

Esthetician: Career Summary, Occupational Outlook, and Educational Requirements

Esthetician: Career Outlook and Job Profile

Learn about the education and preparation needed to become an esthetician. Get a quick view of the requirements as well as details about schooling, job duties and licensing to find out if this is the career for you. If becoming an esthetician is something you're thinking about, you will need to complete an esthetician or cosmetology program, and obtain a state license. Estheticians may work in a doctor's office, like a dermatologist's or plastic surgeon's, or they can work in a spa or salon. Sometimes estheticians, also called skin care specialists, are self-employed.

Essential Information

An esthetician, also known as a skin care specialist, helps people look their best through a variety of cleansing and cosmetic treatments. They usually work in spas or salons, but many are employed in medical offices. Some are self-employed. Every state except Connecticut requires that estheticians be licensed. This generally requires completing a state-approved esthetics or cosmetology program and passing exams. Job opportunities for estheticians should be good over the next few years, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), growing much faster than average for all occupations.

What is an Esthetician?

The role of an esthetician is to help better a client's skin and facial beauty, working within the specifications of the client. Estheticians work at spas and salons and provide various skin care treatments, such as those for removing dead skin or improving its appearance. They also may sell beauty products and recommended them for clients. The job may entail running business operations as well. Estheticians work in the beauty industry and typically focus on skin care. Read the table below for information about becoming an esthetician.

Required Education	Certificate Program; State-approved esthetician or cosmetology program
Other Requirements	Licensing required in most states, except CT
Key Skills	Head and neck massage, facials, skin treatments, makeup and hair removal
Projected Job Growth (2018-2028)*	11%* <i>(for all skincare specialists)</i>
Median Salary (2018)	\$31,290 - \$36,350* <i>(for skincare specialists)</i>

Source: * U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

What Are the Educational Requirements for This Career?

In most states, completion of an esthetics training program and licensing are required to work in this career. Most esthetics programs award a certificate and are completed in one year or less, but some associate programs may be available. The curriculum may include hands-on work with clients in conjunction with classroom study. You may take courses in cosmetology esthetics and salon concepts such as sanitation, skin treatments and science, business practices and make-up application.

Most programs teach the fundamental techniques for administering treatments to clients including facial techniques, makeup application methods and eyebrow tinting procedures. In advanced programs, you may learn about techniques like laser treatments.

Career Outlook for Estheticians

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that the job outlook for estheticians is favorable, with an expected growth of 11% between 2018 and 2028 (www.bls.gov). This boom in growth is attributed to new service offerings and the rising demand for skin treatments for medical and cosmetic purposes. The BLS added that workers should have good job opportunities because salons and spas are growing in number. The BLS added that estheticians who have experience should have the best job opportunities.

As of May 2018, the median annual salary for a skincare specialist was \$31,290, according to the BLS. The industry that employed the most estheticians was personal care services. The top-paying employers were general medical and surgical hospitals, which paid estheticians an annual mean salary of \$46,020. By state, California had the highest number of estheticians, followed by Texas, New York and Florida, the BLS noted.

What Can I Expect In a Career as an Esthetician?

As an esthetician, you cleanse and beautify a client's skin through head and neck massages, full-body treatments and facials. You may also apply makeup and remove body hair. Giving manicures and pedicures may also fall under your job duties. Recommending and selling skin and body care products to clients may also be a part of your job.

You may work full-time, but part-time work is common. It is also normal in this career to work variable schedules.

Employers typically include spas and beauty salons. However, work may be available with doctors, which may allow you to perform advanced tasks such as deep chemical peels.

What Is My Occupational Outlook?

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), job openings for estheticians, also called skin care specialists, were estimated to increase 11% between 2018 and 2028 (www.bls.gov). An aging population interested in better lifestyles could contribute to this faster than average growth. Qualifying for jobs within high-end establishments may be easier if you are licensed and experienced.

Job Profile for Estheticians

Estheticians fall into the general category of cosmetologists. Specifically, they keep skin healthy through skin care and cosmetic treatments. They perform skin treatment and cleansing procedures. This work includes waxing, massages, hair removal, light therapy and facials. Estheticians are also skilled at selecting and applying makeup for clients to enhance features and hide skin issues.

Also, estheticians may work in the offices of dermatologists and plastic surgeons to help them with patient skincare issues caused by illnesses, accidents or medical procedures. Estheticians may be self-employed, too.

Licensing Requirements

Estheticians are required to have a state license to work. Each state's licensing requirements vary but generally include being at least 16 years old, possessing a high school diploma and completing a licensed cosmetology school program. These programs may take up to nine months to complete. Applicants must then pass a state licensing exam.

Estheticians, or skin care specialists, perform skin care and cosmetic treatments, including cleansing treatments, waxing, massage, facials, and makeup selection and application. They need to complete a state-approved cosmetology or esthetician program and obtain a state license. Estheticians work in medical settings, salons and spas; some are self-employed. Demand for skin care specialists is predicted to be strong with growth at 11% through 2028.