

# Radiologist

You read the scans other doctors order, and your report is what decides the next move.

## TYPICAL PAY

**\$420,860**

a year, full time

## PAY RANGE

**\$89k to \$594k**

starting to experienced

## TIME TO QUALIFY

**13 to 14 years**

after high school

## DEMAND

**Moderate**

job outlook

## LICENCE NEEDED

**Yes**

regulated job

## WHERE YOU WORK

**Hospital reading rooms, imaging centers, private radiology groups,...**

## How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12  
Biology, chemistry, physics and math, with grades strong enough for a competitive college.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years  
Any major, as long as you finish the pre-medical science courses and sit the MCAT (Medical College Admission Test).
- 3 Medical school** 4 years  
Two years of science, then hospital rotations. You graduate as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO).
- 4 Intern year** 1 year  
One general clinical year, usually internal medicine or surgery, before imaging training starts.
- 5 Diagnostic radiology residency** 4 years  
Four accredited years covering every body part and every imaging method, with rising independence and a lot of overnight call.
- 6 Board certification** During and after residency  
The American Board of Radiology runs a Core exam after 36 months of residency, then a Certifying exam you can take 12 months after resi...

## Pros and cons

- + Among the highest-paid work in medicine
- + Real remote and work-from-home options, which almost no other doctor has
- + You touch every specialty in the hospital without owning any patient's whole problem
- Thirteen years and around \$200,000 of debt before you start
- Scan volumes keep rising and the pressure to read faster is real
- You work in the dark, alone, for most of your shift

## Optional boosts

Interventional radiology. Neuroradiology. Breast imaging. Pediatric radiology.

## Good to know

### The first x-ray was of a hand with a ring on it

Wilhelm Rontgen made the image in 1895, of his wife's hand. She is said to have reacted by saying she had seen her own death. The whole specialty grew out of that one photograph.

### The final exam is going back to spoken answers

The American Board of Radiology is moving the last certifying step to oral exams after 2027: seven sessions of about 25 minutes each, covering areas like breast, chest, abdomen, bones, nuclear medicine,...

### Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Radiologists (29-1224.00)

The American Board of Radiology: initial certification in diagnostic radiology

American College of Radiology

Association of American Medical Colleges

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/radiologist>



Scan for the full clicker