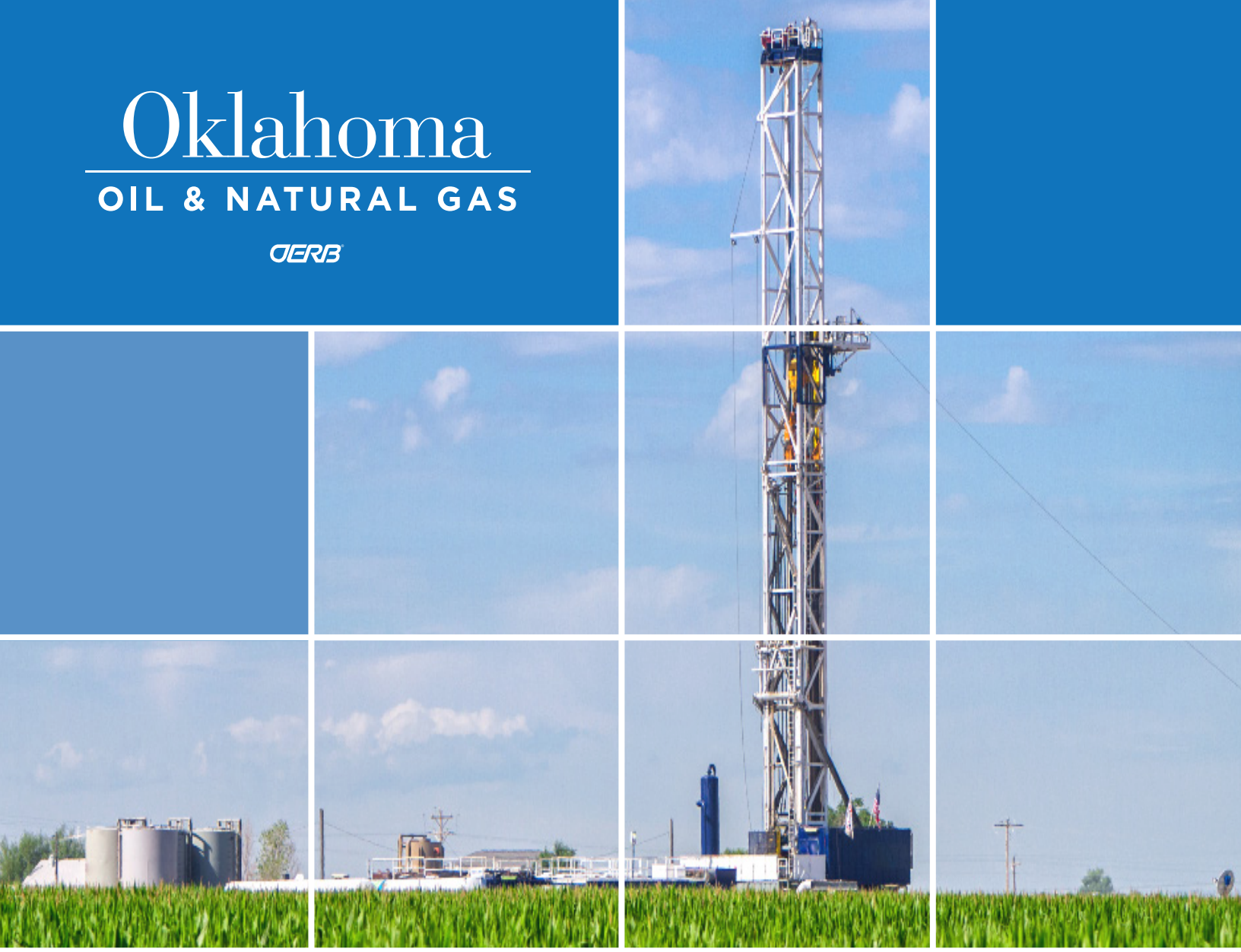
Oklahoma

OIL & NATURAL GAS

OERB



# CAREERS IN THE OIL & NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY


# THE INDUSTRY IN OKLAHOMA

**Explore Your Future in Oklahoma's Oil and Natural Gas Industry**

Oklahoma's oil and natural gas industry is always on the lookout for skilled professionals, from accountants and engineers to floorhands and technicians. Whatever your interests, there's a place for you in this ever-evolving field.

**Start Planning Your Career Now**

It is never too early to start thinking about your future career. Whether you are interested in college, trade school, professional training, or a combination of these, there are classes you can take now to give you a head start. Understanding your options can help you make informed decisions and prepare for success.

