

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/pharmacy-technician>



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