



U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

Bureau of Labor Statistics > Publications > Occupational Outlook Handbook > Production

OOH HOME | OCCUPATION FINDER | OOH FAQ | HOW TO FIND A JOB | A-Z INDEX |

OOH SITE MAP

Search Handbook

OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK

Bakers

PRINTER-FRIENDLY

Summary	What They Do	Work Environment	How to Become One	Pay	Job Outlook	State & Area Data
Similar Occupations				More Info		

Summary

Summary



Quick Facts: Bakers

2021 Median Pay	\$29,750 per year \$14.31 per hour
Typical Entry-Level Education	No formal educational credential
Work Experience in a Related Occupation	None
On-the-job Training	Moderate-term on-the-job

	training
Number of Jobs, 2021 ?	200,800
Job Outlook, 2021-31 ?	8% (Faster than average)
Employment Change, 2021-31 ?	16,300

[What Bakers Do](#)

Bakers mix ingredients according to recipes in order to make breads, pastries, and other baked goods.

[Work Environment](#)

Most bakers work in retail or commercial bakeries (manufacturing facilities), grocery stores or wholesale club stores, and restaurants. Work shifts often include early mornings, nights, weekends, and holidays.

[How to Become a Baker](#)

Although bakers typically need no formal educational credential, employers may prefer or require that candidates have a high school diploma. Some choose to attend a technical or culinary school. They typically learn their skills through on-the-job training, which may include participating in an apprenticeship program.

[Pay](#)

The median annual wage for bakers was \$29,750 in May 2021.

[Job Outlook](#)

Employment of bakers is projected to grow 8 percent from 2021 to 2031, faster than the average for all occupations.

About 31,300 openings for bakers are projected each year, on average, over the decade. Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire.

[State & Area Data](#)

Explore resources for employment and wages by state and area for bakers.

[Similar Occupations](#)

Compare the job duties, education, job growth, and pay of bakers with similar occupations.

[More Information, Including Links to O*NET](#)

Learn more about bakers by visiting additional resources, including O*NET, a source on key characteristics of workers and occupations.

What They Do

What They Do ->

What Bakers Do

About this section ?

Bakers mix ingredients according to recipes in order to make breads, pastries, and other baked goods.

Duties

Bakers typically do the following:

- Prepare workstation for baking
- Measure and weigh ingredients
- Combine measured ingredients in mixers or blenders
- Knead, roll, cut, and shape dough
- Prepare and fill pans, molds, or baking sheets
- Set oven temperatures and place items into ovens
- Monitor baking process and adjust oven temperature or item positioning as needed

Bakers produce breads, pastries, and other baked goods sold by grocers, wholesalers, restaurants, and institutional food services. Standard procedure for each batch includes checking the condition of ingredients, following instructions for recipes, and examining the quality of the final product.

The following are examples of types of bakers:

Commercial bakers, also called *production bakers*, work in manufacturing facilities that produce breads, pastries, and other baked products. In these facilities, bakers use high-volume mixing machines, ovens, and other equipment, which may be automated, to mass-produce standardized baked goods. They often work with other production workers, such as helpers and maintenance staff, to keep equipment cleaned and ready.

Retail bakers work primarily in grocery stores and specialty shops, including bakeries. In these settings, they produce small quantities of baked goods for people to eat in the shop or for sale as specialty items. Retail bakers may take orders from customers, prepare baked products to order, and occasionally serve customers. Most retail bakers are also responsible for cleaning their work area and equipment and unloading supplies.

Some retail bakers own bakery shops where they make and sell breads, pastries, pies, and other baked goods. In addition to preparing the baked goods and overseeing the entire baking process, they are also responsible for hiring, training, and supervising their staff. They must budget for and order supplies, set prices, and decide how much to produce each day.




Bakers prepare various types of baked goods.

[<- Summary](#)

[Work Environment ->](#)

Work Environment

Work Environment

About this section 

Bakers held about 200,800 jobs in 2021. The largest employers of bakers were as follows:

Bakeries and tortilla manufacturing	32%
Food and beverage stores	26
Restaurants and other eating places	22
Self-employed workers	7

The work can be stressful because bakers must maintain consistent quality while following time-sensitive baking procedures, often under deadline.

