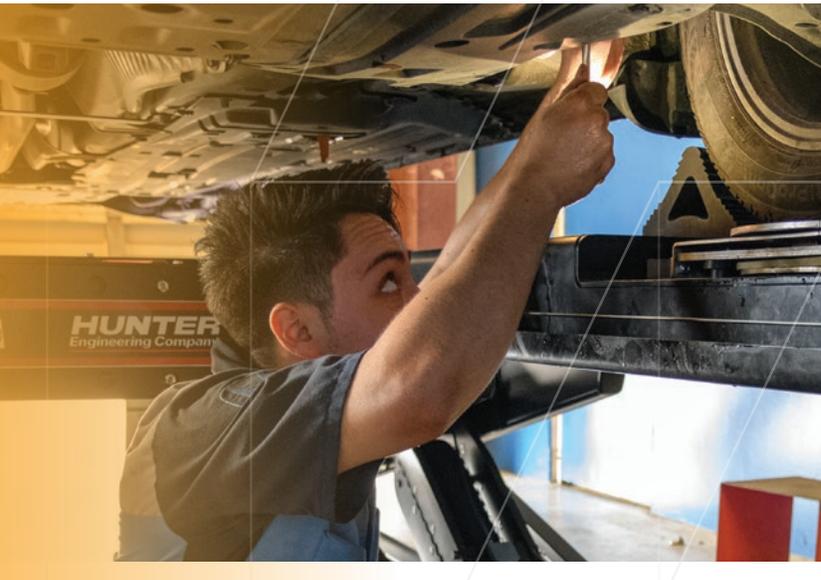
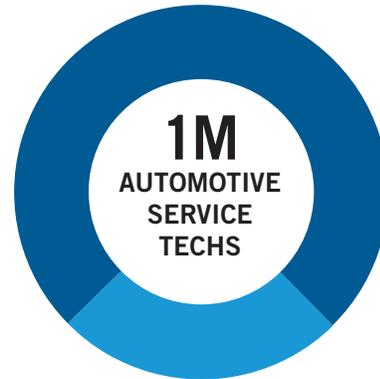




**THE BENEFITS OF**  
**AUTOMOTIVE**  
**TECHNICIAN**  
**CAREERS**



750,000 TOTAL  
AUTO SERVICE  
TECHS



250,000 TOTAL  
DIESEL TECHS

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## WHY BECOME AN AUTO OR TRUCK TECHNICIAN?

These days it's not easy to find a high-quality, good-paying job that offers someone without a four-year college degree the ability to advance into management and even ownership positions in a company.

But today, automotive technicians at new-car and -truck dealerships have all of these opportunities.

The average compensation of an automotive service technician at a new-car dealership is over \$61,000 per year (plus health and retirement benefits). Top technicians can make over \$100,000 per year, and managers can make even more.

And with a projected shortage of 370,000 auto service technicians through the year 2026, these jobs are in high demand at local dealerships in all regions of the country. Technician jobs are also available at America's car and truck auctions, where millions of used vehicles are serviced before sale every year.

### TECHNICIAN SHORTAGE



Total shortfall in 10 years: **370,000**

# JOBS EVERYWHERE, TRAINING EVERYWHERE

Local dealerships that service new cars and heavy trucks exist in virtually every community across America, from Miami to Anchorage and everywhere in between.

