

Purchasing Managers, Buyers, and Purchasing Agents

SOC: 11-3061 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$79,830

Median Salary

605,600

Employment

+5.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Bachelor's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 18.0% 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

9.3/10 - Excellent work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	4.2/10	Investigative	6.8/10
Artistic	4.4/10	Social	7.8/10
Enterprising	8.6/10	Conventional	7.4/10

■ Top Skills Required

Analytical skills, Communication skills, Decision-making skills, Interpersonal skills, Math skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Purchasing Managers, Buyers, and Purchasing Agents oversee and manage **the acquisition of goods and services for organizations**. They negotiate with suppliers, evaluate products, and ensure timely delivery while controlling costs. Their work is critical in manufacturing, retail, government, and service industries.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy negotiation, analysis, and coordinating supply and demand.

What Do Purchasing Managers, Buyers, and Purchasing Agents Do?

These professionals plan and execute purchasing strategies, manage supplier relationships, and monitor procurement processes.

Common responsibilities include:

- Analyzing organizational needs for goods and services
- Identifying and evaluating potential suppliers
- Negotiating prices, terms, and contracts
- Monitoring delivery schedules and supplier performance
- Managing inventory levels and procurement budgets
- Collaborating with internal departments to meet operational goals
- Preparing reports and maintaining procurement documentation

Key Areas of Purchasing and Procurement

Professionals may focus on specific functions or industries:

- Supplier Relationship Management: Building and maintaining strong partnerships with vendors
- Strategic Sourcing: Identifying cost-effective and high-quality suppliers
- Inventory and Supply Chain Coordination: Ensuring availability of goods without overstocking
- Contract Negotiation: Establishing terms, agreements, and compliance measures
- Procurement Analysis: Evaluating costs, performance metrics, and market trends

Skills and Abilities Needed

Purchasing professionals combine analytical, negotiation, and organizational skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires formal education and experience:

- Bachelor's Degree: Business, supply chain management, finance, or related fields
- On-the-Job Training or Experience: Procurement, purchasing, or inventory management roles
- Professional Certification (optional): Certified Purchasing Professional (CPP) or similar credentials
- Continuous Learning: Staying current on procurement trends, technology, and industry standards

Where Do Purchasing Managers, Buyers, and Purchasing Agents Work?

They are employed in organizations that require procurement of goods and services:

- Manufacturing Companies
- Retail and E-commerce Firms
- Government Agencies
- Healthcare and Service Organizations

- Supply Chain and Logistics Companies

Work environments include offices, warehouses, manufacturing facilities, and corporate settings.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires analytical thinking, negotiation skills, and attention to detail. Professionals must manage budgets, supplier relationships, and organizational needs effectively.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy negotiation, analysis, and strategic planning
- Are detail-oriented and organized
- Can manage relationships with suppliers and internal teams
- Have strong decision-making and problem-solving skills
- Want a career that supports operational efficiency and cost management

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in business, finance, supply chain, or economics
- Gain experience through internships or part-time roles in purchasing or inventory management
- Develop negotiation, communication, and analytical skills
- Learn procurement software and tools
- Stay informed on market trends, supplier performance, and procurement best practices

Purchasing managers, buyers, and agents ensure organizations obtain the right goods and services efficiently and cost-effectively, supporting operations and supply chain success.

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

Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/business-and-financial/purchasing-managers-buyers-and-purchasing-agents.htm>