

Median annual earnings of maids and housekeepers were \$15,410 in 2000. The middle 50 percent earned between \$13,230 and \$18,030. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$11,910, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$22,200. Median annual earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of maids and housekeepers in 2000 are shown below:

Hospitals	\$16,820
Real estate agents and managers	16,500
Nursing and personal care facilities	15,460
Services to buildings	15,150
Hotels and motels	14,760

Median annual earnings of first-line supervisors/managers of housekeeping and janitorial workers were \$25,760 in 2000. The middle 50 percent earned between \$19,920 and \$33,740. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$16,220, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$42,850. Median annual earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of first-line supervisors/managers of housekeeping and janitorial workers in 2000 are shown below:

Elementary and secondary schools	\$29,540
Hospitals	27,010
Nursing and personal care facilities	25,290
Services to buildings	23,000
Hotels and motels	21,820

Related Occupations

Workers who specialize in one of the many job functions of janitors and cleaners include pest control workers; industrial machinery installation, repair, and maintenance workers; and grounds maintenance workers.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about janitorial jobs may be obtained from State employment service offices.

For information on certification in executive housekeeping, contact:

► International Executive Housekeepers Association, Inc., 1001 Eastwind Dr., Suite 301, Westerville, OH 43081-3361. Internet: <http://www.ieha.org>

Grounds Maintenance Workers

(O*NET 37-1012.01, 37-1012.02, 37-3011.00, 37-3012.00, 37-3013.00)

Significant Points

- Opportunities, especially for seasonal or part-time work, should be excellent due to significant job turnover.
- Many beginning jobs have low earnings and are physically demanding.
- Most workers learn through short-term on-the-job training.

Nature of the Work

Attractively designed, healthy, and well-maintained lawns, gardens, and grounds create a positive first impression, establish a peaceful mood, and increase property values. Grounds maintenance workers perform the variety of tasks necessary to achieve a pleasant and functional outdoor environment. They also care for indoor gardens and plantings in commercial and public facilities, such as malls, hotels, and botanical gardens.

The duties of *landscaping workers* and *groundskeeping workers* are similar, and often overlap. Landscaping workers physically install and maintain landscaped areas. They grade property, install lighting or sprinkler systems, and build walkways, terraces, patios, decks, and fountains. In addition to initially transporting and planting new vegetation, they also transplant, mulch, fertilize, and water flowering plants, trees, and shrubs, and mow and water lawns. A growing number of residential and commercial clients, such as managers of office buildings, shopping malls, multiunit residential buildings, and hotels and motels, favor full-service landscape maintenance. Landscaping workers perform a range of duties for such clients on a regular basis during the growing season, including mowing, edging, trimming, fertilizing, dethatching, and mulching.

Groundskeeping workers, also called *groundskeepers*, maintain a variety of facilities, including athletic fields, golf courses, cemeteries, university campuses, and parks. In addition to caring for sod, plants, and trees, they also rake and mulch leaves, clear snow from walkways and parking lots, and use irrigation methods to adjust the amount of water consumption and prevent waste. They see to the proper upkeep and repair of sidewalks, parking lots, groundskeeping equipment, pools, fountains, fences, planters, and benches.

Groundskeeping workers who care for athletic fields keep natural and artificial turf fields in top condition and mark out boundaries and paint turf with team logos and names before events. They must make sure that the underlying soil on natural turf fields has the required composition to allow proper drainage and to support the appropriate grasses used on the field. They regularly mow, water, fertilize, and aerate the fields. Groundskeeping workers also vacuum and disinfect synthetic turf after use in order to prevent growth of harmful bacteria, and periodically remove the turf and replace the cushioning pad.

Workers who maintain golf courses are called *greenskeepers*. Greenskeepers do many of the same things that other groundskeepers do. In addition, greenskeepers periodically relocate the holes on putting greens to eliminate uneven wear of the turf and to add interest and challenge to the game. Greenskeepers also keep canopies, benches, ball washers, and tee markers repaired and freshly painted.

Some groundskeeping workers specialize in caring for cemeteries and memorial gardens. They dig graves to specified depths, generally using a backhoe. They may place concrete slabs on the bottom and around the sides of the grave to line it for greater support. When preparing a site for the burial ceremony, they position the casket-lowering device over the grave, cover the immediate area with an artificial grass carpet, erect a canopy, and arrange folding chairs to accommodate mourners. They regularly mow grass, apply fertilizers and other chemicals, prune shrubs and trees, plant flowers, and remove debris from graves. They also must periodically build the ground up around new gravesites to compensate for settling.

Groundskeeping workers in parks and recreation facilities care for lawns, trees, and shrubs, maintain athletic fields and playgrounds, clean buildings, and keep parking lots, picnic areas, and other public spaces free of litter. They also may remove snow and ice from roads and walkways, erect and dismantle snow fences, and maintain swimming pools. These workers inspect buildings and equipment, make needed repairs, and keep everything freshly painted.