**What this Guide Offers You**

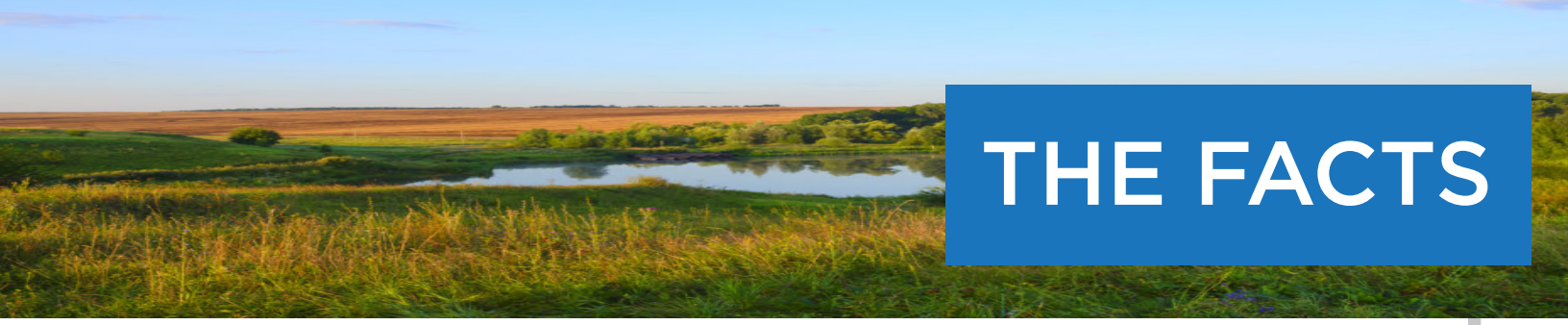
- **Career Exploration:** Discover the wide range of jobs available in the energy industry.
- **Required Skills and Education:** Explore the skills and education required to succeed in the energy career that interests you most.
- **Work Environment Insights:** Get a clear picture of what day-to-day life is like in various roles.
- **Salary Expectations**: Compare salaries across different careers in the energy industry.

**Consider the Complete Compensation Package**

Remember, salary is just one part of your compensation. Many companies in the industry offer valuable benefits, including health and dental insurance, retirement contributions, and paid time off. Understanding these benefits is important as you explore your options.

**Opportunities for Oklahomans**

The oil and natural gas industry offers a wide range of opportunities for individuals seeking rewarding careers. With scholarships, internships, and hands-on training available, you can gain the skills and experience needed for success. To explore the opportunities available to you, visit **OERB.com/industry-careers**.



# THE FACTS

In 2024, Oklahoma Oil and Natural Gas was responsible for

## $54.7 billion

in both direct and indirect total economic impact in Oklahoma.

## $151,500

is the average salary of a worker in the oil and natural gas industry in Oklahoma, which is 2.2 times more than other industries.

Number of jobs directly or indirectly supported by the oil and natural gas industry

## 255,764

(That's 10% of Oklahoma jobs!)

Oil and natural gas contributed

## 23%

of the total statewide economic activity in 2024.

Since 2006, Oklahoma Oil and Natural Gas have provided over

## $6.3 million

in scholarships supporting the next generation of energy leaders through their Petroleum Scholar program.

Scan to watch **Day in the Life of a Petroleum Scholar** video to learn more about what it is like to be a scholar plus explore other exciting careers in the oil and natural gas industry.

# HOW DO STEM & TRADES POWER OUR INDUSTRY?

## CONSIDER A STEM & SKILLED TRADE CAREER PATH

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) are required for current and future careers in the energy industry. The oil and natural gas sector offers a wide range of opportunities for problem solvers, innovators, and tech enthusiasts. Whether you are interested in designing new projects, exploring the Earth, or mastering cutting-edge technology, Oklahoma's energy industry has a place for you.

## QUICK FACTS: OKLAHOMA AND STEM

**SOURCE: OKLAHOMA.GOV**

- Oklahoma had a total of **79,040 STEM jobs in 2023,** accounting for nearly 4.7% of the state's total employment.
- The largest share of STEM occupations was **Engineering with 28,270 jobs**, and 35.8% of total STEM employment.
- Oklahoma's STEM jobs' **average annual wage is $92,985,** with Petroleum Engineers earning an impressive $148,310 on average.
- **Engineering and Geosciences** rank among the top five fastest-growing STEM fields in Oklahoma, with projected job growth from 2022 to 2032.

Oklahoma's energy sector offers rewarding careers for individuals of all ages, providing stability, innovation, and high earning potential. Explore your future in STEM and energy today.

## RESEARCH BEFORE DECIDING WHICH JOB IS RIGHT FOR YOU

This guide is just one of many tools available to support you. Here are a few other valuable resources to explore.

U.S. Energy Information Administration | **eia.gov**

U.S. Department of Energy | **energy.gov**

National Science Foundation | **nsf.gov**

Center for Energy Workforce Development | **cewd.org**

Learn to Become | **learnhowtobecome.org**

Bureau of Labor Statistics | **bls.gov**

Energy 4 Me | **energy4me.org**

American Petroleum Institute | **api.org**

Oklahoma Works | **oklahomaworks.gov**

Oklahoma Career Guide | **okcareerguide.org**

American Association of Petroleum Geologists | **aapg.org**

Society of Petroleum Engineers | **spe.org**

# FIND YOUR PATH

Fill in the circle for each question that best matches how you feel, then count how many times you picked each letter to discover careers that best-fit YOU!

**1. Which school subject do you enjoy most?**

- (A) Math or computer science
- (B) Science (earth science and chemistry)
- (C) Art, design, or writing
- (D) Geography or history
- (E) Business or technology
- (F) Shop, ag, or auto tech

**2. What is your ideal work environment?**

- (A) At a desk solving problems with tech
- (B) Outdoors collecting samples
- (C) Creative environment
- (D) Quiet and focused space
- (E) Fast-paced, coordinating tasks & people
- (F) Hands-on in the field

**3. How do you like to solve problems?**

- (A) With numbers, logic, or technology
- (B) By testing and exploring ideas
- (C) Creativity and communication
- (D) Researching and digging into details
- (E) Organizing people or projects
- (F) With tools and hands-on effort

**4. What motivates you most?**

- (A) Building smart systems
- (B) Learning how things work in the real world
- (C) Helping people understand
- (D) Solving mysteries
- (E) Finishing big projects
- (F) Getting the job done