Bakers are exposed to high temperatures when working around hot ovens. They stand for long periods while observing the baking process, making the dough, or cleaning the equipment.

Injuries and Illnesses

Bakeries, especially large manufacturing facilities, have potential dangers such as hot ovens, mixing machines, and dough cutters. Although their work is generally safe, bakers may experience back strain from lifting heavy items, as well as cuts, scrapes, and burns. To reduce risk of injury, bakers often wear back supports and heat-resistant aprons and gloves.

Work Schedules

Most bakers work full time, although part-time work is common. Schedules may vary and often include early morning, night, weekend, or holiday shifts. Some facilities operate around the clock.




Bakers stand for extended periods while they prepare dough.

[<- What They Do](#)

[How to Become One ->](#)

How to Become One

How to Become a Baker

About this section 

Bakers typically need no formal educational credential to enter the occupation; however, employers may prefer or require that candidates have a high school diploma, and some candidates choose to attend a technical or culinary school. Bakers typically learn their skills through on-the-job training, which may include participating in an apprenticeship program.

Education

High school students interested in becoming a baker may benefit from enrolling in culinary classes, if available, at their school.

Postsecondary options include attending a technical, culinary arts, or baking program that covers topics such as nutrition, food safety, and pastry techniques. Enrollees may be required to have a high school diploma or equivalent to enter these programs, which typically last 1 to 2 years.

Training

Most bakers learn their skills through on-the-job training. The length of training varies but may last up to 1 year. Some employers provide apprenticeship programs for aspiring bakers, which may take months or years to complete.

Training or apprenticeship programs cover topics such as baking and decorating techniques, production processes, and food safety.

Other Experience

Some bakers learn their skills through work experience related to baking. For example, they may start as a baker's assistant and progress to becoming a baker as they take on more responsibility and refine their technique.

Licenses, Certifications, and Registrations

Employers may require candidates to obtain certification in food safety procedures. Check with your state or local health department for certification information.

Optional certification may demonstrate a level of competence and experience that makes candidates more attractive to employers.

For example, [Retail Bakers of America](#) offers certification for several levels of competence, with a focus on topics such as baking sanitation, management, retail sales, and staff training. Those who wish to become certified must satisfy requirements for education and experience before taking an exam. Other organizations may offer credentials for specific skills, such as the [American Culinary Federation's](#) pastry chef certifications.

Important Qualities

Communication skills. Bakers must be able to convey information effectively to other workers or to customers.



On-the-job training is the most common method of learning for bakers.

Detail oriented. Bakers must follow recipes and instructions precisely. They also should have an eye for detail because many pastries and cakes require intricate decorations.

Math skills. Bakers need basic math skills, especially knowledge of fractions, in order to mix recipes, weigh ingredients, or adjust mixes.

Physical stamina. Bakers stand for extended periods while they prepare dough, monitor baking, or package baked goods.


Physical strength. Bakers should be able to move heavy items, such as bulk-sized bags of flour, from storage to a work area.

[<- Work Environment](#)

[Pay ->](#)

