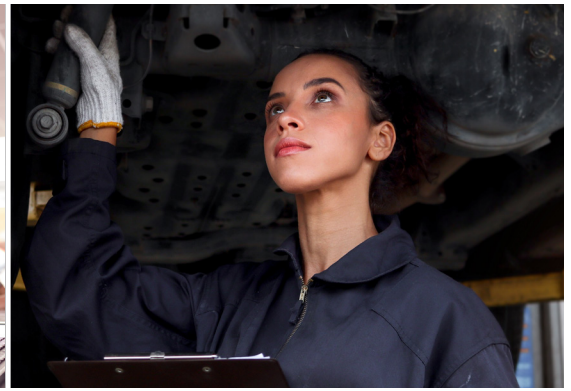




Top 20 in-demand jobs in Washington State

And the career training or college education
required to obtain them.



70% of Washington jobs require education beyond high school—and that number is on the rise. But which job is right for you or your student? Which job is likely to have the most job openings, and what do employers want to see?

This guide will help students, parents, and adults looking for a new career path make informed choices about the future. It details which Washington jobs are projected to have the most openings over the next several years—according to the [latest Washington State Higher Education & Labor Market Report \(HELM\)](#)—and what type of college or career training is required to obtain these in-demand jobs.

You'll learn:

- The top 10 in-demand jobs at the midlevel—requiring some education or training
- The top 10 in-demand jobs at the bachelor's level—requiring a four-year degree
- The median hourly wage for each job
- What type of qualifications are needed for each job
- The benefits of obtaining additional qualifications

Remember: Free or low-cost college or career training is possible with WA Grant.
Learn more at [WAgrant.org](https://wagrant.org)

The top 10 in-demand jobs at the midlevel

This midlevel category includes jobs requiring education or training beyond high school but less than a bachelor's degree. Credentials include short-term or long-term certificates, apprenticeships, and associate degrees.

Note: Facts below are statewide and may vary by city or county.

Top 10 in-demand jobs	Median hourly wage	Education requirements	Certification	Number of job openings predicted by 2033	Projected job outlook
1. Heavy Tractor-Trailer Truck Driver*	\$28.21	Postsecondary certificate	Commercial driver's license (CDL)	50,102	5% growth
2. Bookkeeping & Accounting Clerk	\$23.59	Postsecondary certificate	QuickBooks Certified User (QBCU), payroll certification, Uniform Bookkeeper Certification, accounting software certification	42,479	5% decline—but still one of the jobs with the highest number of projected job openings
3. Teaching Assistant (K-12)	\$20.68	Some college/certificate	Teaching assistant certificate	41,398	Expected to stay the same
4. Nursing Assistant	\$19.58	Postsecondary certificate	Nursing Assistant Certification (NAC)	30,995	4% growth
5. Computer User Support Specialist	\$31.91	Associate degree	None required but helpful ones are CompTIA A+, CompTIA Network+, Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA), CompTIA Security+, Google IT Support Professional Certificate, Microsoft certifications	24,497	6% growth
6. Medical Assistant	\$23.44	Postsecondary certificate	Certified Medical Assistant (CMA), Registered Medical Assistant (RMA)	22,267	15% growth
7. Automotive Technician or Mechanic	\$23.85	Postsecondary certificate	Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certificate	15,407	3% growth
8. Preschool Teacher	\$18.06	Some college/certificate	Washington State Teaching Certificate with endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education	14,720	4% growth
9. Dental Assistant	\$23.70	Associate degree	Certified Dental Assistant (CDA)	12,870	8% growth
10. HVAC Mechanic and Installer	\$29.29	Postsecondary certificate	EPA 608 Certification, North American Technician Excellence (NATE) certification, state license	10,489	9% growth

*Training is not covered by WA Grant

The top 10 in-demand jobs at the bachelor's degree level

This category includes jobs requiring a bachelor's degree, many of which also have professional certifications.

Top 10 in-demand jobs	Median hourly wage	Certification	Number of job openings predicted by 2033	Projected job outlook
1. Software Developer	\$72.95	Common certifications include: • AWS Certified Developer • Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP) • Microsoft Certified: Azure Developer Associate • Certified Scrum Master • Certified Software Development Professional (CSDP) • Oracle Certified Associate • Java Programmer (OCAJP) • AWS Certified Solutions Architect • CompTIA Security+	121,703	Overall employment of software developers, quality assurance analysts, and testers is projected to grow 17% from 2023 to 2033
2. Registered Nurse	\$48.61	NCLEX-RN exam	74,812	High demand due to aging population and healthcare needs
3. General & Operations Manager	\$56.71	Common certifications include: • Certified Operations Manager (COM) • Project Management Professional (PMP) • Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP)	69,960	Expected to see a growth of 4.2% over the next ten years
4. Business Operations Specialist	\$38.36	Common certifications include: • Project Management Professional (PMP) • Certified Business Operations Professional (CBOP) • Certified Six Sigma Green Belt (CSSGB) • Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP)	58,558	The projected job outlook for business operations specialists is generally positive, with a projected growth of 4.15% over the next decade
5. Accountant or Auditor	\$38.86	Common certifications include: • Certified Public Accountant (CPA) • Certified Management Accountant (CMA) • Certified Internal Auditor (CIA) • Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) • Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA)	45,521	Employment of accountants and auditors is projected to grow 6% from 2023 to 2033

The top 10 in-demand jobs at the bachelor's degree level

Top 10 in-demand jobs	Median hourly wage	Certification	Number of job openings predicted by 2033	Projected job outlook
6. Management Analyst	\$49.64	Common certifications include • Certified Management Consultant (CMC) • Project Management Professional (PMP) • Lean Six Sigma Green Belt • Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP)	37,539	11% growth from 2023 to 2033
7. Elementary School Teacher	\$39.17	Washington State Teaching License	34,911	Overall employment of elementary school teachers is projected to stay the same from 2023 to 2033
8. Market Research Analyst	\$40.44	Common certifications include • Professional Researcher Certification (PRC) • Certified Analytics Professional (CAP) • Google Analytics Certification • Market Research Society (MRS) Certification	32,064	8% growth from 2023 to 2033
9. Computer Systems Analyst	\$55.21	Common certifications include • Certified Information Systems Analyst (CISA) • Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP) • Project Management Professional (PMP) • ITIL Certification	21,819	11% growth from 2023 to 2033
10. Computer & Systems Manager	\$83.79	Common certifications include: • Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) • Project Management Professional (PMP) • Certified Information Systems Manager (CISM) • ITIL Certification • AWS Certified Solutions Architect	21,138	17% growth from 2023 to 2033

Workers in these types of jobs have a lower risk of automation but are predicted to be exposed to automation by the advance of generative artificial intelligence, according to the HELM report.



The benefits of obtaining additional qualifications

Obtaining additional qualifications is a strategic investment that enhances job prospects, leads to higher salaries, and unlocks career advancement opportunities.

By gaining these qualifications, individuals can secure better job stability and growth.

How WA Grant can help

WA Grant plays a pivotal role in making these opportunities accessible—giving eligible people more money for more types of education like certificate programs, job training, apprenticeships, or college. WA Grant is one of the most generous financial aid programs in the country. The amount you receive depends on family size, income, and the cost of your school or program.

WA Grant is not a loan—it is free money from the state to help pay for career training or college. Whether you're aiming for a career as a skilled tradesperson, software developer, or nurse, WA Grant can help you achieve your goals and secure a brighter future.

Learn more and check your eligibility
at WAGrant.org