**5. How do you prefer to work?**

- (A) Team solving complex problems
- (B) Independently with some teamwork
- (C) Collaborating with others
- (D) On your own
- (E) Leading or managing tasks
- (F) Group that's active and hands-on

**6. What kind of challenge do you enjoy?**

- (A) Technical or coding problem
- (B) Questioning how nature or science work
- (C) Chance to explain through design
- (D) Solving mysteries through research
- (E) Juggling lots of moving pieces
- (F) A job that keeps you moving

## Use this key throughout the guide to find your energy career match.

- **Mostly A's** – Explore careers marked with  in the areas of **Engineering**, **Technical Support**, **Crossover**, and **Oilfield Services** and put your problem-solving skills to work.
- **Mostly B's** – You're curious about the Earth, discover your path in **Geological Sciences**, **Land and Legal**, and **Technical Support** careers marked with  throughout this guide.
- **Mostly C's** – Put your creativity to the test and consider a path in our **Crossover** careers marked with  .
- **Mostly D's** – A researcher at heart with an eye for detail, is **Land & Legal** or **Technical Support** careers right for you? Check out all of the careers labeled with  .
- **Mostly E's** – You're organized, strategic, and goal-driven, make sure to check out the **Crossover** careers tagged with the  symbol.
- **Mostly F's** – You are active and like to get the job done! You may thrive in our **Oil Field Services** and **Technical Support** careers represented with  throughout this guide.

# DEGREE-BASED CAREER PATHS

If you're considering a degree, the oil and natural gas industry offers a wide range of rewarding careers that span multiple fields. Engineering is at the heart of energy production, with engineers designing advanced drilling techniques, optimizing extraction methods, and ensuring safe and efficient operations. Geological sciences offer another exciting path, where geologists study the Earth to identify valuable energy resources and analyze rock formations. But the opportunities don't stop there. The industry also relies on professionals in land and legal roles, where experts manage property rights, negotiate contracts, and ensure compliance with regulations.

Beyond these core fields, many other crossover careers play a pivotal role, from environmental scientists ensuring sustainability to data analysts optimizing production, to accountants and marketers supporting business growth.

No matter your interests or skill set, the oil and natural gas industry has a place for you. Explore your options and discover how a degree can lead to a successful and impactful career. All the information provided in this guide is based on industry standards and practices. Once you have identified your direction, be sure to research the specific qualifications and current salary range for your desired position to help you stay on track and informed.

## ENGINEERING

If you love math and science, engineering could be the perfect fit. Engineers combine design, technology, math, and science to develop innovative equipment, chemicals, pipelines, and structures that solve real-world problems. In the oil and natural gas industry, **engineers focus on creating safer, more efficient tools and processes to improve exploration and production**.

Explore the wide range of engineering careers and find the path that fits you best.

### How do engineers make oil and natural gas production safer and more efficient?

Engineers play a crucial role in the oil and natural gas industry by designing advanced equipment, developing cutting-edge drilling techniques, and implementing safety systems. From building pipelines to creating environmental protection technologies, engineers ensure that energy is produced safely and efficiently.

"Engineering is a fast-paced environment, but the thrill of the oil and natural gas industry makes it very exciting."

-Steve Slawson | Petroleum Engineer

## Chemical Engineer (Process Engineer)

**Turning chemistry into real-world impact.**

Do you love chemistry and solving big challenges? Chemical engineers use chemistry to solve problems and improve how we turn oil and natural gas into useful products. They often work at refineries, creating safer and more efficient ways to produce fuels, plastics, and chemicals. In the oil and gas industry, they play a central role in developing cleaner, safer solutions that protect both people and the environment.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science
- Math (specifically algebra, calculus, and trigonometry)
- Science (specifically chemistry and physics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering or Mechanical Engineering
**Work environment:** Primarily office, refinery, or lab with occasional field work
**Average starting salary:** $70,000-$90,000

## Completions Engineer

**Turn possibilities into flowing energy.**

Do you enjoy turning plans into action and making energy flow? Completions engineers make sure oil and gas wells are safely and efficiently ready to produce energy. After drilling is complete, they are responsible for "completing" the well, selecting equipment and using well stimulation techniques to get oil and gas flowing from day one. They are often responsible for tracking well performance to keep energy flowing safely and reliably.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science
- Math (specifically algebra and calculus)
- Science (specifically chemistry and physics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, or Chemical Engineering
**Work environment:** Both office work and field work (drilling and well sites)
**Average starting salary:** $80,000-$100,000

## Drilling Engineer

**Lead the way to new energy discoveries.**

Do you like blending technology with hands-on work? Drilling engineers are energy explorers who design and manage the process of drilling deep into the Earth to reach oil and natural gas. They plan every detail, often using **directional drilling**, to guide the well with precision and access hard-to-reach resources. Their job is to make sure each well is drilled safely, efficiently, and on budget, while protecting workers and the environment. Whether it's using advanced computers to map the path or leading a team on-site, drilling engineers are innovators helping power the world.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science
- Math (specifically algebra, calculus, and trigonometry)
- Science (specifically physics and earth science)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, or Chemical Engineering
**Work environment:** Primarily field work (drilling sites) with some office; travel may be required
**Average starting salary:** $80,000-$100,000

**What is directional drilling (also known as horizontal drilling)?**
The practice of drilling a well from the surface vertically to a certain depth and then angling the well bore and drilling horizontally to encounter more of the producing formation recovering more oil while reducing the surface footprint.

