



OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK

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Manicurists and Pedicurists

PRINTER-FRIENDLY

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Summary

Summary



Quick Facts: Manicurists and Pedicurists

2021 Median Pay	\$29,210 per year \$14.05 per hour
Typical Entry-Level Education	Postsecondary nondegree award
Work Experience in a Related Occupation	None
On-the-job Training	None
Number of Jobs, 2021	163,600
Job Outlook, 2021-31	22% (Much faster than average)
Employment Change, 2021-31	36,600

[What Manicurists and Pedicurists Do](#)

Manicurists and pedicurists clean, shape, and beautify fingernails and toenails.

[Work Environment](#)

Manicurists and pedicurists usually work in a nail salon, spa, or hair salon. Most manicurists and pedicurists work full time, although part-time work is common. Work schedules may vary and often include evenings and weekends.

[How to Become a Manicurist or Pedicurist](#)

Manicurists and pedicurists must complete a state-approved cosmetology or nail technician program and then pass a state exam for licensure.

[Pay](#)

The median hourly wage for manicurists and pedicurists was \$14.05 in May 2021.

[Job Outlook](#)

Employment of manicurists and pedicurists is projected to grow 22 percent from 2021 to 2031, much faster than the average for all occupations.

About 26,600 openings for manicurists and pedicurists 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 manicurists and pedicurists.

[Similar Occupations](#)

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

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

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

[What They Do ->](#)

What They Do

What Manicurists and Pedicurists Do

Manicurists and pedicurists clean, shape, and beautify fingernails and toenails.

Duties

Manicurists and pedicurists typically do the following:

- Discuss nail treatments and services available
- Remove clients' nail polish, if any
- Clean, trim, and file nails
- Soften calluses and remove rough skin
- Massage and moisturize hands (for a manicure) and feet (for a pedicure)
- Polish or buff nails
- Apply or remove artificial nails and nail art
- Advise clients about nail and skin care for hands and feet
- Clean and disinfect their work area and tools



Manicurists and pedicurists polish or buff nails.

Manicurists and pedicurists, sometimes called *nail technicians*, work exclusively on the hands and feet to groom fingernails and toenails. A typical service involves soaking the clients' hands or feet to soften the skin in order to remove dead skin cells and artificial nails. Manicurists and pedicurists apply lotion to the hands and feet to moisturize the skin. They also may shape and apply polish to natural fingernails or toenails or apply and decorate artificial fingernails.

Manicurists and pedicurists use equipment that includes nail clippers, nail files, and cuticle tools. They must be focused while they perform their duties, because most of the tools they use are sharp. They keep their tools clean and sanitary and follow health regulations to protect consumer safety.

Some manicurists and pedicurists operate their own nail salon, which requires performing business tasks such as keeping inventory and ordering supplies. They also hire and supervise workers and may sell nail care products, such as nail polish and hand or foot cream.

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Work Environment

Work Environment

Manicurists and pedicurists held about 163,600 jobs in 2021. The largest employers of manicurists and pedicurists were as follows:

Personal care services	75%
Self-employed workers	24

Manicurists and pedicurists usually work in a nail salon, spa, or hair salon. The job involves a lot of sitting. A small number of manicurists and pedicurists make house calls, traveling to their clients' locations to provide mobile services. However, mobile services may not be widely available.

Manicurists and pedicurists use chemicals when working on fingernails and toenails, so they often wear protective clothing such as gloves and masks.

Work Schedules

Most manicurists and pedicurists work full time, although part-time work is common. Schedules may vary and often include evenings and weekends. Some manicurists and pedicurists work more than 40 hours per week. Self-employed workers often set their own schedules.

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How to Become One

How to Become a Manicurist or Pedicurist

Manicurists and pedicurists must complete a state-approved cosmetology or nail technician program and then pass a state exam for licensure.

Education

Manicurists and pedicurists must complete a state-approved cosmetology or nail technician program. These programs usually involve classroom and hands-on training. For a list of approved programs, contact your state licensing agency.

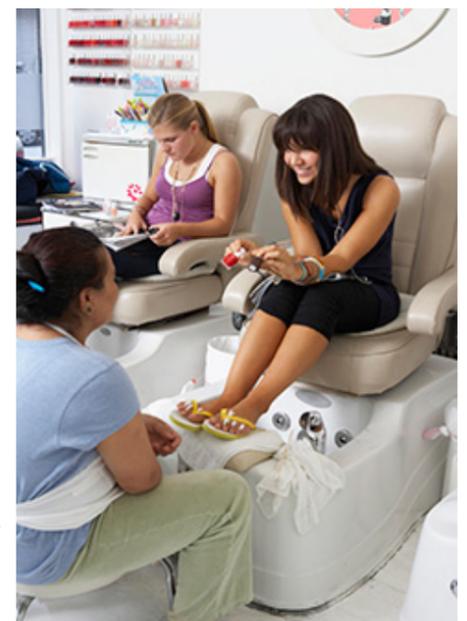
Licenses, Certifications, and Registrations

State licensing requirements vary but usually include completing a state-approved cosmetology or nail technician program and passing a state exam. Applicants also may need to be at least 16 or 18 years old and have a high school diploma or the equivalent. Check with your state licensing agency for details.

