

Oil and Gas Workers

SOC: 47-5011 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$52,610

Median Salary

115,900

Employment

+1.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: No formal educational credential

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Medium Risk - 35.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job has some routine elements but still requires human judgment and interaction.

■■ Work-Life Balance

3.6/10 - Challenging work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	9.4/10	Investigative	5.8/10
Artistic	4.0/10	Social	5.0/10
Enterprising	5.0/10	Conventional	6.0/10

■ Top Skills Required

Ability to work at heights, Communication skills, Detail oriented, Interpersonal skills, Mechanical skills, Physical stamina and strength, Problem-solving skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Oil and Gas Workers are skilled trades and extraction professionals who operate and maintain **equipment used to drill, extract, process, and transport oil and natural gas**. They work on drilling rigs, production sites, and processing facilities to ensure energy resources are produced safely, efficiently, and reliably. Their role is essential to powering industries, transportation systems, and modern infrastructure worldwide.

This career is well suited for individuals who prefer hands-on work, are comfortable in industrial or outdoor environments, and can follow strict safety and operational procedures.

What Do Oil and Gas Workers Do?

Oil and gas workers perform a range of physical and technical tasks that support drilling and production operations. Duties vary by job title and worksite but consistently focus on safety, equipment operation, and teamwork.

Common responsibilities include:

- Operating drilling and extraction equipment
- Installing, repairing, and maintaining pipes, valves, and machinery
- Monitoring gauges, pressures, and production levels
- Assisting with drilling, casing, and well completion activities
- Transporting materials and supplies around the site
- Following strict safety, environmental, and emergency procedures
- Communicating with supervisors and crew members during operations

Types of Oil and Gas Workers

This occupation includes several specialized roles across extraction and production:

- Roustabouts: Perform general labor, maintenance, and site support tasks.
- Roughnecks: Work directly on drilling rigs handling pipes and drilling equipment.
- Derrick Operators: Control drilling fluid circulation and work at elevated positions.
- Pump Operators: Monitor and maintain pumping equipment.
- Well Service Workers: Perform maintenance and repairs on existing wells.
- Production Operators: Oversee day-to-day oil and gas flow operations.

Skills and Abilities Needed

Oil and gas workers combine physical ability with technical awareness.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Training Pathway

Most oil and gas workers enter the field through on-the-job training:

- High School Diploma or Equivalent: Typical minimum requirement
- On-the-Job Training: Learning equipment use and safety practices
- Safety Certifications: Training in hazardous materials, confined spaces, and emergency response
- Technical or Trade Training (helpful): Mechanical, welding, or industrial skills
- Advancement Opportunities: Progression to lead operator or supervisor roles

Where Do Oil and Gas Workers Work?

Oil and gas workers are employed across extraction and production environments:

- Onshore Drilling Sites and Oil Fields
- Offshore Oil Rigs and Platforms
- Natural Gas Processing Plants
- Pipeline and Transportation Facilities
- Energy Service and Contracting Companies
- Remote and Industrial Locations

Work schedules often involve long shifts, rotating schedules, and time away from home.

How Much Do Oil and Gas Workers Earn?

Earnings vary by role, experience, and location:

- Entry-Level Workers: Typically earn strong hourly wages due to labor demands
- Experienced or Specialized Workers: Often earn higher pay with technical expertise
- Offshore or Remote Assignments: May include premium pay and bonuses

Compensation often includes overtime opportunities and housing or travel allowances.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career is physically demanding and safety-critical. Workers face harsh weather, heavy equipment, and long hours. The challenge lies in maintaining focus, teamwork, and strict safety discipline in high-risk environments.

Who Should Consider Becoming an Oil and Gas Worker?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy hands-on, physically demanding work
- Are comfortable working outdoors or in industrial settings
- Can follow safety rules and procedures closely
- Prefer team-based environments
- Want access to high-paying skilled labor roles without long-term schooling

How to Prepare Early

- Build physical fitness and endurance
- Learn basic mechanical and tool-handling skills
- Take safety, welding, or industrial training courses
- Develop teamwork and communication skills
- Research entry-level positions with energy service companies

Oil and gas workers form the backbone of energy production, performing demanding and essential work that keeps fuel flowing safely from the ground to the global economy.