

Here are the 20 fastest-growing occupations between 2008 and 2018*:

1. [Biomedical engineers](#)

Percent change: 72 percent

Number of new jobs: 11,600

Annual median salary: \$77,400

Why they're growing: As the population ages, demand for new health-care equipment designed by biomedical engineers will increase.

2. [Network systems and data communications analysts](#)

Percent change: 53 percent

Number of new jobs: 155,800

Annual median salary: \$71,100

Why they're growing: Companies will continue to upgrade technology (such as networks) and will need to expand their IT workforce.

3. [Home health aides](#)

Percent change: 50 percent

Number of new jobs: 460,900

Annual median salary: \$20,460

Why they're growing: As the population gets older and lives longer, home health aides will see a rise in demand.

4. [Personal and home care aides](#)

Percent change: 46 percent

Number of new jobs: 375,800

Annual median salary: \$19,180

Why they're growing: The aging population will require more medical attention, often at home rather than in medical facilities.

5. [Financial examiners](#)

Percent change: 41 percent

Number of new jobs: 11,100

Annual median salary: \$70,930

Why they're growing: Financial institutions are under increasing watch by the government and will continue to be for the next decade, which provides many new opportunities for financial examiners.

6. [Medical scientists, except epidemiologists](#)

Percent change: 40 percent

Number of new jobs: 44,200

Annual median salary: \$72,590

Why they're growing: Advances in biotechnology have created new opportunities for medical scientists over the past two decades and are on track to continue.

7. [Physician assistants](#)

Percent change: 39 percent

Number of new jobs: 29,200

Annual median salary: \$81,230

Why they're growing: Health-care facilities will use physician assistants to ease some responsibilities from physicians who are being given heavier workloads.

8. [Skin care specialists](#)

Percent change: 38 percent

Number of new jobs: 14,700

Annual median salary: \$28,730

Why they're growing: Spas and other cosmetic centers are expanding at a fast pace and skin care specialists are some of their most in-demand employees.

9. [Biochemists and biophysicists](#)

Percent change: 37 percent

Number of new jobs: 8,700

Annual median salary: \$82,840

Why they're growing: Continued advances in biotechnology create opportunities for new research and development careers.

10. [Athletic trainers](#)

Percent change: 37 percent

Number of new jobs: 6,000

Annual median salary: \$39,640

Why they're growing: As Americans focus on preventative health care and organizations support these efforts, athletic trainers will see an increase in responsibilities and job opportunities.

11. [Physical therapist aides](#)

Percent change: 36

Number of new jobs: 16,700

Annual median salary: \$23,760

Why they're growing: In general, all physical therapy services will be in higher demand, and the need for aides will rise along with them.

12. [Dental hygienists](#)

Percent change: 36 percent

Number of new jobs: 62,900

Annual median salary: \$66,570

Why they're growing: Due to the aging population and an increased emphasis on health care, dental health services will create more opportunities for dental hygienists.

13. [Veterinary technologists and technicians](#)

Percent change: 36 percent

Number of new jobs: 28,500

Annual median salary: \$28,900

Why they're growing: The need for technologists and technicians will outpace qualified candidates who are graduating from institutions, creating an increased demand.

14. Dental assistants

Percent change: 36 percent

Number of new jobs: 105,600

Annual median salary: 32,380

Why they're growing: Due to an aging population and better preventative dental care habits for adults and children, dental assistants will see rapid growth in the coming decade.

15. Computer software engineers, applications

Percent change: 34 percent

Number of new jobs: 175,100

Annual median salary: \$85,430

Why they're growing: Advances in technology and a continued reliance on computer networks ensure organizations of all industries will need software engineers.

16. Medical assistants

Percent change: 34 percent

Number of new jobs: 163,900

Annual median salary: \$28,300

Why they're growing: Medical assistants will increasingly assume some health-care provider roles in order to alleviate the increasing demands of physicians.

17. Physical therapist assistants

Percent change: 33 percent

Number of new jobs: 21,200

Annual median salary: \$46,140

Why they're growing: As the population ages, many people will turn to physical therapy for an increased quality of life.

18. Veterinarians

Percent change: 33 percent

Number of new jobs: 19,700

Annual median salary: \$79,050

Why they're growing: Pet owners are willing to spend more money for the health and well being of their pets, thereby putting veterinarians in high demand.

19. Self-enrichment education teachers

Percent change: 32 percent

Number of new jobs: 81,300

Annual median salary: 35,720

Why they're growing: The types of coursework offered in this field are expected to broaden and create new positions for teachers.

20. Compliance officers, except agriculture, construction, health and safety, and transportation

Percent change: 31 percent

Number of new jobs: 80,800

Annual median salary: \$48,890

Why they're growing: Compliance officers are one of the fastest growing occupations due to tighter restrictions and more scrutiny on financial institutions.

*Growth rates and salary information for all occupations based on data from the BLS.