

Orthotists and Prosthetists

SOC: 29-2091 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$78,310

Median Salary

10,100

Employment

+13.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Master's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 8.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■■ Work-Life Balance

8.3/10 - Excellent work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.4/10	Investigative	8.6/10
Artistic	4.8/10	Social	9.0/10
Enterprising	5.4/10	Conventional	6.2/10

■ Top Skills Required

Compassion, Communication skills, Detail oriented, Dexterity, Interpersonal skills, Physical stamina, Problem-solving skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Orthotists and Prosthetists design, fit, and fabricate **orthotic devices and prosthetic limbs to assist patients with physical impairments**. They assess patients' needs, create customized devices, and provide training for their use. Their work is critical in rehabilitation, mobility improvement, and enhancing patients' quality of life.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy healthcare, technical fabrication, and helping patients regain mobility and independence.

What Do Orthotists and Prosthetists Do?

These professionals evaluate patients, design devices, and monitor usage to ensure effectiveness and comfort.

Common responsibilities include:

- Assessing patient physical conditions and measuring for devices
- Designing and fabricating prosthetics, orthotics, or supportive devices
- Fitting and adjusting devices to meet patient needs
- Training patients on proper use, care, and maintenance of devices
- Monitoring patient progress and making modifications as necessary
- Collaborating with physicians, therapists, and healthcare teams
- Maintaining records and documenting patient outcomes

Key Areas of Orthotics and Prosthetics

Orthotists and prosthetists may focus on specific patient populations, devices, or clinical practices:

- Prosthetic Limb Design: Creating artificial limbs for amputees
- Orthotic Device Fabrication: Designing braces, supports, and mobility aids
- Patient Fitting and Adjustment: Ensuring proper fit, comfort, and functionality
- Rehabilitation Support: Training patients in device use and mobility
- Clinical Consultation: Assessing outcomes and recommending modifications

Skills and Abilities Needed

These professionals combine technical, medical, and interpersonal skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires formal education and clinical training:

- Bachelor's Degree: Prosthetics, orthotics, or a related biomedical field
- Master's Degree (common): Advanced prosthetics and orthotics programs
- Clinical Internship or Residency: Hands-on experience in patient assessment, device fabrication, and fitting
- Licensure or Certification: Required to practice as a certified orthotist or prosthetist
- Continuing Education: Maintaining certification and staying current on technology and rehabilitation methods

Where Do Orthotists and Prosthetists Work?

They are employed in healthcare organizations and rehabilitation settings:

- Hospitals and Rehabilitation Centers
- Orthotic and Prosthetic Clinics
- Private Practices and Specialty Clinics
- Research and Development Facilities

- Educational or Training Institutions

Work environments include clinics, hospitals, laboratories, and patient homes.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires technical expertise, medical knowledge, and patient care skills. Orthotists and prosthetists must design precise devices, ensure patient safety, and monitor outcomes for optimal functionality.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy healthcare, rehabilitation, and hands-on technical work
- Are detail-oriented and precise
- Can communicate effectively with patients and healthcare teams
- Have an interest in biomechanics, anatomy, and device design
- Want a career enhancing patient mobility, independence, and quality of life

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in biology, anatomy, physics, and engineering
- Volunteer or intern in rehabilitation clinics, hospitals, or prosthetic/orthotic labs
- Develop technical skills in measurement, fabrication, and materials handling
- Explore accredited prosthetics and orthotics degree programs
- Gain hands-on experience through clinical practice, internships, or apprenticeships

Orthotists and prosthetists create and fit customized devices that restore mobility, improve function, and enhance the quality of life for patients with physical impairments.

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Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/orthotists-and-prosthetists.htm>