



The 10 Best Jobs in America Today

Jump to Results

--by *Tony Lee*

Remember that kid in elementary school who always had a pencil and calculator nearby, and while the rest of us drew pictures, read comic books or played cards, that kid was happily crunching numbers -- for fun. Fast forward 20 years or so, and it turns out that kid probably has one of best careers around today, according to an exclusive new study of the nation's best and worst jobs.

Compiling research on 200 different positions, this year's JobsRated.com report ranks mathematician as the country's best job, followed by actuary and statistician -- three jobs for which a calculator and solitude are prerequisites. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the Monty Python troupe made famous the song, "I'm a lumberjack and I'm OK." Unfortunately, our study finds that lumberjacks have the nation's worst job, followed by dairy farmers and taxi drivers, which seems to bear out the old grade-school adage that "it's better to earn a living with your head rather than with your hands."

Of course, it doesn't take much effort to determine that mathematician is a more attractive job to most people than lumberjack. But ranking 200 jobs from best to worst is no easy feat. To compile this year's report, researchers relied on five criteria to compare jobs as different as librarian and sheet metal worker. Those criteria: stress, physical demands, hiring outlook, compensation and work environment (for more info on scoring, visit our [Methodology Page](#)).

If advanced equations aren't your strong suit, however, there are plenty of other jobs that score well, too. After the top three math-oriented careers, the rest of the top 10 read like a who's who of well-educated professions:

1. Mathematician

Applies mathematical theories and formulas to teach or solve problems in a business, educational, or industrial climate.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	1
Overall Score:	104
Work Environment:	89.720
Physical Demands:	3.97
Stress:	24.670
Income:	\$94,160
Hours per Week:	45

2. Actuary

Interprets statistics to determine probabilities of accidents, sickness, and death, and loss of property from theft and natural disasters.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	2
Overall Score:	128
Work Environment:	179.440
Physical Demands:	3.97
Stress:	20.187
Income:	\$88,146
Hours per Week:	45

3. Statistician

Tabulates, analyzes, and interprets the numeric results of experiments and surveys.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	3
Overall Score:	152
Work Environment:	89.520
Physical Demands:	3.95
Stress:	27.980
Income:	\$72,197
Hours per Week:	45

4. Biologist

Studies the relationship of plants and animals to their environment.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	4
Overall Score:	153
Work Environment:	314.370
Physical Demands:	4.98
Stress:	26.950
Income:	\$74,273
Hours per Week:	45

5. Software Engineer

Researches, designs, develops and maintains software systems along with hardware development for medical, scientific, and industrial purposes.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	5
Overall Score:	178
Work Environment:	150.000
Physical Demands:	5
Stress:	25.000
Income:	\$86,139
Hours per Week:	50

6. Computer Systems Analyst

Plans and develops computer systems for businesses and scientific institutions.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	6
Overall Score:	182
Work Environment:	90.780
Physical Demands:	5.08
Stress:	24.970
Income:	\$75,160
Hours per Week:	45

7. Historian

Analyzes and records historical information from a specific era or according to a particular area of expertise.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	7
Overall Score:	189
Work Environment:	136.410
Physical Demands:	5.09
Stress:	28.420
Income:	\$61,209
Hours per Week:	45

8. Sociologist

Studies human behavior by examining the interaction of social groups and institutions.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	8
Overall Score:	204
Work Environment:	318.290
Physical Demands:	5.09
Stress:	34.100

Income:	\$63,195
Hours per Week:	45

9. Industrial Designer

Designs and develops manufactured products.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	9
Overall Score:	205
Work Environment:	177.000
Physical Demands:	6.85
Stress:	32.080
Income:	\$58,206
Hours per Week:	45

10. Accountant

Prepares and analyzes financial reports to assist managers in business, industry and government.

Job Ratings

Overall Ranking:	10
Overall Score:	208
Work Environment:	276.780
Physical Demands:	4.23
Stress:	31.138
Income:	\$59,173
Hours per Week:	45

All these positions rate highly in the key criteria, and all require at least a college degree, if not graduate-school credentials. But whatever job you're interested in learning more about, JobsRated.com data will be a valuable aid to help ensure that your choice measures up to the standards you've set for yourself. Jobs are also ranked by industry, giving you the best options in fields ranging from Agriculture to Travel.