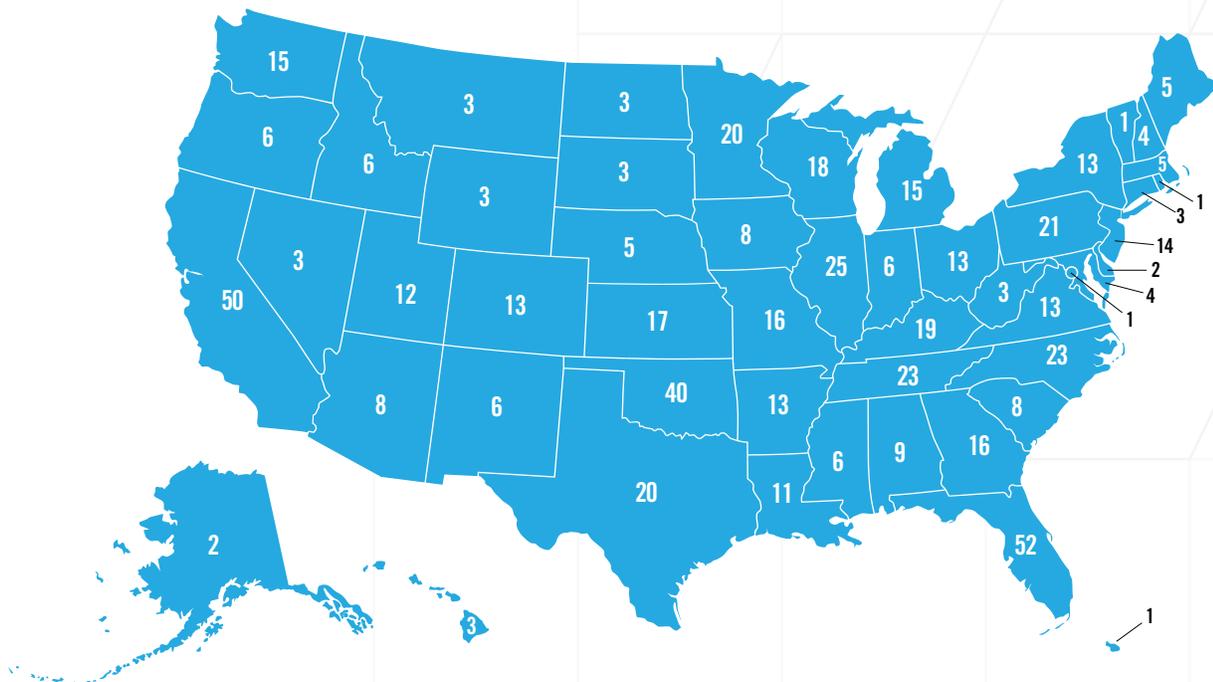
While some service jobs with on-the-job training are available at dealerships, more complex service work must be done by certified technicians. Prospective technicians can find state-of-the-art training in dynamic, two-year programs at community colleges or technical schools. Training and certification can also be achieved at some high schools.

After an apprenticeship or training at a community college or technical school, technicians can receive ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) certifications, the standard automotive industry certifications.

More than 610 training programs exist in facilities across America in every state.

Visit [nadafoundation.org/join-workforce](http://nadafoundation.org/join-workforce) to view an interactive map with a full list of technician training centers nationwide, including those closest to you.

NUMBER OF TRAINING CENTERS BY STATE



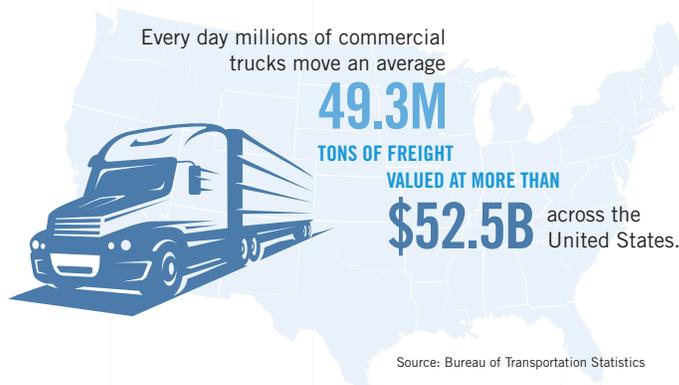
Source: ASE

# KEEPING COMMERCIAL TRUCKS ON THE ROAD

Commercial trucks move America, literally. Virtually every item available for sale in a store or online is moved by a truck at some point. Keeping those trucks on the road is a priority—and a billion-dollar business. Every day millions of commercial trucks move an average 49.3 million tons of freight—valued at more than \$52.5 billion—across the United States, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

The path to becoming a commercial truck tech is the same as that for becoming a car technician, and the guidelines in the other pages of this brochure apply, including the tiered path on page 9. The coursework, however, is very different.

Truck dealerships sell to businesses, rather than consumers, and the service departments reflect that difference. Commercial truck techs work on a wide variety of vehicles, from medium-size trucks to 18-wheelers and everything in between. Most perform critical maintenance and repairs on school buses and emergency and other vehicles as well.



