



How To Guide:

How much should a worker in a given occupation be making in my region?

Occupational wages are important pieces of information for staff at many colleges. For instance, they can help faculty set expectations for students looking to select a career, or help inform colleges about whether their programs prepare workers for quality jobs. We are going to quickly walk you through the steps necessary to find occupational wage information in your region.

1. Go to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (or BLS) website, or www.bls.gov
2. On the BLS home page, scroll over the subjects tab on the top banner.
3. Under the heading of “Pay & Benefits”, click on “Wages by Area and Occupation”.
4. Under the heading of “Wage Data by Metropolitan Area”, click on the link that says: For 375 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), 34 metropolitan divisions, and over 170 nonmetropolitan areas.
5. Once you are on the page for “Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates”, click on the link for Gadsden, AL.
6. Scroll down the table until you reach Standard Occupational Classification Code 51-4041, which is the SOC Code for Machinists.
 - a. Note you can also use the “Filter Table by Text” box at the top of the table to find the occupation in question.
7. Read across the row and you will see that in May 2014, the Median Hourly Wage for Machinists in the Gadsden, AL MSA is \$13.74, the Mean Hourly Wage is \$15.66, and the Annual Mean Wage is \$32,570.



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