

Top 10 Jobs in Science

Modified from an article posted by Anthony Balderrama of CareerBuilder.com. He researches and writes about job search strategy, career management, hiring trends and workplace issues. Posted: 2008-02-05.

For many of us, our childhood science classes taught us only one thing: We're not meant to be scientists. For the luckier (and smarter) students, those classes were the first step toward successful careers in a growing industry. **According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the number of science-related jobs will increase at a rate faster than the national average between now and 2016. Environmental scientists, hydrologists and geoscientists will experience the fastest growth.** Careers in science demand large amounts of education, and some require extensive research just to qualify for a position. For most jobs you need at least a bachelor's degree, and an increasing number are asking for a master's or a doctorate. Luckily, this hard work is rewarded with **attractive salaries that range on average from \$56,100 to \$95,740, with the highest earners making six figures.**

Here are the top 10 jobs in science (based on the projected job growth) as reported by the BLS:

- 1. Environmental Scientists** research issues relating to natural resources, plants, animals and humans. They use their findings to spread awareness about pollution and how it can be prevented.
Earnings: \$56,100*
Projected growth by 2016: 25 percent
New jobs by 2016: 21,000
- 2. Hydrologists and Hydrogeologists** study surface water, groundwater, and rainfall throughout the world. Their research helps other scientists, governments and businesses understand what pollutants are affecting the water supply.
Earnings: \$66,260
Projected growth by 2016: 24 percent
New jobs by 2016: 2,000
- 3. Geoscientists** (except hydrologists and geographers) study the characteristics of the Earth in an attempt to understand its origins and how it has evolved.
Earnings: \$72,660
Projected growth by 2016: 22 percent
New jobs by 2016: 6,800
- 4. Medical Scientists** (not including epidemiologists) study human health and diseases in order to develop treatments and discover preventative measures.
Earnings: \$61,680
Projected growth by 2016: 20 percent
New jobs by 2016: 18,000

5. **Biochemists and Biophysicists** study how chemistry and physics affect living organisms, respectively.
Earnings: \$76,320
Projected growth by 2016: 16 percent
New jobs by 2016: 3,200
6. **Atmospheric Scientists** monitor the behavior of the Earth's atmosphere in order to understand its role in the environment. Their work is gaining more visibility as they learn more about global warming, which has become a media and political focal point.
Earnings: \$77,150
Projected growth by 2016: 11 percent
New jobs by 2016: 900
7. **Materials Scientists** attempt to learn about the composition of natural and synthetic materials in order to enhance them or develop new ones. These materials, such as metals or plastic, can be found in everyday items or in large structures.
Earnings: \$74,610
Projected growth by 2016: 9 percent
New jobs by 2016: 800
8. **Physicists** study the properties of matter and motion. This includes researching the universe's origin or developing new scientific tools, depending on their specialization.
Earnings: \$94,240
Projected growth by 2016: 7 percent
New jobs by 2016: 1,000
9. **Astronomers** study the characteristics and behavior of the sun, stars, galaxies and planets of the universe.
Earnings: \$95,740
Projected growth by 2016: 6 percent
New jobs by 2016: 100
10. **Biological Scientists** observe and study all forms of life, from microscopic organisms to humans, in order to better understand how these organisms develop and interact with their surroundings.
Earnings: \$76,320
Projected growth by 2016: 4 percent
New jobs by 2016: 1,100

*Median annual salary information based on BLS data.