## DEALERSHIP DIVERSITY

Today's new-car and -truck dealerships are modern, inviting, inclusive places to work. It makes sense for their workforces to reflect their individual diverse communities, and they welcome women, minorities and people of different nationalities. While female techs are still a minority of the total, their numbers are growing as women recognize they can use their technical and computer skills in these high-paying jobs.

Visit [nadafoundation.org](http://nadafoundation.org) for videos featuring successful female technicians. For a look at what it's like to work at a modern dealership, visit [MyDealership.org](http://MyDealership.org).



**LISA KOWITE** COMPARES HER JOB AS  
A SERVICE TECH AT JOHNSON LEXUS,  
DURHAM, NC, TO HER PREVIOUS CAREER  
AS AN ENGLISH TEACHER: “EVERY DAY  
YOU HAVE A PLAN, BUT YOU NEVER KNOW  
HOW IT’S GOING TO GO IN CLASS. IT’S  
THE SAME WORKING ON CARS IN A SENSE  
THAT YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT’S GOING TO  
COME INTO YOUR BAY.”

## SERVICE TECH JOBS ARE HIGH-TECH JOBS

Years ago, “technician” took the place of “mechanic” in the automotive vocabulary, as cars and trucks—and the skills needed to service them—became increasingly complex.

Today’s new cars and trucks take this to a whole new level. They are intricate systems combining computers, and mechanical and software elements with precision cast parts.

This means much of today’s service work involves the use of computers and high-tech diagnostic equipment. Working on these machines involves problem solving and can be both challenging and rewarding.

Visit [nadafoundation.org](http://nadafoundation.org) to hear from real technicians about the work they do, and the lifestyle their careers provide.

“I SPEND ALMOST HALF OF MY TIME ON A COMPUTER. WE HAVE A LOT OF SOFTWARE RUNNING, A LOT OF ELECTRICAL IN THE VEHICLES. THERE ARE MULTIPLE NETWORKS RUNNING, SO IT’S NOT JUST NUTS AND BOLTS ANYMORE, IT’S UNDERSTANDING HOW ALL OF THE SYSTEMS AND COMPONENTS WORK TOGETHER.”

~Todd Parker  
Master Technician  
Colorado



## ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

It's not uncommon for automotive technicians to advance significantly within a dealership over the course of their careers. Common ways to advance are through increasing certifications to perform more complicated work—starting as a level D technician doing maintenance work and advancing eventually to become a level A master technician certified to service virtually all systems in the vehicle (see page 9).

On a separate career track, some technicians transition to the customer service side and become service-writers, working with customers to identify their needs and schedule service and maintenance.

Still others progress into management, some moving into the parts department of a dealership, others managing entire service operations. Service operations at some dealerships can involve managing dozens of technicians and hundreds of service and maintenance orders each day.

Still others become owners of local dealerships. Mike Jackson, chairman of America's largest dealership group, AutoNation (which operates more than 230 dealerships nationwide), started his career as a service technician in Cherry Hill, New Jersey!

Mike Jackson, chairman of AutoNation ▶



## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Local dealerships and associations fund hundreds of scholarship opportunities for aspiring technicians each year. Many of these scholarship opportunities can fund a prospective student's entire enrollment in an automotive service training program. For a listing of automotive technician scholarships, visit [nadafoundation.org/join-workforce/find-scholarships](http://nadafoundation.org/join-workforce/find-scholarships).

# HOW TO GET STARTED AS AN AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE TECHNICIAN

Achieving the highest level of technical expertise is a process; there are no shortcuts. But while formal training programs can be important, on-the-job experience and a general mechanical interest and ability are critical. Computer skills are increasingly valuable as well.

A good place to start is an entry-level position in the service department or body shop of an auto or truck dealership or an auction, even without any training. The dealership will often oversee and pay for your training and certification on the vehicle brands they sell and service. (Many manufacturers have their own training programs and criteria, available only to dealership-sponsored students.)

Once you're in the door, a continuous interest in advancing to the next level and acquiring the skills to do that will help you achieve success; well-run dealerships will constantly make you aware of your progress and help you move up.

