

Oh, The Places You'll Go!

Racial/ethnic minorities earned
1/3
of doctorates in psychology in 2016.

Nearly
23.9
percent of psychologists were self-employed in 2016.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS

HERE'S THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO PREPARING FOR A REWARDING CAREER IN PSYCHOLOGY.

DEGREE TYPE	MEDICAL (M.D.)	DOCTORATE (PSY.D., PH.D., ED.D.)
HOW LONG IT TAKES	7–9 years	3–7 years
CAREER OPTIONS	Psychiatrist (Researcher or Clinician), Professor	Psychologist (Researcher or Clinician), Professor, Educational Administrator
SPECIALTY FIELDS	 Addiction, Adult, Child/Pediatric, Geriatric, Forensic, Neuropsychiatry, Psychopharmacology	 Child, Clinical, Cognitive, Community, Consumer, Counseling, Developmental, Educational, Engineering, Environmental, Evolutionary, Family, Forensic, Gerontology, Health, Industrial/Organizational, Media, Military, Neuropsychology, Psychometry, Rehabilitation, Sports
TYPICAL PREREQUISITES	Premed background in biology, physics, chemistry, and calculus; MCAT; volunteer or research work	GRE; GRE Subject Test in Psychology; exposure to research; a statistics course is recommended for Ph.D. applicants
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	Internship, residency, additional training in specialties (for example, forensic, child/adolescent, psychoanalysis), state licensure	Research, dissertation, internship, and practicum; licensure is required for those interested in private practice
WHAT IT COSTS (ANNUALLY)	\$36,755–\$60,802	Public in state: \$11,000; Public out of state: \$24,000 Private: \$34,000
CAN I GET MY DEGREE ONLINE?	Only some required courses can be completed online	Yes
CAN I KEEP MY DAY JOB WHILE I PURSUE MY DEGREE?	No. (Sorry.)	Yes. It'll take a lot longer, but some universities offer a part-time track for students who wish to work part- or full-time.
CLASSES YOU'LL TAKE	Clinical Curriculum, Psychopharmacology, Psychiatric Disorders, Physician-Patient Communication	Clinical Practicum, Neuropsychology, Developmental Psychology
HIGHEST PAYING POSITION	Psychiatrist	Industrial/Organizational Psychologist
TOP-PAYING STATE FOR HIGHEST PAYING POSITION	California	Virginia
WHAT THEY DO	Assess, diagnose, and treat brain and behavioral disturbances; prescribe medication; conduct research	Conduct research, administer psychometric testing, teach, counsel, consult and/or treat clients individually or in groups.
WHAT IT TAKES	Ability to stay composed under stress, interest in the human mind and behavior, listening skills, interpersonal skills, conscientiousness, punctuality, trustworthiness, attention to detail, problem-solving skills	Analytical skills, interpersonal skills, a knack for problem solving, patience, a strong eye for observation, trustworthiness, resourcefulness
WHERE YOU'LL FIND THEM	Private practice, clinics, mental health facilities, outpatient care centers, hospitals, colleges and universities	Academic settings, private practice, private consulting services, government agencies, clinics, hospitals, community mental health centers, rehabilitation facilities
WHAT THEY EARN (ANNUALLY)	\$71,560–\$285,000+	\$38,090–\$184,520
HOW TO GET STARTED	Most psychiatrists pursue a premed track during their undergrad years. For those who switch career paths after college, postbaccalaureate programs that train grad students in the hard sciences can be a viable alternative. These range from around \$25,000 to over \$50,000. Volunteering in the health profession during undergrad and interim years is highly recommended. Most important, however, is the MCAT, which students should begin prepping for in college.	The majority of Ph.D. and Psy.D. programs require a background in psychology as well as the GRE and GRE Subject Test in Psychology. Internships and research in the field are major pluses. If you don't already have an undergrad degree in psych, take continuing education courses in theory and statistics and secure a volunteer or internship position at a mental health care facility or research center. Attending open houses and contacting admissions offices are good bets for learning what is required to proceed. Applying to a school to work with a certain researcher is another route.
PROJECTED JOB GROWTH OVER THE NEXT DECADE	13%	14%
UNUSUAL CAREER PATHS	Disaster Psychiatrist	Animal Behaviorist, Sports Psychologist, Military Psychologist
FAMOUS PEOPLE WITH THIS DEGREE	Daniel Amen (celebrity doctor and author)	Ted Strickland (former governor)



Psychology is the fourth most declared major with approximately

117,000 students.

