What can I do with my physics degree?
What do Career Physicists Do?

**Highest Degree**

**BS Physics**

- Life Science: 1%
- CS/Math: 13%
- Physical Sci: 14%
- Engr: 14%
- S&E Manager: 8%
- Technician: 9%
- Teach: 3%
- Other: 38%

**BS (78,000)**

**Highest Degree**

**PhD (64,000)**

- Life Science: 6%
- CS/Math: 8%
- Physical Sci: 53%
- Engr: 11%
- S&E Manager: 3%
- Technician: 3%
- Teach: 2%
- Other: 14%

**Highest Degree**

**MS (33,000)**

- Life Science: 7%
- CS/Math: 17%
- Physical Sci: 26%
- Engr: 13%
- S&E Manager: 7%
- Technician: 7%
- Teach: 3%
- Other: 20%

Physics jobs span the economy

Note: 47% of new physics bachelors were employed in the winter following the year in which they received their degree.

29% Phys/Astro grad school
10% Engineering grad school
10% other schooling
4% Unemployed
Private Sector Job Areas – 1 Yr Post B.S.

Field of Employment for New Physics Bachelors Employed in the Private Sector, Classes of 2015 & 2016 Combined

- Engineering: 35%
- Computer or Information Systems: 27%
- Non-STEM, Regularly Solves Technical Problems: 15%
- Other STEM: 12%
- Non-STEM, Rarely or Never Solves Technical Problems: 7%
- Physics or Astronomy: 4%
- Non-STEM: 4%

STEM refers to natural science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Regularly solving technical problems refers to respondents who selected “Daily”, “Weekly”, or “Monthly” on a four-point scale that also included “Rarely or Never”.

Figure 3. Employment data for physics bachelor’s degree recipients in the private sector. Note that Engineering and Computer Systems comprise 62% of the employment fields for bachelor’s working in the private sector.

www.aip.org/statistics
Typical Job Skills Utilized
## Typical Job Titles 1 yr Post B.S.

### Engineering
- Systems Engineer
- Electrical Engineer
- Design Engineer
- Mechanical Engineer
- Project Engineer
- Optical Engineer
- Manufacturing Engineer
- Manufacturing Technician
- Laser Engineer
- Associate Engineer
- Technical Services Engineer
- Application Engineer
- Development Engineer
- Engineering Technician
- Field Engineer
- Process Engineer
- Process Technician
- Product Engineer
- Product Manager
- Research Engineer
- Test Engineer
- General Engineer

### Research & Technical
- Research Assistant
- Research Associate
- Research Technician
- Lab Technician
- Lab Assistant
- Accelerator Operator
- Physical Sciences Technician

### Computer Hardware / Software
- Software Engineer
- Programmer
- Web Developer
- IT Consultant
- Systems Analyst
- Technical Support Staff
- Analyst

### Education
- High School Physics Teacher
- High School Science Teacher
- Middle School Science Teacher
- Substitute Science Teacher
Typical Starting Salaries

Private sector jobs tend to pay more upfront but other jobs, such as teaching, have other benefits.

Figure 6. Typical Starting Salaries for New Physics Bachelors

Figure includes only bachelors in full-time, newly accepted positions. Typical salaries are in the middle 50% i.e., between the 25th and 75th percentiles. STEM refers to positions in natural science, technology, engineering, and math. Regularly solving technical problems refers to respondents who selected “Daily”, “Weekly”, or “Monthly” on a four-point scale that also included “Rarely or Never” when asked how frequently they solved technical problems in their positions.
What resources are available for my job search?

- American Physical Society Careers Page

- Society of Physics Students Careers Page
  - [https://www.spsnational.org/career-resources](https://www.spsnational.org/career-resources)

- AAAS (Science Magazine) Career Resources
  - [http://www.scientemag.org/careers/career-resources](http://www.scientemag.org/careers/career-resources)

- UW Career Center
  - Drop in at Mary Gates Hall
  - [http://careers.uw.edu/](http://careers.uw.edu/)

- Faculty, Alumni, others in area: see PANEL
SPS Jobs | jobs.spsnational.org
SPS Jobs has job listings appropriate for students seeking employment with a bachelor’s degree in physics.

Physics Today Job Resources | www.physicstoday.org/jobs/career_resources SPS Career Resources | www.spsnational.org/career-resources
Visit this Society of Physics Students site for career-related information, including profiles of people working in different careers, advice, and links to related resources.

Click on a state to see a list of some of the employers that hired physics bachelor’s recipients recently in that state.

This link will take you to a report titled, “Physics Bachelor’s Initial Employment.” Figure 4 in this report shows the skills used by physics bachelor’s recipients in their first job. Use these lists when you are thinking about the knowledge and skills you have. Make sure these are highlighted in your resume.

APS Careers Website | www.aps.org/careers
Access a host of career resources at the APS Careers website, including links to the APS Webinar Archive, Career Workshops from annual meetings, links to a professional development guide, and information on Student Travel Awards and Future of Physics Days events at APS national meetings, specifically geared toward undergraduates.
Career Panel

• Patrick Chidsey, Assoc. Director UW Career Center

• Elana Voigt, ‘14: UG Laboratory Staff, UW Physics

• Naydene Hays: Head Tutor, Olympic College

• Chandler Lougee, ’18: Peace Corp

• Travis Yerian, ‘12: Amazon.

• Marie Scott, ’16: Allen Brain Institute

• Cliff Slaughterbeck, PhD ‘96: Sr. Manager, Allen Brain Institute