



Where the “Best” Jobs Are

What are the best college majors for students who want a lucrative career and low unemployment in their field? Recently, the Kiplinger magazine ranked the top ten (you can find the slideshow here: <http://www.kiplinger.com/slideshow/business/T012-S001-10-best-college-majors-for-a-lucrative-career/index.html>), starting with “Pharmacy and “Pharmaceutical Sciences,” where starting salaries average \$42,100 and mid-career salaries average \$120,000. Unemployment rates for these graduates are 2.5%, and job growth is projected at 36.4% a year. This degree leads to a career as a pharmacist or researcher in the pharmaceutical industry (designing and developing drugs).

Second on the list is “Computer Science,” with a starting salary averaging \$58,400, mid-career: \$100,000. Job growth is projected at 18.7% a year, and the unemployment rate for these graduates is 4.7%. Students are advised to master computer languages C++ and Java, and be prepared to work in artificial intelligence, computer system organization and digital system design.

Third? “Civil Engineering” (\$53,800; \$88,800, 19.4% job growth and 4% unemployment rate). These are the people who design and supervise large construction projects--like airports, sewer systems and tunnels.

Numbers four through ten are “Information Systems Management” (which marries computer courses with project management skills); “Nursing;” “Information Systems” (implementing technology within a company or organization, often best supplemented with a minor in business); “Finance” (requiring economics, statistics and calculus, plus accounting and financial markets courses); “Mathematics” (mastering number theory and real analysis for work with government and scientific research teams); “Information Science” (database management and programming, plus study of human-computer interaction); and “Construction: (requires a solid foundation of math and science courses, including the physics of building a structure and the accounting to build the budget for it).

The magazine also ranked the worst careers: the list included “Human Services and Community Organization” (\$32,900; \$41,100; 8.1% unemployment rate); “Fine Arts” (\$31,800; \$53,700; 7.3%); “Social Work” (\$33,100; \$45,300; 6.5% unemployment rate); “Early Childhood Education” (\$29,200; \$37,600; 5.5% unemployment rate); “Art History” (\$36,400; \$54,000; 8.3%); “Interdisciplinary Studies” (majors you design yourself; \$37,500; \$51,000; 8.5%); “Studio Arts” (\$35,700; \$53,200; 7.3%); “Mass Media” (\$34,400; \$59,800; 7.9%); “Humanities” (\$35,600; \$60,100; 9.8%); and “Family Consumer Sciences” (aka Home Economics; \$34,700; \$47,800; 5.6%).