Orthotics and Prosthetics
(orthopedic braces & artificial limbs)

Make a career of making a difference—every day

Orthotic and prosthetic (O&P) professionals find great personal satisfaction from their work by helping individuals maximize their independence. O&P is an allied health profession that offers exciting opportunities for employment as an O&P practitioner, assistant, fitter, or technician.

Information

For more information about careers and schooling in O&P, please visit www.opcareers.org or call (703) 836-0788.

This brochure was made possible through the collaboration of:

- American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists
- American Board for Certification in Orthotics and Prosthetics, Inc.
- American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association
- National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics
- National Association of Prosthetic-Orthotic Educators
- National Commission on Orthotic and Prosthetic Education
- Orthotic & Prosthetic Assistance Fund

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Orthotics and Prosthetics Today

A Great Career

Work with other members of the rehabilitation team, problem solve, design, and help patients reach their goals...these are among the typical things O&P professionals do every day. Orthotics and prosthetics is a specialized allied health profession which combines art, science, technology, and creativity to help patients reach their goals. Unlike many allied health professions, you build lifelong relationships with your patients.

Professionals in O&P assess, design, fabricate and fit custom orthotic and prosthetic devices to help individuals with disabilities of all ages lead more active, independent lives. Some may choose to focus on pediatrics, sports or other specialty areas.

Where would you work?

O&P professionals work in a variety of settings:
- Private offices
- Hospitals
- Rehabilitation facilities
- Specialty clinics
- Home health settings
- Nursing homes

Orthotic and Prosthetic Education

Educational requirements for O&P professionals vary. For instance, if you are interested in working as an orthotic or prosthetic practitioner, you will need a strong background in the sciences. At the college level, you may complete a bachelor’s degree in orthotics and prosthetics. If your degree is unrelated to O&P, additional science courses maybe required followed by a six-month to one year O&P certificate program.

Upon finishing O&P studies, there is a one-year residency program that provides hands-on clinical training and experience. Accredited residency sites are available throughout the U.S. Once your education and residency are completed, you’ll want to seek the “mark of merit” for O&P practitioners, which is board certification through the American Board for Certification in Orthotics and Prosthetics, Inc.

To find out more about the practitioner or learn about the assistant, fitter, and technician education programs, visit www.opcareers.org.

A Bright Future

The number of people requiring orthotic and prosthetic care is expected to increase as the population ages. Studies show that more practitioners are needed to respond to the increasing demand for O&P services.

At present, O&P graduates have a 100% employment rate and most choose to make it a lifelong profession.