



Make a difference

Young or old, we all have daily “occupations,” or activities. Learning, growing, playing, working, managing our homes, and caring for our families and ourselves are among the occupations of life.

Sometimes physical, emotional, cognitive, or other challenges prevent people from participating fully in their daily occupations. Stroke, injury, depression, and developmental disabilities, for example, can make it difficult for people to do everyday tasks or be as active and as independent as they’d like.

Occupational therapy—a vibrant, growing profession—makes it possible for people to regain independence and to enjoy living life to its fullest. By choosing a career in occupational therapy, you’ll make a difference. You’ll improve the lives of children, young people, and adults alike.

Occupational therapy makes it possible



Use your talent

You’re creative, energetic, and ambitious. You enjoy science and the arts, and you know the value of

good health. You’re a skillful communicator. You do well in school. You have a knack for problem solving. You have a lot to offer and want to make the most of what you do best. A career in occupational therapy will let you blend your many talents and interests while making a profound difference in others’ lives. **In addition to the traditional role of clinicians, opportunities exist for careers as researchers, educators, entrepreneurs, and leaders in policy development.**

As an occupational therapy practitioner, you’ll help children and adults gain skills needed to take part in meaningful occupations—from dressing and feeding themselves, to work, school, leisure, and community pursuits. You’ll confront problems and suggest innovative tools and techniques to help your clients perform daily tasks and gain more independence in their lives. You’ll be part of a team that helps make a person’s home, school, work setting, or even community safer and more productive.



Explore the possibilities

The outlook for occupational therapy practitioners is bright. Students today can look forward

to dynamic careers working in varied settings with people of all ages. **Many practitioners help children thrive in the “occupations” of childhood: playing, learning, performing activities of daily living independently, and socializing with peers.** Some work in schools with children who have learning disabilities or behavioral problems. Others work with premature newborns at pediatric hospitals or with children who have autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and other disabilities.

Practitioners also work with individuals in their homes, community centers, rehabilitation hospitals, and nursing homes. In these settings, they may support people with traumatic injuries, stroke, Alzheimer’s disease, physical disabilities, chronic disease, or mental health problems.

Those who join the field today may choose other areas of practice that are becoming increasingly important. These specialties include training workers to use proper ergonomics on the job, helping people with low vision maintain their independence, making buildings and homes more accessible, assisting older drivers to remain safe, and promoting health and wellness.



Pursue a degree

You can enter the challenging, rewarding field of occupational therapy after completing either a

professional or associate degree. The choice is yours! **Occupational therapists** earn an entry-level master’s or entry-level doctoral degree from a university/college program. Many occupational therapists work as members of rehabilitation teams, while others choose careers in private practice, consulting, management, teaching, or research.

Occupational therapy assistants earn a 2-year associate’s degree from an **occupational therapy assistant program**. Under the supervision of occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants provide hands-on services to children and adults who are learning new ways to succeed in the occupations of life.

In addition to earning a degree, occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants must complete supervised fieldwork, pass a national certification exam, and become licensed in the state where they plan to work.



*You know
who you are*

Resourceful. A creative problem-solver. Compassionate. A good listener. Interested in health, science, and the arts. Now choose a career that makes the most of what you have to give.

Occupational Therapy: Living Life to Its Fullest



Take
the next step

The occupational therapy field welcomes people with diverse backgrounds and varied life experiences.

To learn more about occupational therapy careers and training programs, visit the Education and Careers section of the American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA's) Web site at www.aota.org, or contact a school of occupational therapy.

AOTA is a nationally recognized professional organization for occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and occupational therapy students. AOTA educates the public and advances the profession by providing resources, setting standards, and serving as an advocate to improve health care. AOTA has a vibrant student leadership group, offers dynamic meetings just for students, and offers up to a 30% discount on textbooks and exam prep.

We welcome your interest in the exciting, fulfilling profession of occupational therapy.

Occupational Therapy: Living Life to Its Fullest

AOTA[®]

The American
Occupational Therapy Association
4720 Montgomery Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814-3425
301-652-AOTA (2682) • www.aota.org



Define Yourself Reach for a Career in Occupational Therapy

Living Life
to Its Fullest
With a
Career in
Occupational
Therapy

