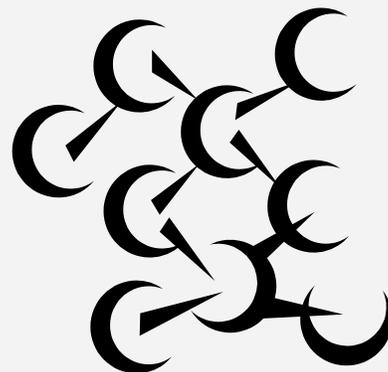


# Florida Institute of Technology– Career Management Services

## Career Profile: Chemistry

Chemists and materials scientists search for and use new knowledge about chemicals. Chemical research has led to the discovery and development of new and improved synthetic fibers, paints, adhesives, drugs, cosmetics, electronic components, lubricants, and thousands of other products. Chemists and materials scientists also develop processes such as improved oil refining and petrochemical processing that save energy and reduce pollution. Applications of materials science include studies of superconducting materials, graphite materials, integrated-circuit chips, and fuel cells.



Chemists often specialize. Analytical chemists determine the structure, composition, and nature of substances by examining and identifying their various elements or compounds. Organic chemists study the chemistry of the vast number of carbon compounds that make up all living things. Inorganic chemists study compounds consisting mainly of elements other than carbon, such as those in electronic components.

Physical and theoretical chemists study the physical characteristics of atoms and molecules and the theoretical properties of matter; and they investigate how chemical reactions work. Their research may result in new and better energy sources. Macromolecular chemists study the behavior of atoms and molecules. Medicinal chemists study the structural properties of compounds intended for applications to human medicine. Materials chemists study and develop new materials to improve existing products or make new ones.

Chemists and materials scientists usually work regular hours in offices and laboratories. Chemists do some of their work in a chemical plant or outdoors. Chemists typically work regular hours. A 40-hour workweek is usual, but longer hours are not uncommon.

A bachelor's degree in chemistry or a related discipline is the minimum educational requirement; many research jobs require a master's degree or, more often, a Ph.D.

The median annual wage of chemists was \$68,320 in May 2010. 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 \$39,250, and the top 10 percent more than \$116,130.

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**For more information on a career in Chemistry contact the Career Management Services Office or your academic advisor.**

**Sources:** Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition, National Association of Colleges and Employers Salary Survey: Winter 2011



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