## Facilities Engineer

**Turning underground energy into above-ground impact.**

Do you like building systems that keep the world running? Facilities engineers help move oil and natural gas from deep underground to refineries, power plants, and homes. They design pipelines, equipment, and processing facilities, working closely with production engineers to keep energy flowing safely and efficiently. From building better transport systems to improving how refineries operate, they are the engineering minds powering energy delivery and helping keep the world moving.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science
- Math (specifically algebra, calculus, and trigonometry)
- Science (specifically chemistry and physics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, or related discipline
**Work environment:** Primarily office or lab with occasional field work
**Average starting salary:** $75,000-$95,000

## Production Engineer

**Boosting energy with smart solutions.**

Do you like making systems work better? Production engineers are the oil and gas industry's efficiency experts. They help get the most energy from every well by using smart systems to separate oil, gas, and water. When wells get older, they use **enhanced oil recovery (EOR)** methods to boost production and keep energy flowing. Whether upgrading equipment, analyzing data, or solving field problems, they help make energy production efficient, safe, and sustainable.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science
- Math (specifically algebra, calculus, and statistics)
- Science (specifically chemistry and physics)

Scan to watch **Day in the Life of a Production Engineer** video.

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, or Chemical Engineering

**Work environment:** Primarily office and field work (well sites); travel may be required

**Average starting salary:** $75,000-$95,000

### What is Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)?

A set of advanced techniques used to increase oil recovery from existing wells after primary and secondary methods are no longer effective. These methods help maximize output and extend the well's economic life.

## Reservoir Engineer

**Unlocking the science behind where energy lives.**

Do you like solving puzzles and discovering what's hidden below the surface? Reservoir engineers study underground rock formations, called reservoirs, to estimate how much oil and natural gas is stored there and how to safely recover it. They analyze pressure, fluids, and rock behavior to design smart recovery plans like waterflood or $CO_2$ injection. Their work helps make energy production more efficient and environmentally responsible, while making the most of what nature has provided.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

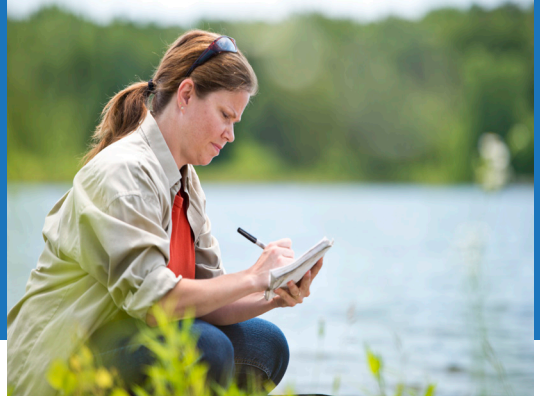
- Computer science
- Math (specifically algebra, calculus, and trigonometry)
- Science (specifically earth science and physics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, or Chemical Engineering

**Work environment:** Primarily office and field work (drilling and well sites)

**Average starting salary:** $85,000-$105,000

# DEGREE-BASED CAREER PATHS



## GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES

If you are fascinated by the Earth and have a passion for science, a career in geosciences could be the perfect fit. Geoscientists use geology, physics, chemistry, and data analysis to understand the Earth's processes, exploring everything from the formation of natural resources to the dynamics of natural hazards. In the oil and natural gas industry, they play a significant role in locating and analyzing underground reservoirs, assessing the potential for resource extraction, and ensuring environmentally responsible exploration. Their expertise guides drilling decisions, reservoir management, and sustainable production, making them essential to the industry's success.

### Geochemist

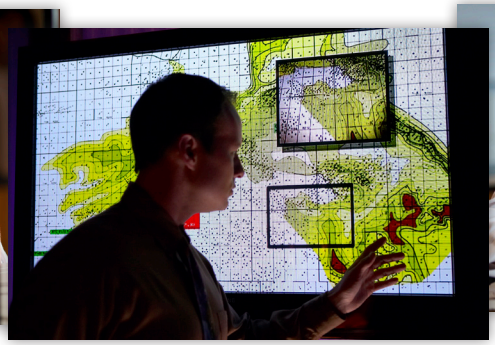
**Unlocking Earth's chemical secrets to power the future.**

Do you enjoy chemistry, love solving puzzles, and want to understand how the Earth works? Geochemists are like Earth detectives who study the chemistry of rocks, soil, water, and oil to understand what's happening deep underground. They figure out how oil and gas formed, how they move through the Earth, and where they are most likely to be trapped. Working closely with engineers, they turn their discoveries into real-world energy solutions, helping us find resources while protecting the planet.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science
- Geography
- Math (specifically algebra and calculus)
- Science (specifically chemistry, earth science, and physics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Geochemistry or related discipline; Master's or PhD is often preferred or required
**Work environment:** Primarily office and lab with occasional field work
**Average starting salary:** $60,000–$75,000 (may vary with advanced degree)



## Geologist

**Exploring Earth's secrets to fuel the future.**

Do you love rocks, maps, and uncovering Earth's history? Geologists are the explorers of the oil and gas industry, using science to figure out where oil and natural gas are hiding deep underground. They study rock layers, fossils, and fault lines to find the best places to drill. By analyzing core samples, interpreting **seismic profiles**, and creating geological maps, geologists help energy companies make smart decisions that lead to safe, successful drilling operations.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science
- Math (specifically algebra, calculus, and trigonometry)
- Science (specifically chemistry, earth science, and physics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Geosciences or related discipline; Master's or PhD is often preferred or required
**Work environment:** Primarily office with occasional field work and travel
**Average starting salary:** $60,000–$75,000 (may vary with advanced degree)

### What is a Seismic Profile?

The visual representations or interpreted sections of seismic data that show the structure of subsurface layers. Seismic profiles are created by processing and interpreting raw seismic data to produce an image of the Earth's subsurface.

