

Jobs That Will Recover First After the Recession

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Good news: Experts believe that the recession officially ended several months ago. The bad news? The recession may be over, but it's left the job market flooded with recently graduated business majors and laid-off corporate workers all vying for the same openings. So now what?

Back to Career-Training Basics

Navigating the post-recession job market will be a whole new world, at least for a while. While the economy figures out how to do a U-turn, you might want to take the opportunity to step back and figure out your career training options. Hoping to hold on to a job through the next recession? Although no career or industry can be considered untouchable, experts consider "back to basic" fields like [health care](#) to be great choices for those who desire job stability along with a challenging career.

Registered Nurses

Our country needs [nurses](#) badly and that's not going to change anytime soon: 2.5 million strong, registered nurses make up the largest job group in health care. Registered nurses play a key role in almost every health care setting -- hospital to hospice, nursing home to ICU. Nurses make the health care world go round and registered nurses have the career training and expertise to manage patient care and provide support and advice to patients and family members.

If you're interested in becoming a registered nurse, you have three options for pursuing your education: a [bachelor's degree in nursing](#), an associate's degree in nursing, or a diploma from an approved nursing school. You'll have the best career opportunities with a bachelor's or master's degree, so online degree programs offering RN to BSN and RN to MSN options have grown significantly in recent years. Salary information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in 2008 reflected an annual mean salary of \$65,130 for registered nurses; you can make significantly more in large metro areas or high-demand specialty jobs.

Medical Assistants

If you're not quite up for the years of studying required to become a nurse, or you'd like to get into a job sooner rather than later, consider becoming a medical assistant or health assistant. You can pursue this career in many health-care settings, but most medical assistants work in a physician's office. The BLS reports that the demand for medical assistants will increase much faster than most other professions, ranking among the fastest-growing careers through 2016.

Although many medical assistants receive on-the-job training, completing a traditional or online degree will be essential for finding a job. You can pursue a one-year certificate program or a two-year program that results in an [associate's degree in medical assisting](#). According to the BLS, your mean annual salary as a medical assistant would be about \$29,060.

Other Health-Care Options

If working as a medical assistant or registered nurse don't interest you, don't give up on health care. The health care industry is enormous and provides an equally enormous number of career opportunities. Here are just a few more ideas to get you thinking:

Health-care administrator -- Every health-care facility needs a manager. You'll need a bachelor's degree in a related field; a master's degree in [health-care administration](#) won't hurt, either. Health care administrators earn a mean annual salary of \$88,750.

Medical lab technician -- If you enjoy studying life's details, take a look at a medical lab technician career. To enter this profession, you'll need an [associate's degree](#) in medical technology at minimum. The BLS reports that medical lab techs earned a mean annual [salary](#) of \$37,150 in 2008.

Occupational therapist -- Individuals in this unique role work with patients to help them improve their ability to perform activities of daily living. The job requires a [bachelor's degree](#) and a master's degree in occupational therapy for licensure. Occupational therapists earn a mean annual salary of \$67,920.

Pharmacist -- You might be surprised to know that your neighborhood pharmacist earns one of the highest salaries on the block. Earn your [Pharm.D](#) from an accredited college and you could be earning a mean average salary of \$104,260 sooner than you thought possible.

Health care continues to be an important priority in the United States, as witnessed by the ongoing national health care debate. Opportunities will continue to grow as baby boomers retire from health care-related fields and require more medical support. Online degree programs offering associate's and bachelor's degrees in health-care careers have boomed, making the process of obtaining your degree easier than ever.