While some organizations—most notably ASE, or the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence—have established testing and certification procedures, there is no industry-wide standard. The same is true for recognized levels of skill and knowledge.

In many shops, techs must supply their own tools although, increasingly, some dealerships provide some tools as incentives to recruit and retain talented technicians.

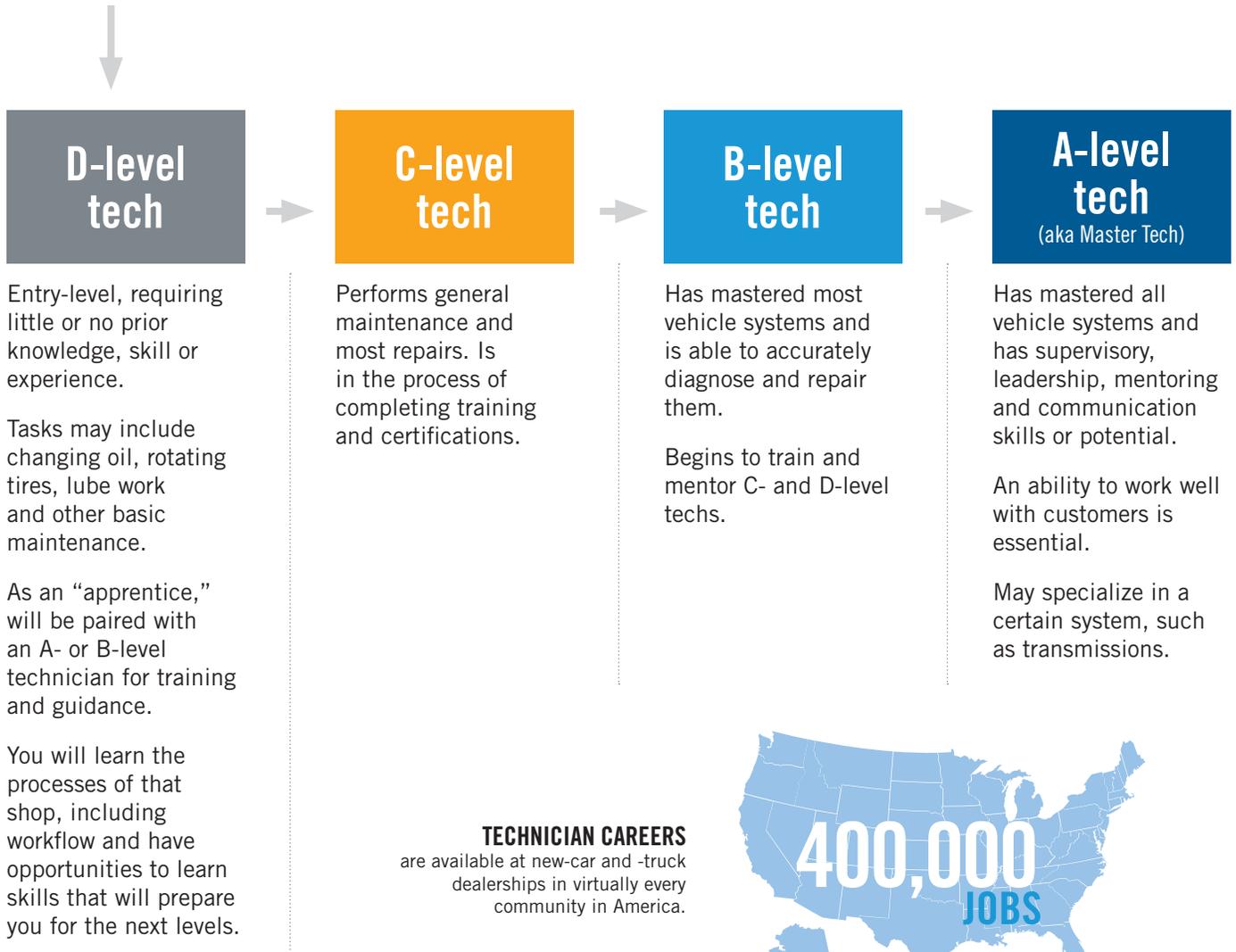
Experienced, well-trained technicians will always be in demand and able to earn top-dollar. If you enjoy the work, putting in the time and effort to complete training and certification will virtually always pay off.

