

## What Is in a California Occupational Guide?

The **California Occupational Guides** furnish information on California wages, job outlook, education, and licensing requirements for approximately 300 occupations. The Guides offer students and job seekers occupational information to assist with making informed career choices. Informed career decisions lead to a satisfying work life.

View the California Occupational Guides on-line at  
[www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/cgi/career/?PAGEID=3&SUBID=139](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/cgi/career/?PAGEID=3&SUBID=139)

## Who Uses the California Guides?

The Guides provide a useful tool for many Californians who are researching occupations:

- **High school students** use Guides to identify attractive careers and focus their education and training plans to meet job entrance requirements.
- **Counselors, career center technicians, and parents** use Guides to supplement their own knowledge of careers while assisting students with career decision making.
- **Adults interested in changing careers** use Guides to discover what other job options relate to their skills and interests.
- **Recent arrivals to California** use the Guides to acquaint themselves with the California labor market in their field.
- **Job seekers** review Guides to refresh their skills vocabulary to better describe past accomplishments and duties in resumes and interviews.

## What's in a California Occupational Guide?

### **Job Title**

What do you call the job? Job titles may vary in different areas of the country and from company to company. For example, a waiter/waitress may be known by alias names such as, food server, wait staff, dining room server, or waiter/waitress.

The California Occupational Guide titles follow the official job titles of the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System. Using a standardized job title classification system assists the Employment Development Department with matching wage and job growth information to specific occupations.

### **Why Is This Important to You?**

You will need to know what a job is officially called in order to look up occupational information for your research. Where do you start to look up a job title?

- Review the Alphabetical Index of the *California Occupational Guides*.
- Review the Interest Area Index of the *California Occupational Guides*.

OR

Are you still having difficulty locating a job title? Give the “**Occupation CodeFinder**” a try at <http://www.calmis.ca.gov/codefinder/codefinder.htm>.

The CodeFinder returns a list of matching occupations and links to the on-line Occupation Profile.

## **Interest Area**

Each of the guides displays an interest area icon. These icons represent John L. Holland's six vocational personality groups: R-I-A-S-E-C.

The six interest areas are:



- **R** - Realistic occupations involve practical, hands-on problems and solutions.
- **I** - Investigative occupations work with ideas and require extensive thinking.
- **A** - Artistic occupations work with forms, designs, and patterns.
- **S** - Social occupations involve communicating with and teaching people.
- **E** - Enterprising occupations may involve starting up and carrying out projects.
- **C** - Conventional occupations involve following set procedures and routines.

### **Why Is This Important to You?**

People are usually happiest and function best in jobs that fit their personalities. One of the most important first steps when exploring careers is to get to know yourself and your interests, likes, and dislikes. It is helpful to have an understanding of what the interest areas are and which describe or fit you the best.

Having a job that is well suited to your interests and personality can mean the difference between:

- Jumping out of bed to get ready for work or dreading the sound of the alarm clock and pushing yourself to get ready for work in the morning.
- Looking forward to work projects the next day or wondering how or when you can find another job, quit, or retire.
- Having a happy attitude and peace of mind because you enjoy what you do, or experiencing anxiety at the very thought of reporting to work that is not a good match for your interests and skills.

Be your own best friend! Learn as much as you can about yourself and your interests, and do your research before making career or educational plans. You want to be sure that you will enjoy the career you have chosen before investing time and money in a training or education program.

### ***What Does the Job Do?***

This section of the guide describes the main duties, normal work routine, and tasks of the job.

#### **Why is this important to you?**

This section is important because it gives you a glimpse of what the job is really like by discussing the activities of the job and the tools and equipment used to do the job. The information about daily work routines and required tasks will help you decide if the job appeals to you.

#### **Things to Think About:**

- Does the job match your interests and personality?
- Will you need additional education, training, or certification to perform the job tasks?
- Are you physically able to perform the tasks of the job on a daily basis?
- Is this a job you would enjoy on a long-term basis?

## ***What Skills Are Important?***

This section describes the top skills, knowledge, and abilities required to perform the job. The source of this information is the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network (O\*NET).

### **Why Is This Important to You?**

The information about the top skills, knowledge, and abilities required for the job will help you analyze your readiness for the job. Do you already have the necessary skills, or do you still need to acquire the skills, knowledge, and abilities required for the job? This will help you identify the need for any additional education, or on-the-job-training needed to develop the necessary job skills.

### **What Skills Do You Like to Use?**

You have skills you enjoy using. You have skills you can take or leave. You have other skills you dread using even though you may be competent enough. Identify the skills you like to use. To discover which occupations use those skills, log on to [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov).

- Select the "Career Center" tab from the menu bar at the top of the page.
- Scroll down the page to the "Career Tools" section.
- Select either "Find Occupations by Skills" or "Find Occupations That Use Similar Skills." The latter finds occupations with similar skills to an occupation you name; usually, one you have experienced already.
- Complete the appropriate information.
- Select "Find Occupations."
- Review the search results that display occupations matching your skills.