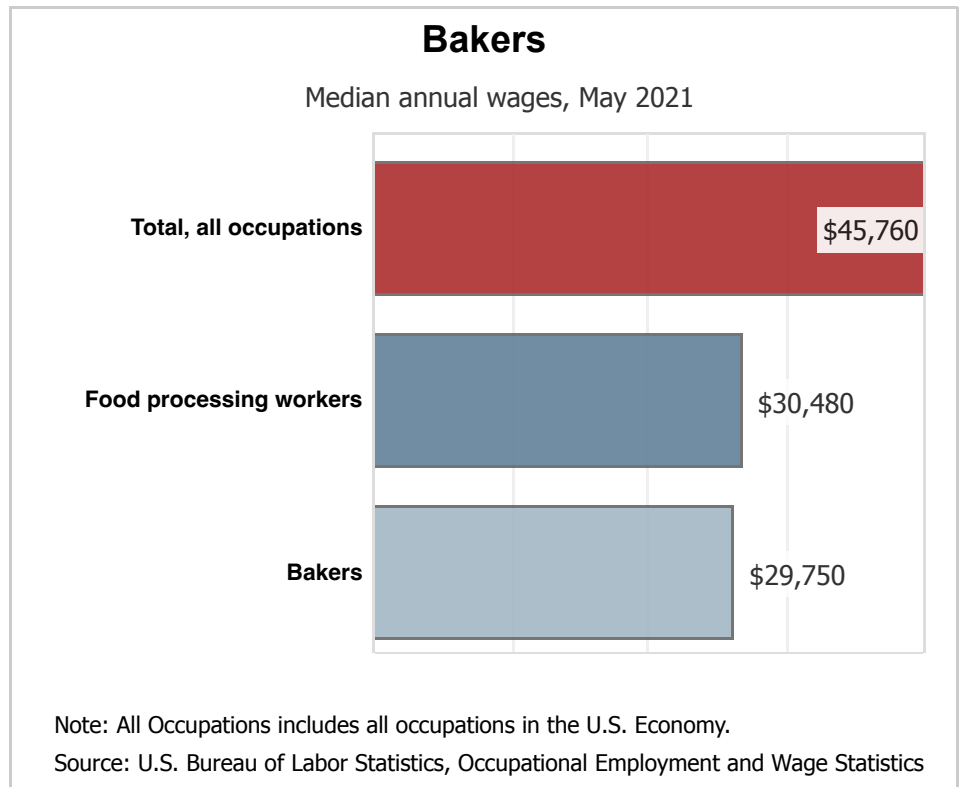
Pay

Pay

About this section 

The median annual wage for bakers was \$29,750 in May 2021. The median wage is the wage at which half the workers in an occupation earned more than that amount and half earned less. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$22,820, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$45,450.

In May 2021, the median annual wages for bakers in the top industries in which they worked were as follows:




Food and beverage stores	\$29,900
Bakeries and tortilla manufacturing	29,690
Restaurants and other eating places	29,110

Most bakers work full time, although part-time work is common. Schedules may vary and often include early morning, night, weekend, or holiday shifts. Some facilities operate around the clock.

[<- How to Become One](#)[Job Outlook ->](#)

Job Outlook

Job Outlook

About this section 

Employment of bakers is projected to grow 8 percent from 2021 to 2031, faster than the average for all occupations.

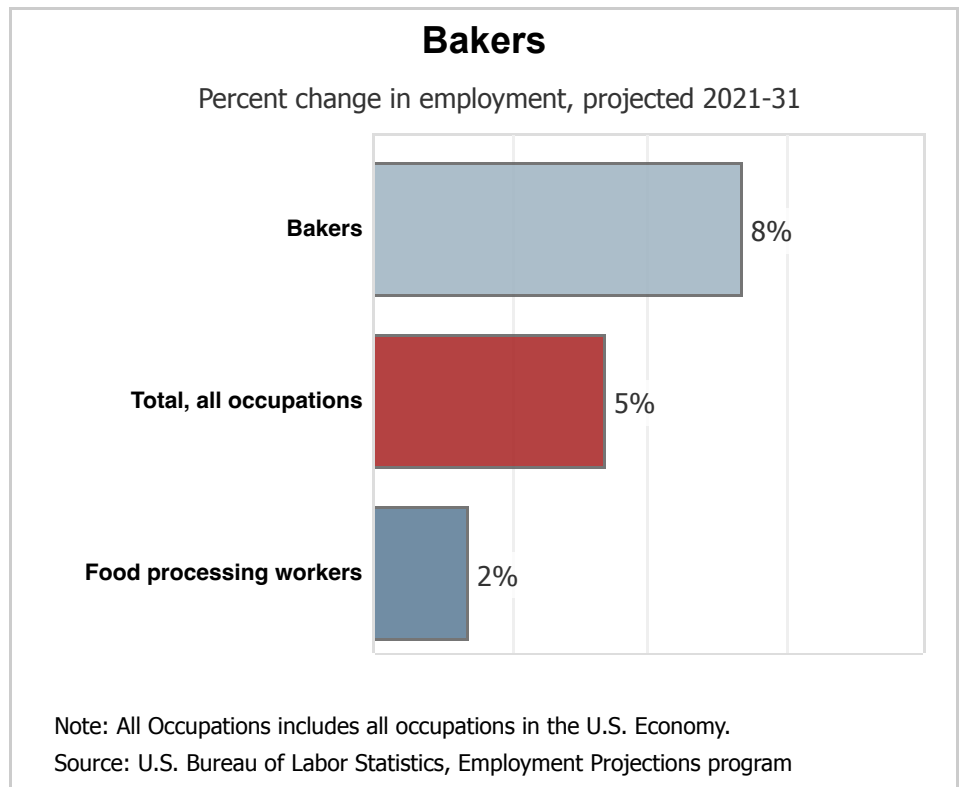
About 31,300 openings for bakers are projected each year, on average, over the decade. Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire.

