

Opportunities in Chemical Engineering

What do chemical engineers do?

It is hard to say exactly what chemical engineers do because they work in so many different areas. One simple answer is that chemical engineers use science and math to take ideas and turn them into products in a cost effective and safe manner.

Chemical engineers work in areas such as chemicals, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, food, energy, environment, consumer products, electronics, nanotechnology, advanced materials, and finance. Chemical engineers have jobs in research, design, development, manufacturing, optimization, teaching, and consulting. Chemical engineers work in laboratories, plants, and offices.

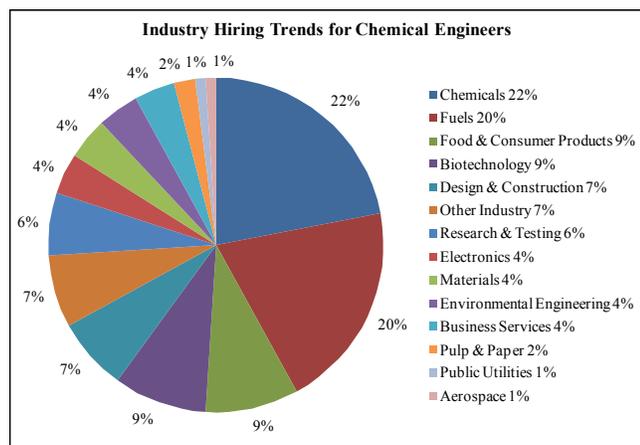
How much do chemical engineers make compared to other college majors?

Undergraduate Major	Starting Salary
Chemical engineering	\$ 63,200
Computer science	\$ 60,400
Mechanical engineering	\$ 57,000
Civil engineering	\$ 51,600
Economics	\$ 50,500
Accounting	\$ 48,100
Sociology	\$ 34,800
English	\$ 34,300
Psychology	\$ 33,600

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers Summer 2008 Salary Survey

Which industries hire chemical engineers?

The majority of chemical engineering graduates (52%) are employed by industry, government, or academia. The rest continue to graduate school or are undecided.



Source: AIChE 2006-2007 Initial Placement Survey

Why are chemical engineers so highly sought after?

An undergraduate degree in chemical engineering provides:

- Knowledge of mathematics and science, especially chemistry
- The capability for analyzing and optimizing complex systems
- The capacity to work over a wide range of scales, from molecular to worldwide
- An understanding of the importance of safety and sustainability

This skill set allows chemical engineers to solve problems in almost any technical, business, or management career.

