

## Myth and Facts

**Myth: Occupational therapists help unemployed individuals find jobs.**

*FACT:* Occupational therapists help individuals increase participation in important activities. Employment opportunities are just one of many areas from treatment.

**Myth: Occupational therapy and physical therapy are the same profession.**

*FACT:* Both are rehabilitation professions, but physical therapists have expertise in movement, while occupational therapists have expertise in meaningful performance and participation in life.

**Myth: Occupational therapists only work in the hospital setting.**

*FACT:* Occupational therapists work in architectural firms, schools, vocational rehabilitation centers, mental health clinics, homes, communities, and many more settings.



# OT

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Find your

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*in the world*

## What is occupational therapy?

- Occupational therapy helps people of all ages with disabilities develop skills necessary to independently perform meaningful activities such as leisure, work, and self-care.
- Occupational therapists provide services in a variety of settings:
  - Schools
  - Work and industry
  - Hospitals
  - Mental health clinics
  - Home health
  - Community access
- A career that averages a yearly salary between \$53,000 to \$56,000+.
- The outlook for this career will provide a promising future because of the following areas of need:
  - Early intervention for children
  - Aging in place
  - Home modifications
  - Return to work
  - Driving rehabilitation
  - Cognitive rehabilitation

## Resources

### American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

[www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)

Visit this Web site for information on:

- Local occupational therapy facilities and services by state
- Educational programs in the United States
- Current events in the media about occupational therapy
- Job opportunities
- Scholarships

### Want to learn more about occupational therapy?

#### Suggestions:

- Talk to local occupational therapists
- Volunteer
- Seek internships
- Contact OT schools
- Find a mentor involved in OT
- Search the web

## Education

### Occupational Therapist

An occupational therapist can receive a professional degree of master's or doctorate degree.

- **Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MSOT):** 2-year program post-bachelor's degree.
- **Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD):** Additional one year post-MSOT in a particular area of expertise.
- **3-2 program:** Some graduate programs have an agreement with undergraduate programs that allow a student to obtain a master's degree in 5 years (undergraduate for 3 years and graduate school for 2 years).

### Occupational Therapy Assistant

The occupational therapy assistant aids the occupational therapist in the treatment process.

- **Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA):** A 2-year associate's degree from an accredited college.