

CAREER PROFILE

Chemist and Materials Scientist

Chemists and materials scientists study the properties of matter and investigate how different substances interact and change. They use their knowledge of chemistry to develop new medicines, improve materials, create safer products, protect the environment, and much more. Chemists and materials scientists work in many different industries, such as healthcare, energy, food science, agriculture, and consumer products.

➤ School to Career Pathway

- Complete coursework in chemistry, biology, physics, and math.
- Gain laboratory experience through school projects, internships, or research opportunities.
- Earn a bachelor's degree in chemistry or a related science.

➤ Durable Skills

As a chemist or materials scientist, you need:

- Math and analytical skills to calculate and evaluate the results of experiments to ensure accuracy in the results.
- Perseverance to persist in the trial-and-error demands of laboratory work and avoid becoming discouraged.
- Interpersonal skills of cooperation, teamwork, and motivation to work with many different people.
- Communication skills to be able to convey information clearly in reports and presentations for both technical and nontechnical audiences.

➤ Paycheck Peek

\$41.64 hourly, \$86,620 annually

*Note that annual wages vary by location (state, city, or work setting)



Core Duties

Conduct experiments

Plan and perform laboratory experiments to learn about the properties and reactions of different substances.

Analyze samples

Use scientific instruments to identify chemicals, measure their properties, and determine the composition of materials.

Develop new products

Create or improve products such as medicines, plastics, cosmetics, foods, batteries, and cleaning products.

Record and interpret data

Carefully collect, organize, and analyze experimental results to draw accurate conclusions and solve problems.

Follow laboratory safety procedures

Handle chemicals and equipment safely while following strict rules to protect people and the environment.



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Could This Be Your Thing?

- Do you like to cook and experiment with recipes?
- Are you always asking the question: How does that work?
- Do you measure and pay attention to procedures carefully?
- Do you like finding patterns in numbers, charts, or graphs?

Explore Similar Career Pathways

- chemical technician
- chemical engineer
- material engineer

Dig Deeper Here

Find out more about all careers at: [US Bureau of Labor Statistics Student's Desk](#)

Find out more about STEM careers at: [Careers with STEM: STEM](#)

Find out more about the careers above:

- [O*NET Online: Chemical Technicians](#)
- [O*NET Online: Chemical Engineers](#)
- [O*NET Online: Material Engineers](#)