

HVAC Careers - Starting in High School, Students Step Up to Fill an Ever-Growing Need

The "correct" career path is always a topic of dispute, and the right answer swings and sways with the times. From the 1950s through the 70s, blue-collar careers such as steel working, carpentry, and refrigeration and HVAC installation and repair were tickets to a middle-class life, and all of the luxuries - automobiles, detached homes, summer vacations - this lifestyle afforded. However, the demise of steel and American automobile manufacturing in the 1970s signaled a new tide for American workers - the wave of the "mandatory" college degree. No longer. Blue-collar and labor careers are making a comeback in the year 2007. This makes perfect sense: If more and more people between the ages of 18 and 30 are seeking college degrees, these degrees cease to be precious commodities - becoming, instead, common possessions. As more and more Millennial parents push their children into bachelors and masters degree programs, some blue-collar professions wind up short-staffed, and in immediate need of workers with skill. This trend of "not enough workers" and "too few skilled technicians" is especially apparent in the HVAC, refrigeration, heating, and cooling industry. In this profession, students will spend relatively little on training costs; the total time investment is low, as well. However, the return is enormous. The median earnings of this profession, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), were \$17.43 in May 2004 - and, market theory dictates that increasing shortages in technical professions raises the median salaries of these professions even further. Training programs like those offered by the Refrigeration School, Inc., a Phoenix, AZ, technical school, offer students hands-on instruction that is directly applicable to their jobs. These schools feature high post-graduation job placement rates in HVAC professions. Students who excel in their schooling can ascend the career ladder relatively quickly. The scarcity of HVAC technicians with certification is no surprise, given recent labor and education trends. The number of Americans holding bachelor' degrees continues to rise; meanwhile, the growth of low-wage service jobs - like restaurant work and retail customer service - far outpaces the growth of white-collar professions. The stereotype of the liberal arts grad slaving away in one of these service-sector jobs still holds. Many young people in non-science and non-technical fields continue to be significantly under-employed in these low-paying jobs, especially during their first few years out of college. According to the Oregon Employment Department: "First, some occupations requiring a bachelor's degree simply pay low wages. Second, many with their bachelor's degree are underemployed - working in occupations that do not require their level of education. Training for HVAC certification, like several other specialized technical fields, boasts an excellent return on investment, with students directly employed in their field after program completion, and earning wages that out-pace those of many bachelor's degree holders. So, what's the best preparation for the HVAC certification Interested students might want to take the following steps: 1. Prepare with mathematics and computer courses. Proficiency in these subject areas increases your chances of success in school. Math changes the way your brain works, training you to think both logically and analytically. 2. Finish high school, get a GED, or talk to an HVAC school admissions representative about an "ability to benefit" testing, such as the one that RSI offers. The mathematical and English skills you demonstrate when taking one of these actions is essential for success in the HVAC field. 3. Research schools and find the one that suits you best. An accredited school with strong job placement records, such as the Refrigeration School, Inc., is often your best bet. 4. Take advantage of your education. Though HVAC schools such as RSI boast experienced faculty and staff, these teachers report that students who experience the greatest success in the field are those who fully participate in their education. As job security waxes and wanes in a turbulent, wartime economy, HVAC, heating, and refrigeration careers are strong, and growing. Those who are reluctant to pursue a bachelor's degree in a saturated market might benefit greatly from other options, like a certified HVAC and refrigeration training program.

About the Author

The Refrigeration School, Inc. gets students of post-high school age and beyond into [HVAC, heating and air conditioning careers](#) of security and growth. Learn more about their [HVAC certification and training programs](#) at <http://www.refrigerationschool.com>.

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