Scan to watch **Day in the Life of a Geologist** video.

## Geophysicist

**Uncovering hidden energy with the power of physics.**

Are you fascinated by how we explore the unseen parts of Earth? Geophysicists use physics and high-tech tools to create maps of what lies below the surface. By analyzing seismic waves, gravity, and magnetic fields, they help locate and characterize potential oil and natural gas reservoirs without ever digging. Their work guides smart drilling decisions, protects the environment, and helps us understand the Earth in powerful new ways.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science
- Math (specifically algebra, calculus, and trigonometry)
- Science (specifically earth science and physics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Geophysics or related discipline; Master's or PhD is often preferred or required
**Work environment:** Primarily office and field work
**Average starting salary:** $65,000–$80,000 (may vary with advanced degree)

# DEGREE-BASED CAREER PATHS

## LAND AND LEGAL

If you're fascinated by how land, law, and business connect, a career in land and legal might be the perfect fit. Whether you're great at research, negotiation, or understanding rules, this field offers exciting roles that help energy projects move forward ethically and legally.

### Attorney

**Where law, land, and energy come together.**

Do you enjoy solving problems, making persuasive arguments, and understanding complex rules? Attorneys write contracts, help solve disputes, and work to protect both the company and the communities they serve. These legal experts specialize in everything from land rights and mineral ownership to royalties and regulations.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- English and writing
- Speech and communications

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree plus a Juris Doctor in Law
**Work environment:** Primarily office
**Average starting salary:** $90,000–$110,000

### Environmental Regulatory Specialist

**Protecting nature while powering the future.**

Do you like protecting nature and solving problems with science and policy? Environmental regulatory specialists make sure oil and gas operations follow environmental laws. They assess impacts, track regulations, and work with engineers to reduce pollution, manage waste, and prevent spills. Their work helps protect ecosystems and ensure safe, sustainable energy production.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- English
- Math
- Science (specifically biology, chemistry, and physical science)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science or related discipline; Master's is often preferred or required
**Work environment:** Primarily office and field work
**Average starting salary:** $55,000–$70,000 (may vary with advanced degree)

## Landman

**Opening doors to energy through people and partnerships.**

Do you like working with people, negotiating deals, and understanding how land is used? Landmen connect oil and gas companies with landowners by negotiating the rights to access land and minerals. They help secure leases, surface agreements, and routes for pipelines. Landmen read property records, meet with landowners, and work with legal teams to make sure all contracts are fair and legal. Their work is the main driver to starting any energy project and making sure it runs smoothly for everyone involved.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Geography
- Speech and communications
- Writing

Scan to watch **Day in the Life of a Landman** video.

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Energy Management or related discipline; Juris Doctorate in Law may help advance your career

**Work environment:** Primarily office and field work; travel often required

**Average starting salary:** $60,000–$80,000 (may vary with advanced degree)

## Safety Specialist

**Protecting people. Powering progress.**

Do you care about helping others and creating safer workplaces? In the oil and natural gas industry, safety isn't just a rule, it's a mindset. Safety specialists build a **company culture** where everyone takes responsibility for working safely. They lead training sessions, monitor safety on job sites, and ensure workers use equipment correctly. They also investigate accidents and recommend ways to prevent them. Working closely with engineers, field crews, and leaders, they help make safety a top priority. Their efforts protect people, the environment, and the future of energy.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Health and safety
- Math (specifically algebra)
- Science (specifically chemistry)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Industrial Safety or related discipline

**Work environment:** Primarily field work with some office; travel often required

**Average starting salary:** $60,000–$75,000

**What is a company culture?**

Shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that define how people work and interact within an organization.

# DEGREE-BASED CAREER PATHS

## CROSS OVER CAREERS

The oil and natural gas industry relies on business professionals just as much as it does on geologists and engineers. Whether you excel at analyzing data, managing finances, or building employee or customer relationships, there are diverse opportunities for you in this high-impact industry.

### Accountant

**Driving smarter energy decisions with every calculation.**

Do you enjoy working with numbers, solving puzzles, and staying organized? Accountants track every dollar to make sure it's used wisely. They manage revenue, taxes, and budgets for drilling and production. Whether analyzing data, preparing reports, or ensuring bills are paid, accountants help companies run smoothly, efficiently, and within the law.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Accounting
- Computer applications (especially Excel and Word)
- Math (especially business math)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Accounting
**Work environment:** Primarily office
**Average starting salary:** $55,000–$70,000

### Communications Specialist

**Turning information into impact.**

Do you enjoy writing, speaking, and connecting with others? Communications specialists are the voice of the energy industry. They craft press releases, manage social media, and share news through events and websites. By shaping public understanding and promoting innovation, they help tell the industry's story clearly and responsibly.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- English and writing
- Public speaking

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Communications, Marketing, or Public Relations
**Work environment:** Primarily office with occasional event or field work
**Average starting salary:** $50,000–$65,000

## Data Analyst

**Turning numbers into smart energy solutions.**

Do you love solving puzzles, working with numbers, or spotting patterns? Data analysts help the energy industry make smarter decisions by collecting and interpreting information from drilling, production, supply chains, and markets. Using dashboards and data visuals, they turn complex data into clear insights that drive efficiency, cost savings, and innovation.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science (specifically programming and data tools)
- Math (specifically calculus and statistics)
- Science (specifically chemistry and physics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Computer science or Statistics
**Work environment:** Primarily office
**Average starting salary:** $60,000–$75,000

