

Why should you become a nurse?

You genuinely care about people. In caring for others, you will become more empathetic and compassionate. Many nurses say that caring for others is a privilege and makes them better persons. Although nurses are no longer “angels in white,” men and women in nursing are expected to use the therapeutic power of caring with patients and families. Nurses connect with patients through caring, genuine interactions.

You value job security. There is great demand for nurses. The job opportunities for nurses are astounding. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, demand for licensed practical and registered nurses is expected to increase 16% from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations.

You want to make excellent wages. The median pay for licensed practical nurses was \$43,170 and \$67,490 for registered nurses in 2015. An experienced and specialized nurse makes more than \$72,000 per year.

You need a flexible schedule and/or don't mind shift work. Nursing is one of the rare occupations that combines job security, a good income, and flexible working hours that can fit in with other demands or obligations such as caring for a family or returning to school.

You want the opportunity to work in different kinds of facilities and areas of nursing care. You can work in many different types of healthcare facilities as a nurse: hospitals, nursing homes, medical offices, retail clinics, schools, community health, hospice, home care, government agencies, and many more. In an inpatient facility or hospital, you can work in a wide variety of areas such as medical-surgical nursing, emergency room care, pediatrics, women's health care, operating room, oncology, coronary care, neonatal intensive care, rehabilitation, and others.

You need to be able to work anywhere. Skills as a nurse are universal and portable and with the right qualifications and experience, you can work in any state in the US with minimal retraining or re-licensing requirements. This is ideal if your partner's job requires you to move frequently, or if you like to travel or not stay long in one place.

You are good at math and science. Empathy and compassion aren't the only services that nurses provide. For example, nurses must monitor changes in patient vital signs and laboratory test results, calculate medication dosages, and understand human anatomy, human physiology, and chemistry.

You want to advance in a career. Nurses have the opportunity for continuing their education to become nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives, nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists, and nurse researchers. Nurses may also advance in their career by becoming nurse managers and supervisors. Opportunities abound for advancement in the profession.

You want to make a huge difference in people's lives. Patients and families often are very grateful for what nurses do for them. Nurses are present at the most significant events in life such as birth and death. Nurses assist patients, families, and communities across the entire continuum from health to illness: promotion of health, prevention of illness, and caring for the ill and disabled.

You value competence and skill. Nursing is an art and a science. As well as being compassionate and empathetic, nurses must be intelligent and competent caregivers; and able to critically think, solve problems, make skillful observations, base their practice on evidence, be lifelong learners, and advocate for patients.