

Occupational Therapy



WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY?

Occupational Therapy is an evidence-based, scientific profession that helps individuals of all ages to recover from injury, disability or illness and participate in activities of daily living.

Occupational Therapists practice from a holistic perspective, considering the patients' contexts to design customized activities in pursuit of their needs. For example: helping children with disabilities to participate fully in school and social situations, helping people recovering from injury to regain skills, supporting older adults experiencing physical and cognitive changes.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Occupational Therapy is a career for individuals who care about people and have a desire to learn, achieve, and contribute their best to society and the profession.

The *U.S. News & World Report* ranks OT as 11th among health care jobs and 13th among all jobs overall.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the job outlook for OTs will improve substantially in the next several years relative to other fields.

OTs can practice in diverse settings with patients of diverse ages, from working with premature newborns at pediatric hospitals to supporting people with traumatic injuries, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, or mental health problems at rehabilitation hospitals and nursing homes.

ACADEMIC TRAINING

- Students must complete a master's (MSOT) or doctoral (OTD) degree.

- Search for programs online: AOTA.org/Education-Careers/Find-School.aspx

CAREER PLANNING

- **What should I major in if I want to apply to an entry-level master's or an entry-level doctoral program?** Examples of majors include biology, kinesiology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, liberal arts, and anatomy. It is important that you contact the educational programs you are interested in applying and make sure you have taken the necessary prerequisites for admission into their programs.
- **Some programs require that I have observation or volunteer experience. Who do I contact to set this up?** It is suggested that you contact local facilities that employ occupational therapists and/or occupational therapy assistants (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, or school systems). Be prepared to discuss your reason for the request and your availability. You are advised to call facilities rather than email them.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.: AOTA.org[Facebook.com/AmericanOccupationalTherapyAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanOccupationalTherapyAssociation)[AOTA](http://AOTA.org)
- The American Journal of Occupational Therapy: AJOT.AOTA.org
- OT Practice Magazine: AOTA.org/Publications-News/OTP.aspx

If you are interested in UTC's Occupational Therapy programs, please visit utc.edu/ot.

UTC.EDU/PRE-HEALTH

 THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
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