83%

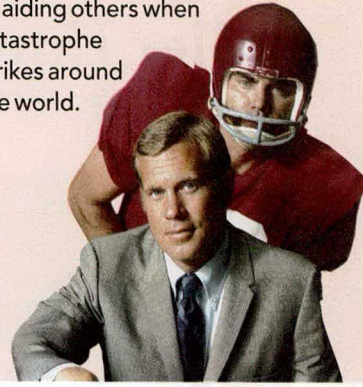
of psychiatrists would choose their career again if they could get a do-over.

The average salary of psychologists employed by local governments is

\$123,570

Psychology is Never Boring

Imagine yourself caring for top athletes of your favorite team, or aiding others when catastrophe strikes around the world.



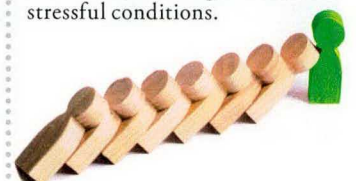
Sports Psychologist

Some athletes struggle with psychological issues that hurt their performance on and off the field. Sports psychologists help athletes optimize their performance through work on self-confidence, self-esteem, weight management, anger management, sportsmanship, and leadership skills. They can be especially helpful in times of transition, such as when an athlete is traded to a new team. They also help athletes through mental illness like depression and anxiety. Coaches can also work with sports psychologists to enhance their team's motivation and cohesiveness. Professionals in this role need a doctorate in psychology and a license to practice.

Disaster Psychiatrist



When catastrophe strikes, these health professionals are often among the first responders. The disasters they respond to are varied—from tsunamis to terrorist attacks to plane crashes. Immediately after a disaster, psychiatrists help prevent panic. They also identify which survivors are most distressed, providing them with relief. During the aftermath of trauma, these specialists may take on the task of notifying family members of a loved one's death and helping them manage their grief. In disaster zones, these psychiatrists often work with communities to build positive coping mechanisms and resilience. This may also include counseling relief workers, who often witness tragedies and labor long hours under stressful conditions.



MASTER'S (M.S.W., M.F.T., M.H.C., M.ED.)	BACHELOR'S (B.A., B.S., B.S.W.)
1–3 years	3–4 years
Social Worker, Counselor, Marriage and Family Therapist, Human Resources Manager	Child Life Specialist, Counselor, Recruiter, Research Assistant, Human Resources Manager, Sales Representative, Substance Abuse Counselor
Art, Crisis Management, Disability, Exercise, Family, Genetic Counseling, Geriatric, Grief, Life Coaching, Marriage and Family, Occupational Therapist, Public Health, Rehabilitation, School, Substance Abuse, Suicide Intervention, Veterans, Victim Advocate	Human Resources, Market Research, Sales, School, Special Education, Substance Abuse Services
Some, but not all, master's programs require a GRE	SAT or ACT
Internship, licensure (to receive health care reimbursement) + 2,000–3,000 hours of supervised clinical experience, research	Some training and certifications may be required for specific jobs (such as health educators and teachers).
Public in state: \$8,640; Public out of state: \$20,000; Private: \$30,000	\$9,716–\$71,710
Yes	Yes
Yes. Many graduate students maintain full- or part-time positions while working toward a master's degree in social work, counseling, or marriage and family therapy.	If you're pursuing a part-time or online path, yes.
Personality Psychology, Self and Identity, Trends in Psychology	Abnormal Psychology, Social Psychology, Statistics, Cognitive Psychology
Human Resources Manager	Human Resources Manager
New Jersey	New Jersey
Diagnose and treat psychological disturbances; provide group, family, couples, and individual therapy or counseling; assist clients with obtaining federal or state benefits; identify and intervene in child abuse; procure foster family and adoption services	Counsel job-seekers about career paths, work in school administrations, recruit clients for businesses, assist in academic or market research, work in sales or administration
Empathy, listening skills, interpersonal skills, organization and time-management skills, a knack for problem-solving, patience, speaking skills	Interpersonal skills, conscientiousness, punctuality, empathy, speaking skills
Hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, schools, colleges and universities, home health care services, government agencies, employee assistance programs, nursing and residential care facilities, legal and correctional systems	Administrative offices, schools and academic settings, some legal settings, some government agencies, advertising agencies, market research firms, nonprofit organizations, private companies
\$22,040–\$197,720	\$22,040–\$197,720
Many master's programs in counseling and social work don't require a background in psychology, though exposure to the field is obviously a plus. Volunteer work in the mental health profession is highly recommended. If need be, you can take continuing education courses to meet the prerequisites required by most grad programs in psych. (Think: Statistics, Child Development, Abnormal Psychology, and Developmental Psychology.) But typically, the main hurdle is deciding which type of degree and career path (say, counselor versus social worker) best suits you.	For undergrads or high schoolers interested in studying psych from a more data-driven and research angle, try looking for schools that offer Bachelor of Science degrees. Those interested in psychology and its application to other fields (such as law, politics, business, or the creative arts) may be better suited for a Bachelor of Arts.
13%–23%	5%–23%
Product Design/Engineering Psychologist	FBI Behavioral Analyst
Barbara Bach (actress and model)	Natalie Portman (actress), Lil Wayne (rapper)

