

Everyone Wants A Career That He Or She Loves

But once you find the perfect job, only one question that is then at the top of the list: What are you gonna pay me?

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the median hourly earnings of automotive technicians and mechanics, including commission, were \$13.70 (\$28,500 per year) in 2000.

The middle 50% earned between \$9.86 and \$18.67 an hour. The lowest 10% less than \$7.59, and the highest 10% earned more than \$23.67 an hour. BLS points out that many experienced technicians employed by automotive dealers and independent repair shops receive a commission related to the labor cost charged to the customer. With this method, weekly earning depend on the amount of work completed.

"Employers frequently guarantee commissioned mechanics and technicians a minimum salary," according to BLS. Some master technicians earn from \$70,000 to \$100,000 annually,"

According to the 2001 Professional Automotive technician Survey, conducted by Underhood Service magazine, 28.9% of technicians surveyed said they are paid hourly only; 26.3% are paid salary only; 10.5% are paid hourly, plus receive a percentage of labor and parts; and 34.2% reported they were paid in "other" ways, most of whom said they were paid "flat-rate" for completed service work.

Of those who are paid hourly, the average pay reported was about \$21 an hour (\$43,680 a year). This is slightly higher than the median reported by the BLS, but most to be "experienced" technicians with an average age of 40 years. Most of them have been working in the industry for approximately 23 years and have been at their current shop for a little more than 10 years.

The body shop industry is pretty much on par with other mechanics and technicians. According to a 2001- 2002 profile prepared by Babcox Research, the average salary for metal-techs is \$41,415; for painters, \$45,457; and for mechanics, \$38,028. In the body shop side of the automotive aftermarket, entry-level employees can expect to make between \$21,000 and \$25,000 annually.

If you're interested in a career in an automotive machine shop, rebuilding engines, you can expect to be hired in at about \$9.22 an hour (\$19,200 per year) based on 2000 survey numbers. Experienced machine operators average about \$14.82 an hour (\$30,825 per year) while core disassembly people make about \$8.64 an hour.

In the tire industry, managers average about 43,399, while tire technicians average \$24,711.

It should be noted that the annual salaries listed in this article are based on 40-hour workweek and do not include overtime pay, bonus pay or percentage of labor pay.

As you can see, automotive service can offer a wide range of different jobs and varying salaries. Making the right choice for you depends on where your strong points lie, what region of the country you live in, and if you are interested in finding your niche or in making a lot of money. Either way, Tomorrow's Technician as well as your instructors, parents and mentors can help guide you.

Types and percentages of fringe benefits reported by independent automotive technicians. Respondents selected all that applied to them.

From *Tomorrow's Technician*