Landscaping and groundskeeping workers use handtools such as shovels, rakes, pruning and regular saws, hedge and brush trimmers, and axes, as well as power lawnmowers, chain saws, snowblowers, and electric clippers. Some use equipment such as tractors and twin-axle vehicles. Landscaping and groundskeeping workers at parks, schools, cemeteries, and golf courses may use sod cutters to harvest sod that will be replanted elsewhere.



Grounds maintenance workers transport and plant potted plants and shrubs.

Pesticide handlers, sprayers, and applicators, vegetation, mix or apply pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, or insecticides through sprays, dusts, vapors, soil incorporation, or chemical application on trees, shrubs, lawns, or botanical crops. Those working for chemical lawn service firms are more specialized. They inspect lawns for problems and apply fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and other chemicals to stimulate growth and prevent or control weed, disease, or insect infestation, as well as practice integrated pest management techniques.

Tree trimmers and pruners cut away dead or excess branches from trees or shrubs to maintain rights-of-way for roads, sidewalks, or utilities, or to improve the appearance, health, and value of trees. Tree trimmers also may fill cavities in trees to promote healing and prevent deterioration. Workers who specialize in pruning trim and shape ornamental trees and shrubs for private residences, golf courses, or other institutional grounds. Tree trimmers and pruners use handsaws, pruning hooks, shears, and clippers. When trimming near powerlines, they usually use truck-mounted lifts and power pruners.

Working Conditions

Many of the jobs for grounds maintenance workers are seasonal, meaning that they are in demand mainly in the spring, summer, and fall when most planting, mowing and trimming, and cleanup is necessary. The work, most of which is performed outdoors in all kinds of weather, can be physically demanding and repetitive, involving much bending, lifting, and shoveling. Workers in landscaping and groundskeeping may be under pressure to get the job completed, especially when preparing for scheduled events such as athletic competitions or burials.

Those who work with pesticides, fertilizers, and other chemicals, as well as potentially dangerous equipment and tools such as power lawnmowers, chain saws, and power clippers, must exercise safety precautions. Workers who use motorized equipment must take care to protect themselves against hearing damage.

Employment

Grounds maintenance workers held about 1.1 million jobs in 2000. Employment was distributed as follows:

Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	894,000
First-line supervisors/managers of landscaping, lawn service, and groundskeeping workers	159,000
Tree trimmers and pruners	52,000
Pesticide handlers, sprayers, and applicators, vegetation	27,000

About 42 percent of wage and salary workers in grounds maintenance were employed in companies providing landscape and horticultural services. Others worked for firms operating and building real estate, amusement and recreation facilities such as golf courses and racetracks, and retail nurseries and garden stores. Some were employed by local governments, installing and maintaining landscaping for parks, schools, hospitals, and other public facilities.

More than 1 out of every 6 grounds maintenance workers were self-employed, providing landscape maintenance directly to customers on a contract basis. About 1 of every 7 worked part time; many of these were of school age.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

There usually are no minimum educational requirements for entry-level positions in grounds maintenance. In 2000, most workers had a high school education or less, although a diploma is necessary for some jobs. Short-term on-the-job training usually is sufficient to teach new hires how to operate equipment such as mowers, trimmers, leafblowers, and small tractors, and to follow correct safety procedures. Entry-level workers must be able to follow directions and learn proper planting procedures. If driving is an essential part of a job, employers look for applicants with a good driving record and some experience driving a truck. Workers who deal directly with customers must get along well with people. Employers also look for responsible, self-motivated individuals, because grounds maintenance workers often work with little supervision.

Laborers who demonstrate a willingness to work hard and quickly, have good communication skills, and take an interest in the business may advance to crew leader or other supervisory positions. Advancement or entry into positions such as grounds manager or landscape contractor usually requires some formal education beyond high school, and several years of progressively more responsible experience.

Most States require certification for workers who apply pesticides. Certification requirements vary, but usually include passing a test on the proper and safe use and disposal of insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides. Some States require that landscape contractors be licensed.

The Professional Grounds Management Society (PGMS) offers certification to grounds managers who have a combination of 8 years of experience and formal education beyond high school, and pass an examination covering subjects such as equipment management, personnel management, environmental issues, turf care, ornamentals, and circulatory systems. The PGMS also offers certification to groundskeepers who have a high school diploma or equivalent, plus 2 years of experience in the grounds maintenance field.

The Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) offers the designations Certified Landscape Professional or Certified Landscape Technician to those who meet established education and experience standards and pass an ALCA examination. The hands-on test for technicians covers areas such as maintenance equipment operation and the installation of plants by reading a plan. A written safety test also is administered.

Some workers with groundskeeping backgrounds may start their own businesses after several years of experience.

Job Outlook

Those interested in grounds maintenance occupations should find plentiful job opportunities in the future. Because of high turnover, a large number of job openings is expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to other occupations or leave the labor force. These occupations attract many part-time workers. Some take grounds maintenance jobs to earn money for school or simply to secure an income until they find a better-paying job.