education

CAREERS IN PSYCHOLOGY | 2019

OPPORTUNITIES ARE BLOSSOMING EVERY YEAR.

In a time when the growth of countless occupations has been in question, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected a 14 percent expansion in careers for psychologists between 2016 and 2026, double the average growth rate of all careers.

For those with a bachelor's degree, new avenues of understanding human behavior, through social media, marketing, and sales, are evolving. Bachelor's degree holders can find opportunities in public relations, business administration, market research, residential counseling, admissions counseling, rehabilitation assistance, and youth advocacy.

Graduate degrees are necessary to practice as a clinical psychologist. Doctoral training is the standard in most states, but school psychology or behavioral analysis can be practiced at the master's level. The master's degree in psychology can lead to work as a school counselor, career counselor at a university, sports counselor, substance abuse counselor, or social worker, including case management. Careers for mental health professionals in schools are projected to grow by upward of 20 percent, according to the American Psychological Association. The destigmatization of mental health concerns creates jobs for those willing to take a clinical, social, and personal approach to the study of the mind.

For those with a Ph.D. in psychology, medical advancements coupled with technological changes in society are opening new frontiers—deciphering the effects of cell phones, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence on the human mind. Psychometricians are needed to assess individual abilities in SAT testing, workplace interaction, and other dimensions of social and personal achievement.

The median pay for a psychologist in 2017 was \$77,030 per year. Job opportunities are greatest for those with a doctoral specialty.

The need for addiction treatment continues to grow. Cognitive-behavioral techniques are being used to help patients with chronic pain. The burgeoning field of pain psychology needs fresh minds to increase both viability and effectiveness. Nutritional psychology often overlaps with life coaching. Sports psychology is an increasingly valuable resource for players dealing with brain injury, stress, sexual assault, and problems relating to culture on and off the field.

In the areas of artificial intelligence and the application of personal tech such as smartphones, psychologists can provide unique insight into the effects on us and what problems they can cause. Designing new technology

to be in tune with recent psychological evidence can foster mental well-being and aid in the assessment of disorders resulting from potential misuse.

Applications for statistical methods in psychology have been greatly expanded by digital tech. A brief survey delivered via smartphone can provide data on millions of people, leading to enormous sample sizes in new studies.

The research of the mind is just getting started. At all levels of education, the science of consciousness, behavior, mental faculties, and decision making is among the most complex in the universe. It is unlikely that psychology will ever run out of new frontiers to examine, and anyone can become a part of that investigation.

What To Expect

We asked Katharine S. Brooks, Ed.D., Executive Director at the Vanderbilt University Career Center, questions on career options.

What are some good career options for the increasingly popular bachelor's degree in psychology? Many undergraduate psychology majors who enjoyed their education but choose not to continue on to graduate school apply their learning in careers outside of psychology—in business, law, public relations, marketing and market research, sales, education, or social media specialties. Those who have taken statistics or data-related courses may find new opportunities in data analytics.

Focus on the type of work you want to do, rather than the specific title. Ask yourself whom you want to work with (as client, colleague, or customer); what work do you want to do (counsel, write reports, analyze data, conduct research.); and where you want to do this (hospital, private agency, community program.). Most important, why are you doing this? What is your purpose in pursuing this career?

What types of jobs can one find in psychological research, on the more neurological and psychometric end of the job spectrum? The field of data analytics as enhanced by new technology has opened up many opportunities for psychology majors who specialize in statistics. Every company from Google to your local department store relies on data to understand their customers and market their products. Medical advances, particularly related to genetics, neurology, and neuroimaging, have opened new avenues for research and clinical therapies, including pharmaceutical treatments. Industrial psychology also continues to grow as a specialty as more corporations see the value of psychologists, whether in the data analytics area or in marketing research.

Psychologists can enhance almost any field of study whether it's rising levels of obesity, crime and rehabilitation, the social effect of technology, online learning, or sports-related brain injuries. The positive psychology movement has also opened up new wellness programs at virtually every workplace and will likely continue to grow.

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