Employment

Baked goods, including cereals, breads, and snacks, remain a major part of the daily diet for many

people and are often valued for their convenience. Population and income growth are expected to result in greater demand for a variety of commercial and retail specialty baked goods, including cupcakes, pies, and cakes.

As a result, more bakers are expected to be needed in food manufacturing and retail establishments that make and sell baked goods.



Employment projections data for bakers, 2021-31


Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2021	Projected Employment, 2031	Change, 2021-31		Employment by Industry
				Percent	Numeric	
Bakers	51-3011	200,800	217,000	8	16,300	Get data

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program

[<- Pay](#)[State & Area Data ->](#)

State & Area Data

State & Area Data

About this section 

Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS)

The [Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics](#) (OEWS) program produces employment and wage estimates annually for over 800 occupations. These estimates are available for the nation as a whole, for individual states, and for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. The link(s) below go to OEWS data maps for employment and wages by state and area.

- [Bakers](#)

Projections Central

Occupational employment projections are developed for all states by Labor Market Information (LMI) or individual state Employment Projections offices. All state projections data are available at www.projectionscentral.org. Information on this site allows projected employment growth for an occupation to be compared among states or to be compared within one state. In addition, states may produce projections for areas; there are links to each state's websites where these data may be retrieved.

CareerOneStop


CareerOneStop includes hundreds of [occupational profiles](#) with data available by state and metro area. There are links in the left-hand side menu to compare occupational employment by state and occupational wages by local area or metro area. There is also a [salary info tool](#) to search for wages by zip code.

[<- Job Outlook](#)








[Similar Occupations ->](#)



Similar Occupations

Similar Occupations

About this section 

This table shows a list of occupations with job duties that are similar to those of bakers.

	OCCUPATION 	JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION  	2021 MEDIAN PAY  
	Chefs and Head Cooks	Chefs and head cooks oversee the daily food preparation at restaurants and other places where food is served.	High school diploma or equivalent	\$50,160
	Cooks	Cooks season and prepare foods, including soups, salads, entrees, and desserts.	See How to Become One	\$29,120

	Food Preparation Workers	Food preparation workers perform a variety of tasks other than cooking, such as slicing meat and brewing coffee.	No formal educational credential	\$28,780
	Food Processing Equipment Workers	Food processing equipment workers operate machinery that mixes, cooks, or processes ingredients for manufacturing food products.	See How to Become One	\$35,430

[< State & Area Data](#)[More Info ->](#)[More Info](#)

Contacts for More Information

[About this section ?](#)

For details about apprenticeships or other work opportunities in this occupation, contact the offices of the state employment service, the state apprenticeship agency, local unions, or firms that employ bakers. Apprenticeship information is available from the U.S. Department of Labor's Apprenticeship program online or by phone at 877-872-5627. Visit [Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship) to search for apprenticeship opportunities.

For more information about food safety, food handling, or related certifications, check with your state or local department of health.

For more information about certification or training programs, visit

[AIB International](#)[American Culinary Federation](#)[Retail Bakers of America](#)**O*NET**[Bakers](#)[< Similar Occupations](#)**SUGGESTED CITATION:**

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