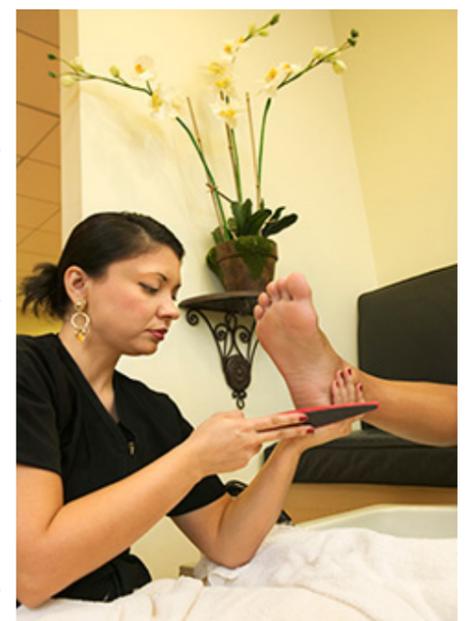
Under state reciprocity agreements, licensed manicurists and pedicurists may be able to get a license in another state without needing to complete an additional program or to pass that state's exam.

Important Qualities

Business skills. Manicurists and pedicurist who run their own nail salon must understand business principles. For example, they should be skilled at administrative tasks, such as accounting, and be able to manage a salon and its personnel efficiently and profitably.



Manicurists and pedicurists work in spas or nail salons, and often sit for long periods.



Manicurists and pedicurists must pass a state-approved cosmetology program before licensure.

Creativity. Manicurists and pedicurists must be able to neatly finish small, intricate nail designs, as well as to suggest designs and match them to individual tastes.

Customer-service skills. Manicurists and pedicurists must have good listening and interpersonal skills to meet clients' needs. Interacting with clients while doing a manicure or pedicure encourages repeat business.

Dexterity. A steady hand is essential in achieving precise nail design. In addition, because manicurists and pedicurists often use sharp tools, they must have good finger dexterity.

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[Pay ->](#)

Pay

Pay

The median hourly wage for manicurists and pedicurists was \$14.05 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 \$10.72, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$18.67.

In May 2021, the median hourly wages for manicurists and pedicurists in the top industries in which they worked were as follows:

Personal care services	\$14.05
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Job Outlook

Job Outlook

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Employment

The projected increase in employment reflects demand for nail services, such as mini-sessions (quick manicures at a low cost) and mobile manicures and pedicures (nail services offered outside of the salon).

The desire among many women and a growing number of men to lead a healthier lifestyle through better grooming and wellness is expected to result in higher employment for manicurists and pedicurists.

Considered a low-cost luxury service, manicures and pedicures will continue to be in demand by individuals at all income levels.

Employment projections data for manicurists and pedicurists, 2021-31

Manicurists and pedicurists

SOC Code:
39-5092

Employment, 2021:
163,600

Projected Employment, 2031:
200,300

Change, 2021-31 (Percent):
22

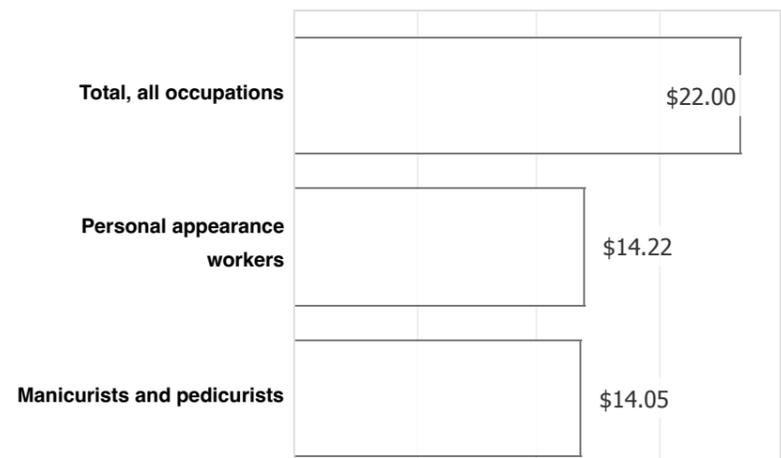
Change, 2021-31 (Numeric):
36,600

Employment By Industry:
[Get data](#)

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

Manicurists and Pedicurists

Median hourly wages, May 2021



Note: All Occupations includes all occupations in the U.S. Economy.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics

[Job Outlook ->](#)

Manicurists and Pedicurists

Percent change in employment, projected 2021-31



Note: All Occupations includes all occupations in the U.S. Economy.

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

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State & Area Data

State & Area Data

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.

- [Manicurists and pedicurists](#)

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.com. 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.

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Similar Occupations

Similar Occupations

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

[Barbers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists](#)

Job Duties:

Barbers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists provide haircutting, hairstyling, and other services related to personal appearance.

Entry-Level Education:

Postsecondary nondegree award

2021 Median Pay:

\$29,680

[Skincare Specialists](#)

Job Duties:

Skincare specialists provide cleansing and other face and body treatments to enhance a person's appearance.

Entry-Level Education:

Postsecondary nondegree award

2021 Median Pay:

\$37,300

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

More Info

Contacts for More Information

For information about manicurists and pedicurists, including cosmetology and nail technician schools and state licensing, visit

[American Association of Cosmetology Schools](#) (AACCS)

[Beauty Schools Directory](#)

[National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology](#) (NIC)

For information about other professional links, visit

[Professional Beauty Association](#) (PBA)

O*NET

[Manicurists and Pedicurists](#)

[<- Similar Occupations](#)**SUGGESTED CITATION:**

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Manicurists and Pedicurists, at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/personal-care-and-service/manicurists-and-pedicurists.htm> (visited September 14, 2022).

Last Modified Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2022

U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS Office of Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections PSB Suite 2135 2 Massachusetts Avenue NE Washington, DC 20212-0001

Telephone:1-202-691-5700_ www.bls.gov/ooh [Contact OOH](#)