## Graphic Designer/Website Designer

**Bringing energy to life through design.**

Do you enjoy art, creativity, and technology? Graphic and web designers shape how the energy industry looks and communicates. They create logos, posters, websites, and more, helping companies tell their story clearly and consistently across all platforms.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Art (drawing, digital design, visual communication)
- Computer classes (web design, graphic software, coding basics)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Web Design or Graphic Design
**Work environment:** Primarily office
**Average starting salary:** $45,000–$60,000

## Human Resources (HR) Specialist

**Building teams. Supporting people. Shaping the workplace.**

Do you enjoy working with people and solving problems? HR specialists help energy companies build strong teams by hiring employees, explaining benefits, and supporting workplace success. If you like staying organized and helping others, this could be the path for you.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer applications
- English and writing
- Public speaking

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management
**Work environment:** Primarily office
**Average starting salary:** $55,000–$70,000

## Information Security Professional

**Protecting energy through digital defense.**

Do you enjoy solving digital puzzles, working with computers, or outsmarting cyber threats? Information security professionals protect energy companies from hackers by monitoring networks, updating security systems, and keeping sensitive data, like land records and finances, secure.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science (specifically programming)
- Math (specifically advanced math)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Cybersecurity or related discipline
**Work environment:** Primarily office
**Average starting salary:** $70,000–$85,000

## Information Technology (IT) Specialist

**Powering energy companies with smart tech solutions.**

Do you enjoy working with computers, solving tech problems, or building digital tools? IT specialists are the support system of technology in the energy industry. They build and maintain data systems, troubleshoot issues, and support users, ensuring that energy companies can operate efficiently and securely every day.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer science (specifically programming)
- Math (specifically advanced math)

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Information Technology or Computer Science
**Work environment:** Primarily office
**Average starting salary:** $55,000–$70,000

## Marketing Representative

**Connecting energy producers with the world.**

Do you enjoy business, numbers, and negotiation? Marketing representatives buy and sell oil and natural gas, track market prices, and make deals to move energy from producers to consumers, helping ensure it's delivered efficiently and profitably.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer applications
- English and writing
- Public speaking

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Marketing, Economics, or Finance
**Work environment:** Primarily office
**Average starting salary:** $60,000–$75,000

## Project Manager

**Turning big ideas into real-world results.**

Do you enjoy organizing tasks, leading teams, and keeping complex projects on track? Project managers are the planners and problem-solvers of the oil and gas industry. They coordinate people, timelines, budgets, and resources to make sure everything, from drilling programs to new construction, runs smoothly and safely. Whether it's launching a new well site or upgrading a processing facility, project managers bring together engineers, contractors, and company leaders to turn strategy into success.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Business or management
- Communication
- Computer applications
- Math

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Business or related discipline
**Work environment:** Primarily office and field work; may involve frequent travel and site visits depending on project
**Average starting salary:** $60,000–$80,000

## Supply Chain Specialist

**Delivering the resources that keep energy moving.**

Do you enjoy solving puzzles, staying organized, and making sure the right things get to the right place at the right time? Supply chain specialists are the logistical backbone of the oil and gas industry. They help manage the purchasing, transportation, and storage of critical materials, everything from drill bits and safety gear to large equipment and pipeline components. By tracking inventory, working with vendors, and coordinating shipments, they keep operations running efficiently and on budget. Their work connects teams across the field and the office, ensuring nothing slows down progress.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Business or logistics
- Communication
- Computer applications
- Math

**Education Needed:** Bachelor's degree in Supply Chain or related discipline
**Work environment:** Primarily warehouse or office with field interaction; some travel may be required
**Average starting salary:** $50,000–$70,000

# NON-DEGREE CAREER PATHS

## OILFIELD SERVICES

The oil and gas industry offers a wide range of high-paying careers that do not require a college degree, especially in oilfield services. Many start in entry-level roles like drilling, production, or transportation and build successful careers through on-the-job training and certifications. These hands-on jobs often involve physical work and some travel, but they come with strong benefits, like health and dental insurance, competitive pay, and clear paths for advancement. Whether you are operating equipment, managing logistics, or maintaining facilities, there are many ways to build a rewarding career in this industry.

Rig-based careers offer the chance to build experience and develop specialized skills, leading to **advancement**, higher earning potential, and greater responsibility.

**Rig-Based Career Advancement Path:**

Floorhand -> Motorhand -> Derrickhand -> Driller -> Rig Manager

### Floorhand (Roughneck/Roustabout)

**Jumpstart your energy career with hands-on work in the field.**

Do you enjoy working outdoors, using tools, and staying active? Floorhands, also called roughnecks or roustabouts, are a big part of the drilling crew. They help move heavy pipes and equipment, assist with repairs, and keep the worksite clean and safe. It's a tough but rewarding career, perfect for those who like physical work, teamwork, and learning by doing. Many oil and gas careers begin right here.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Automotive or mechanics courses
- Construction trades or shop classes

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or equivalent
**Work environment:** Field work with long hours, heavy lifting, and travel required; typical schedule is 2 weeks on, 2 weeks off, working 12-hour shifts
**Average starting salary:** $38,000-$52,000 ($19.00-$26.00 per hour working 12-hour shifts)