Because wages for beginners are low and the work is physically demanding, many employers have difficulty attracting enough workers to fill all openings.

Employment of grounds maintenance workers is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2010, in response to increasing demand for groundskeeping and related services. Expected growth in the construction of commercial and industrial buildings, shopping malls, homes, highways, and recreational facilities should contribute to demand for these workers.

The upkeep and renovation of existing landscaping and grounds are continuing sources of demand for grounds maintenance workers. Owners of many existing buildings and facilities, including colleges and universities, recognize the importance of “curb appeal” and are expected to use grounds maintenance services more extensively to maintain and upgrade their properties. Homeowners also are expected to continue using landscaping services to maintain the beauty and value of their property. As the “echo” boom generation (children of baby boomers) comes of age, the demand for parks, athletic fields, and recreational facilities also can be expected to sustain the demand for grounds maintenance workers.

Job opportunities for nonseasonal work are more numerous in regions with temperate climates, where landscaping and lawn services are required all year. However, opportunities may vary depending on local economic conditions.

Earnings

Median hourly earnings in 2000 of grounds maintenance workers were as follows:

First-line supervisors/managers of landscaping, lawn service, and groundskeeping workers	\$14.70
Tree trimmers and pruners	11.41
Pesticide handlers, sprayers, and applicators, vegetation	11.11
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	8.80

Median hourly earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of landscaping and groundskeeping workers in 2000 were as follows:

Local government	\$11.41
Real estate agents and managers	9.05
Subdividers and developers	8.71
Landscape and horticultural services	8.63
Miscellaneous amusement and recreation services	8.34
Real estate operators and lessors	8.18

Related Occupations

Grounds maintenance workers perform most of their work outdoors and have some knowledge of plants and soils. Others whose jobs may require that they work outdoors and are otherwise related are agricultural workers; farmers, ranchers, and agricultural managers; forest, conservation, and logging workers; landscape architects; and biological scientists.

Sources of Additional Information

For career and certification information on tree trimmers and pruners, contact:

► National Arborist Association, 3 Perimeter Rd., Unit I, Manchester, NH 03103. Internet: <http://www.natlarb.com>

For information on work as a landscaping and groundskeeping worker, contact:

► Professional Lawn Care Association of America, 1000 Johnson Ferry Rd. NE., Suite C-135, Marietta, GA, 30068-2112. Internet: <http://www.plcaa.org>

► Associated Landscape Contractors of America, 150 Elden St., Suite 270, Herndon, VA, 20170.

For information on becoming a licensed pesticide sprayer, contact your State’s Department of Agriculture.

Pest Control Workers

(O*NET 37-2021.00)

Significant Points

- Pesticides used by pest control workers can pose health risks.
- Federal and State laws require licensure through training and examination.
- Job prospects should be favorable for qualified applicants because many people do not find pest control work appealing.

Nature of the Work

Roaches, rats, mice, spiders, termites, fleas, ants, and bees—few people welcome them into their homes or offices. Unwanted creatures that infest households, buildings, or surrounding areas are pests that can pose serious risks to human health and safety. It is a pest control worker’s job to eliminate them.

Pest control workers locate, identify, destroy, and repel pests. They use their knowledge of pests’ lifestyles and habits, along with an arsenal of pest management techniques—applying chemicals, setting traps, operating equipment, and even modifying structures—to alleviate pest problems.

The best known method of pest control is pesticide application. Pest control workers use two different types of pesticides—general use and restricted use. General use pesticides are the most widely used and are readily available; in diluted concentrations, they are available to the public. Restricted use pesticides are available only to certified professionals for controlling the most severe infestations. Their registration, labeling, and application are regulated by Federal law, interpreted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), because of their potential harm to pest control workers, customers, and the environment.

Pesticides are not pest control workers’ only tool, however. Pest control workers increasingly use a combination of pest management techniques, known as integrated pest management. One method involves using proper sanitation and creating physical barriers, for pests cannot survive without food and will not infest a building if they cannot enter it. Another method involves using baits, some of which destroy the pests, and others that prevent them from reproducing. Yet another method involves using mechanical devices, such as traps, that do not allow pests to reenter the environment.

Integrated pest management is becoming popular for several reasons. First, pesticides can pose environmental and health risks. Second, some pests are becoming more resistant to pesticides in certain situations. Finally, an integrated pest management plan is more effective in the long term than use of a pesticide alone.

Most pest control workers work in one of three positions—pest control technician, applicator, or supervisor. Position titles vary by State, but the hierarchy—based on training and responsibility required—remains consistent.

Pest control technicians identify problem areas and operate and maintain traps. They assist applicators by carrying supplies, organizing materials, and preparing equipment. In addition, they may make sales presentations on pest control products or services. Technicians are licensed to apply pesticides only under an applicator’s supervision.