## ***What's the Work Environment?***

This section describes the daily working conditions and potential dangers of the job. The job may involve working outdoors in various weather conditions, or working indoors in an air-conditioned cubicle.

### **Why Is This Important to You?**

It is important for you to know yourself well and what type of work environment you prefer to ensure your overall job satisfaction. Individual preferences vary a great deal. What may please one person may make another person unhappy.

Some work environments include:

- Working outdoors in all types of weather year-round: heat, cold, or rain.
- Working indoors in climate controlled buildings.
- Working in dust-filled environments such as warehouses.
- Lifting heavy objects.
- Working around strong odors or fumes such as a painting occupations or gasoline stations.
- Working around loud noises such as drilling or hammering with construction or roadwork.

Things to consider:

Will you find the work environment enjoyable and pleasant? Or, will the work environment trigger any pre-existing health conditions you may have such as allergies to dust? Do you have any lifting limitations due to prior injuries? Do you enjoy working outdoors or do you prefer an office cubicle? Some people may feel very confined working in a cubicle while others may enjoy working in a cubicle surrounded by their personal items. Evaluate your likes and dislikes. What type of work environment suits your personality the best?

## ***What's the California Job Outlook?***

This part of the guide discusses employment trends that may affect future job openings and gives the estimated number of job openings over the next ten-year period. (The source of the information is the *California Projections of Employment* published by LMID.)

### **Why Is This Important to You?**

It is very important to know the number of statewide openings in the occupation you are considering before investing your time or tuition money in a training program or college degree. You may be very disappointed upon completing a training program to find out that there are limited employment opportunities. The job outlook estimates give you an idea about the number of future job opportunities. If you pursue a limited field, you want to have a "plan B" in mind.

## ***What Does the Job Pay?***

This information shows the wages that workers in this occupation can expect to earn in California. (The source of the information is the Occupational Employment Survey of Employers by EDD/LMID.)

### **Why Is This Important to You?**

Before you begin a training or educational program, it is important to know approximately what the job pays. Will the job pay a living wage? Will the wages meet your personal needs?

## ***How Do I Prepare for the Job?***

Are you wondering where to begin to prepare yourself for your selected career? This section can help you by providing important information on job requirements:

- Personal traits.
- Work experience requirements.
- Education or training requirements.
- License requirements.
- Continuing education requirements, if any.

### **Why Is This Important to You?**

This information will help you assess where you stand. Do you need additional education or training to land the job of your dreams? Will this occupation require lifelong learning? Am I willing to commit the time and money for training?

## ***How Do I Find the Job?***

Are you having difficulty figuring out how to begin your work search? This section of the guide offers tips about where to look for work and places to network.

### **Why Is This Important to You?**

Tips for how to find the job will help you to focus and jumpstart your work search efforts.

## ***Where Can This Job Lead?***

Do you have questions about where this job will lead? Are there promotional opportunities for the future or is this a dead-end job? This section gives an overview of the usual promotional and career ladder opportunities.

## **Why is this important to you?**

This information makes you aware of the typical opportunities for advancement over a work lifetime so you can think about preparing for them or alternative career options.

## ***Other Sources of Information***

Lists professional associations, unions, and licensing agencies that can provide further information on the occupation.

***Related Occupational Guides and Occupational Code References:*** Lists Guides related by interests, skills, or subject matter.

## **Why is this important to you?**

This information will help you to conduct further in-depth research into your selected career or related occupations.

## **Tips for Exploring Occupations Using the Guides**

Are you ready to begin researching occupations using the California Occupational Guides? Simply follow the helpful steps below and good luck with your journey:

- Browse the Alphabetical Index for job titles that arouse your curiosity or sound interesting.
- If you are having difficulty locating a job title, look up the job title or keyword on the **Occupation CodeFinder** at [www.calmis.ca.gov/codefinder/codefinder.htm](http://www.calmis.ca.gov/codefinder/codefinder.htm). The CodeFinder returns a list of matching occupations and links to the on-line Occupation Profile.
- Familiarize yourself with the interest area definitions in the Guide Introduction and use the Interest Area Index to locate occupations that best fit your interests.
- First read about an occupation as a start in career decision-making. Then talk to local people who actually work in the occupation to add more insight into the pros and cons of an occupation. Reading the Guide first will give you enough background to form meaningful questions. Use the yellow pages and local chapters of professional associations to locate persons who would be willing to give you a few minutes of time to answer questions about their profession.
- Complete the **"Factors in Choosing a Career"** (at [www.calmis.ca.gov/file/occmisc/CareerDecisionFactors.pdf](http://www.calmis.ca.gov/file/occmisc/CareerDecisionFactors.pdf)) worksheet located in the introduction section of the Guides. This worksheet is a helpful tool for recording your impressions as you explore and compare occupations.

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