## Motorhand

**Keeping the heart of the rig running.**

Do you like working with machines and keeping things running smoothly? Motorhands maintain the engines and equipment on a drilling rig, helping prevent breakdowns and supporting the crew. It is a hands-on role, and a great next step after floorhand.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Automotive or mechanics courses
- Construction trades or shop classes

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or equivalent; prior experience on a drilling rig required (usually promoted from floorhand)
**Work environment:** Field work with long hours, heavy lifting, and travel required; typical schedule is 2 weeks on, 2 weeks off, working 12-hour shifts
**Average starting salary:** $43,000-$59,000 ($21.00-$29.00 per hour working 12-hour shifts)

## Derrickhand

**Powering the rig from the top down**

Do you enjoy teamwork, machines, and being outdoors? Derrickhands manage drilling fluids, the lifeblood of the rig, by monitoring pumps, mixing fluids, and ensuring smooth flow. They may also climb the derrick to guide pipes into place. This job is physically demanding but offers great pay, travel, and opportunities to move up in the oilfield.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Automotive or mechanics courses
- Communications
- Construction trades or shop classes

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or equivalent; prior experience on a drilling rig required (usually promoted from motorhand)
**Work environment:** Field work with long hours, heavy lifting, and travel required; typical schedule is 2 weeks on, 2 weeks off, working 12-hour shifts
**Average starting salary:** $52,000-$77,000 ($26.00-$38.00 per hour working 12-hour shifts)

## Driller

**Leading the crew. Keeping the rig running.**

Do you enjoy leading a team and keeping operations on track? Drillers manage day-to-day rig activities, assign tasks, and ensure drilling runs safely and smoothly. They are hands-on leaders who move up from derrickhand and play a key role in rig performance and progress.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Automotive or mechanics courses
- Communications and leadership
- Construction trades or shop classes
- Math and science

Scan to watch **Day in the Life of a Driller** video.

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or equivalent; prior experience on a drilling rig required (usually promoted from derrickhand)
**Work environment:** Field work with long hours, heavy lifting, and travel required
**Average starting salary:** $62,000-$87,000 ($31.00-$43.00 per hour working 12-hour shifts)

## Rig Manager

**Leading the team that powers energy production.**

Are you ready to lead the entire operation? Rig managers oversee every part of the drilling process, from safety and staffing to scheduling and compliance. With experience in every rig role, they are the ultimate decision-makers keeping the rig safe, efficient, and productive.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Automotive or mechanics courses
- Communications and leadership
- Construction trades or shop classes
- Math and science

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or equivalent; prior experience on a drilling rig required (usually promoted from driller)
**Work environment:** Field work with long hours and travel required
**Average starting salary:** $85,000-$120,000 ($42.00-$60.00 per hour working 12-hour shifts)



**Beyond the rig, skilled workers keep operations running strong.**

## Field Logistics Coordinator

**Keeping crews equipped and operations on track.**

Are you organized, detail-oriented, and good at managing moving parts? Field logistics coordinators support oil and gas operations by overseeing the delivery and tracking of tools, equipment, and supplies to job sites. They work closely with vendors, warehouse teams, and field crews to keep projects running smoothly. It's a great role for problem-solvers who like working behind the scenes to support fast-paced field operations.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Business or logistics
- Computer applications
- Math
- Communications

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or GED
**Work environment:** Primarily office and warehouse with some field work; may involve travel or on-call hours
**Average starting salary:** $45,000–$60,000

## Lease Operator (Pumper)

**Keeping production flowing in the field.**

Do you enjoy working independently, staying active, and solving mechanical problems? Lease operators, also called pumpers, are responsible for monitoring oil and gas wells, checking production levels, and maintaining equipment to keep operations running smoothly. They perform routine inspections, minor repairs, and daily reporting to ensure safe and efficient production. It's a great fit for self-motivated individuals who like hands-on field work and being a core part of the production process.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer applications
- Environmental science
- Math
- Mechanical systems

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or GED
**Work environment:** Primarily field work with daily driving; often outdoors in all weather
**Average starting salary:** $50,000–$70,000

# NON-DEGREE CAREER PATHS

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Looking for a hands-on career that doesn't require a four-year degree? Technical support roles combine problem-solving skills with real-world field work. Technicians help keep drilling, production, and environmental operations running smoothly. Most jobs just need a high school diploma or GED along with a technical certification. These careers offer good pay, great benefits, and plenty of room to grow, perfect if you like working outdoors and making a difference.

Want to learn more? Explore technical certification programs in your area that can springboard you into a rewarding career in oil and gas. Here are a few technical career paths to consider, each playing an integral role in powering our world without the need for a traditional four-year degree.

### Automation & Electrical Technician

**Powering the systems that keep energy moving.**

Do you enjoy working with technology, solving real-world problems, and staying hands-on? Automation and electrical technicians install, maintain, and troubleshoot the systems that keep oil and gas operations safe and efficient, from motors and transmitters to SCADA controls and programmable logic controllers (PLCs). Whether you are wiring field equipment, calibrating sensors, or supporting automated systems, this career is perfect for those who like a mix of electrical work and smart tech.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer electrical technology
- Computer science
- Physics and math
- Industrial safety

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or GED; technical certification or trade program preferred
**Work environment:** Primarily field with some lab/office work; often outdoors in all weather
**Average starting salary:** $50,000–$75,000