## MEDIAN NATIONWIDE SALARY

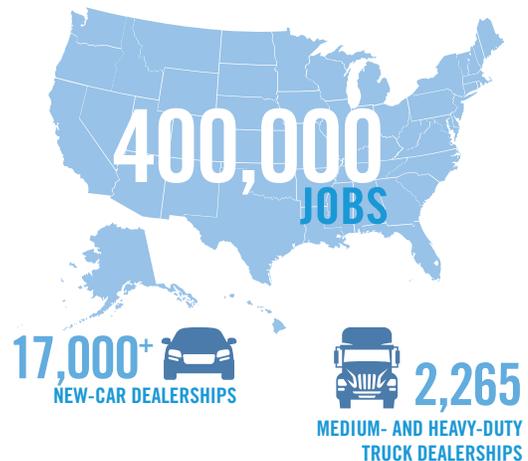
**\$61,067**  
+Benefits 



Most dealerships use some form of tiered system; here are some general guidelines.



**TECHNICIAN CAREERS** are available at new-car and -truck dealerships in virtually every community in America.



# SERVICE TECHS SAY...



**Jonathan Biggom** knows all about the great tech careers available in the retail auto industry. The senior service technician at **Motorcars Toyota, Cleveland**, got hooked on working on cars

when he took part in a vocational program during high school. After graduation, Biggom elected not to go to a traditional four-year college—"I wanted to do something with my hands," he says—and instead enrolled in an accelerated automotive service course at a technical college. Thirteen years later, Biggom has worked his way up the career ladder. "You definitely see the progression. It's rewarding."

**Jake Schunk** said he's always been a problem solver who likes to tinker with cars. "I was always into cars and things like that." His career path from internship to the full employment in a service bay at **John**



**Eagle Honda** in Houston isn't unusual. His favorite part of the job? "It's interesting. It's something different every day. I come in every day and I don't know exactly what I'll be doing. It could be something simple or I could be pulling my hair out trying to figure out what the issue is. But at the end of the day, it's something different, something new. Keeps it exciting." There's also job security and the ability to chart your own path to success. "People always need their cars fixed," Schunk said. "The more you do, the harder you work, you can become more efficient and make more money." For others considering a career in the auto industry, Schunk says there's plenty of opportunity in the service bay. "If it's something that you enjoy, you're passionate about cars, that's a good reason to get into it."



For service tech **Tiara Richardson**, a passion for cars led her down her career path. “I’ve liked cars since I was little,” says Richardson, part of the service center team at **Fitzgerald’s Gaithersburg Hyundai**

in Maryland. She started her career 13 years ago as an express technician, doing oil changes and general maintenance, but Richardson said she “wanted a greater challenge so I started training as a technician ... Every time that I fix a car and it leaves here, that’s my reward.” A combination of computer training and in-person classes help the service techs stay up to date on their skills and their all-important certifications, “The more certifications you have, the more money you’ll make.” She also recognizes just how important the job is and the need to stay up-to-date on the latest repair and diagnostic technology. “Sometimes someone’s life may depend on it.”

Keeping America’s commercial trucks moving is serious business and depends on technicians like the team at **Kenworth of Louisiana**. “We want to be the employer of choice, says owner Jodie Teuton. “We provide well-paying jobs that support families and communities. The quality of our operations rests in the teams we build.” The team at Kenworth of Louisiana includes **Henry Fitch** and **Zach Opperman**, who both grew up getting their hands inside of engines whenever they could. “Growing up a lot of my friends rode four wheelers and dirt bikes and I got to be the mechanic,” Opperman says. “The first truck I bought, I was like, ‘You know what? I want to do this in the automotive field.’ Then it clicked: the diesel side. Big trucks, big motors,” said Fitch, a self-confessed “engine guy.” The Kenworth of Louisiana team works together to get the job done. “Man, I’ve got a great team. I love my team,” said technician **Eric “Peanut” Smith**.





**Workforce Initiative**  
[nadafoundation.org](http://nadafoundation.org)