

Occupational Therapy Assistants and Aides

SOC: 31-1010 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$66,050

Median Salary

54,400

Employment

+18.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: See Requirements (BLS)

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Medium Risk - 48.0% 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

6.0/10 - Good work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.8/10	Investigative	6.0/10
Artistic	4.4/10	Social	8.4/10
Enterprising	4.6/10	Conventional	7.4/10

■ Top Skills Required

Adaptability, Compassion, Detail oriented, Interpersonal skills, Physical stamina, Physical strength

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Occupational Therapy Assistants and Aides help patients **recover, develop, or maintain daily living and work skills under the supervision of occupational therapists**. They implement treatment plans, guide exercises, and support patients in achieving functional independence. Their work is critical in rehabilitation, healthcare, and long-term care settings.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy healthcare, patient interaction, and assisting with rehabilitation and skill development.

What Do Occupational Therapy Assistants and Aides Do?

These professionals support occupational therapists by providing therapy, preparing patients, and assisting with daily activities.

Common responsibilities include:

- Implementing prescribed therapy plans and exercises
- Assisting patients with daily living activities, such as dressing, grooming, or mobility
- Monitoring patient progress and reporting observations to therapists
- Preparing therapy materials and adaptive equipment
- Supporting therapeutic recreational or vocational activities
- Maintaining patient records and documentation
- Educating patients and families on therapy goals and techniques

Key Areas of Occupational Therapy Assistance

Assistants and aides may focus on specific patient populations or therapeutic activities:

- Pediatric Therapy: Supporting children with developmental or physical challenges
- Geriatric Therapy: Assisting older adults with mobility, cognition, and daily living skills
- Physical Rehabilitation: Implementing exercises and activities for recovery from injury or illness
- Adaptive and Assistive Technology: Helping patients use adaptive equipment and tools
- Patient Education and Support: Teaching techniques to maintain functional independence

Skills and Abilities Needed

Occupational therapy assistants and aides combine clinical, physical, and interpersonal skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires formal education and supervised training:

- Associate's Degree (for Assistants): Occupational therapy assistant program
- On-the-Job Training (for Aides): Learning therapy techniques, equipment use, and patient support
- Certification or Licensure (required in most states for Assistants): Credentialing through national or state boards
- Clinical Experience: Supervised practice in rehabilitation, clinics, or healthcare facilities
- Continuing Education: Staying current with therapeutic methods, safety protocols, and patient care techniques

Where Do Occupational Therapy Assistants and Aides Work?

They are employed in organizations providing rehabilitation and healthcare services:

- Hospitals and Rehabilitation Centers
- Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities
- Outpatient Therapy Clinics
- Schools and Pediatric Therapy Programs

- Home Healthcare Services

Work environments include therapy rooms, clinics, patient homes, and long-term care facilities.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires physical stamina, interpersonal skills, and attention to detail. Assistants and aides must follow therapy plans accurately, support patients, and collaborate with healthcare teams.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy helping patients regain or maintain daily living skills
- Are patient, empathetic, and supportive
- Have good communication and observation skills
- Can perform physical tasks and assist with therapy exercises
- Want a career contributing to rehabilitation and quality of life

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in biology, health sciences, and human development
- Volunteer or intern in rehabilitation centers, hospitals, or therapy programs
- Develop communication, empathy, and patient care skills
- Explore accredited occupational therapy assistant programs
- Gain hands-on experience through supervised practice or clinical internships

Occupational therapy assistants and aides support patients in developing and maintaining daily living and work skills, promoting independence and enhancing quality of life.

*Generated by StartRight • Data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics & O*NET*

Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapy-assistants-and-aides.htm>