## Commercial Driver (CDL)

**Driving the energy that fuels the world.**

Do you enjoy being on the road and working independently? Commercial drivers in the oil and gas industry transport equipment, water, fuel, sand, and even crude oil between wells, terminals, and processing facilities. This role is necessary to keeping operations moving safely and efficiently. Drivers must follow strict safety protocols, maintain their vehicles, and often work in remote or rugged environments. It's a great fit for those who like hands-on work, routine, and earning strong pay without needing a degree.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- CDL training
- Safety and hazardous materials handling

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or GED; must obtain CDL
**Work environment:** Primarily field work; long hours and extensive travel
**Average starting salary:** $50,000–$80,000 (may vary based on license class and endorsements)

## Energy Technician

**Turning information into impact.**

Do you like working with numbers, maps, samples, or records? Energy technicians play a vital role behind the scenes. These careers include the following:

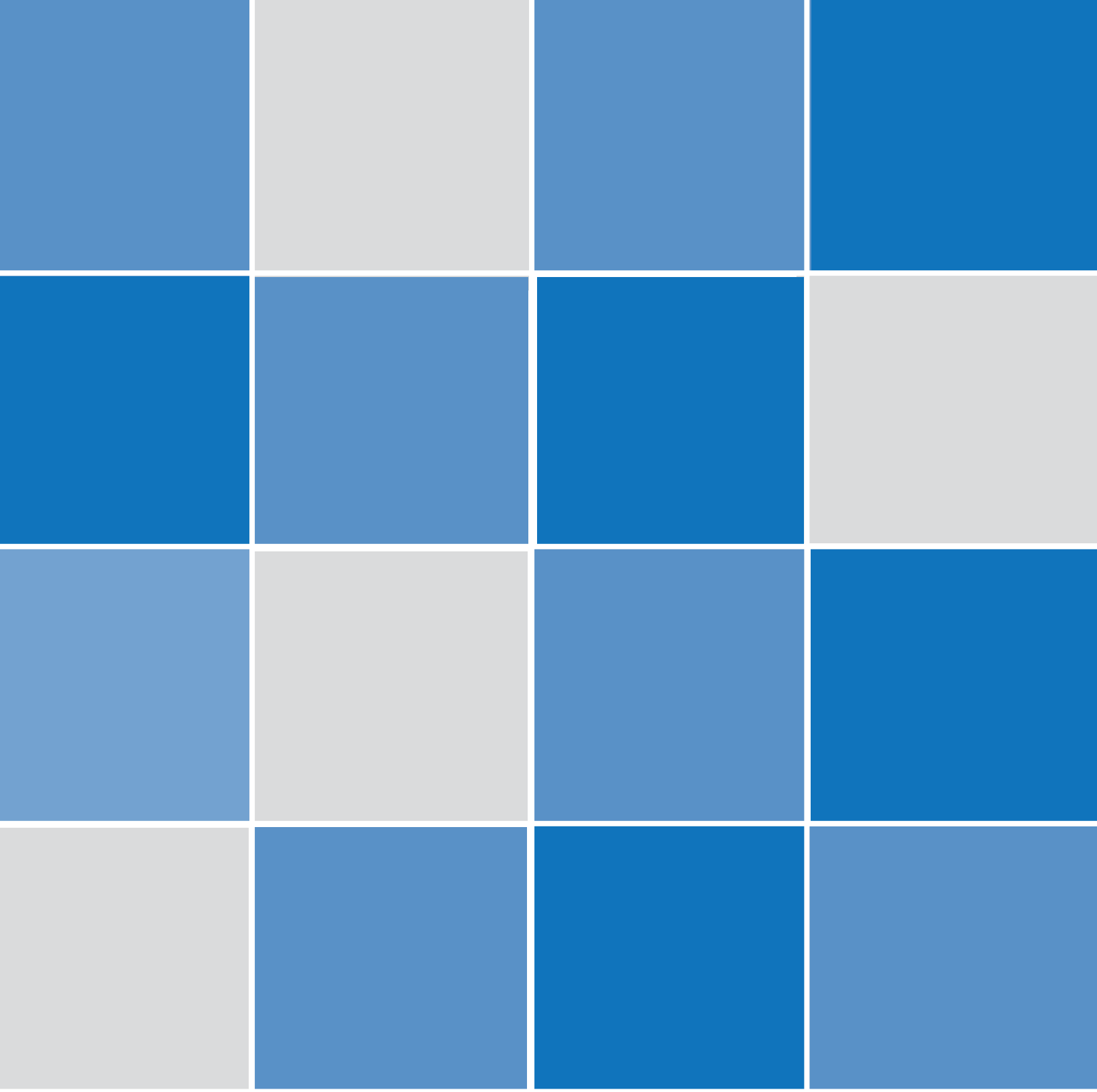
- **Engineering technicians** - Support engineers by organizing data, creating reports, and helping with project planning
- **Geologic technicians** - Assist geologists by creating maps, monitoring rig activity, and managing exploration data
- **Land technicians** - Prepare contracts, research property records, and track lease activity
- **Laboratory technicians** - Analyze rock, fluid, and drilling samples to support smarter, safer exploration

A great fit for detail-oriented problem-solvers who enjoy science, technology, and real-world challenges, without needing a four-year degree.

**Interested? Start preparing now! Take classes in:**

- Computer and software applications
- Math and science

**Education Needed:** High school diploma or GED; certification preferred but not always required (helpful resource: OERB.com/PetroTech)
**Work environment:** Primarily office or lab with some field work and travel
**Average starting salary:** $40,000-$55,000



# Oklahoma

## OIL & NATURAL GAS

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