**13 Dirty Jobs That Pay Shockingly Well**[Lindsay MacNevin](https://www.therichest.com/author/lindsay_macnevin/) May 26, 2016

Disgusting jobs surround us. From janitors to roadkill clean-up crews to chimney sweepers to maggot farmers, there is no shortage of jobs you would probably never want to do. The worst part about these disgusting jobs is that they often pay very little. If you think you are tired of your 9-5 office job that requires you to sift through paperwork, spend countless hours in meetings and wear a suit every day you are not alone. But are you willing to give up that squeaky clean office for a job that requires you to get dirty?

There are many disgusting jobs that pay well; some, in fact, even pay six figures. For some of these jobs higher education is a must and people will have to shell out some money in order to pursue them. For other high paying gross jobs all that is required is a will to work and a high school diploma. Warning—these jobs include the following duties: washing human excrement off the walls, working with millions of tons of garbage, diagnosing warts and dealing with irritable bowels. If you are looking to earn some serious cash and you have a strong stomach, these thirteen jobs may be just right for you!

**13. Garbage Collector/Sanitation Engineer**

Being a garbage collector is not a glamorous job; therefore it has to pay well in order for people to even want to do it. On average these workers make $50,000; although this highly varies from state to state. In California, the average hourly wage is $20, and in some places, the overtime can help shoot the pay to over $60,000 a year. Early mornings, long days and unpleasant working conditions make up this dirty job. Collecting smelly trash that is often leaky, dealing with tipped over garbage bins and dealing with drivers who grow frustrated with frequent stops is all just part of the daily routine. Aside from [angry drivers](http://auto.howstuffworks.com/car-driving-safety/accidents-hazardous-conditions/road-rage.htm), these guys deal with forces of nature as well -- working in rain, snow and sleet. And let's not forget the [smell](http://health.howstuffworks.com/mental-health/human-nature/perception/smell.htm). The reek of dirty diapers and rotting eggs can't be pleasant, especially combined with -- and particularly after -- stewing in the sun on a hot day. Even if sanitation engineers eventually get used to the smell, it probably doesn't make them popular after working a long shift.

Not a job most kids grow up dreaming about, but it only requires a high school education and pays quite well.

**12. Landfill Gas Operator**

We have talked about the gross job of collecting garbage, but what about the people that actually work at the landfill? Landfills are teeming with harmful bacteria, millions of tons of garbage and a whole mess of rodents trying to survive. The duty of a landfill gas operator is remove the methane gas that has been produced by the garbage. The gas operator funnels the gas through the pipes and can be highly dangerous as well as extremely smelly. The pay makes this profession worth it though; with an average salary of $95,000. All that is required is a high school diploma and on the job safety/equipment training.

**11. Gastroenterologist**

When it comes to a high salary, these surgeons are making the big bucks. However, earning this kind of money means dealing with some pretty disgusting things. Nobody likes to talk about or describe their digestive problem. Whether it has to do with gas, abnormal stools or a pain in the rear, GIs diagnose and treat some of the most uncomfortable and embarrassing of ailments. So you can bet that the GI's patients aren't always happy to see him.

On top of it all, it's not easy to become a GI. These doctors have to go through four years of medical school, three years of residency and two to four years of a fellowship to become full-fledged gastroenterologists. Why put yourself through so much grueling training for what's sure to be an aromatic job? Well, if helping people isn't enough of an incentive, it doesn't hurt that GIs make a handsome salary. Most GIs make between $250,000 and $400,000 a year—not too crappy.

**10. Sewer Inspector**

Rats, roaches, dark passages and the occasional [corpse](http://people.howstuffworks.com/incorruptible.htm) –no, we're not talking about a day in the life of Indiana Jones. In a much less glamorous role, the sewer worker deals with all of this stuff and more while braving the depths of the hundreds of miles of sewers beneath our cities.

After we've done our business in the bathroom, all we have to do is flush our waste goodbye, and we'll never have to see it again. But this isn't the case for the people who take care of our sewer systems. Their job entails walking and sometimes crawling through sewer tunnels to inspect for cracks, clogs and other problems. As if wading through human excrement didn't sound bad enough, some workers are also sewage divers. As you probably guessed, they have to go all out to swim through sewage to clean out clogs. In addition to the excrement, smell, and creepy crawly bugs and rats, sewer workers sometimes come across [dead bodies](http://health.howstuffworks.com/diseases-conditions/death-dying/rigor-mortis-cause.htm), both animal and human. Before you write off these employees as nuts for voluntarily diving into human waste, note that, with a high school education, they can make over $60,000 a year.

**9. Crime Scene Cleanup**

If you had big dreams to one day be those detectives on popular shows such as CSI but you couldn’t quite make the cut, there is still a high paying job out there for you. In the aftermath of a bloody crime or the discovery of an illegal chemical lab, the police investigators rush in to save the day and bring the perpetrators to justice. But in the hurry to clean up crime in the city, police don't have time to clean up the walls. Be it blood and guts or hazardous chemicals, not a lot of people jump at the chance to be a [crime scene cleaner](http://science.howstuffworks.com/crime-scene-clean-up.htm).

This job isn't for the faint of heart -- anyone who is prone to getting queasy or emotional won't succeed in this line of work. Developing stress disorders from this work isn't uncommon. It's also pretty dangerous. Even on days they don't have to deal with anthrax-laden labs, they do have to worry about getting infectious diseases from the body fluids. This means suiting up with hazardous materials protection gear. [Murders](http://people.howstuffworks.com/serial-killer.htm) and suicides can get extra messy. Throw in fragments of bone, gore and other body pieces strewn about the place, and you've got quite a mess.

Depending on how bad the mess is, the cleanup could take a few hours to a few days. But you won't hear these crime scene cleaners complaining too much -- they charge by the hour. With a little experience under your belt and flexibility with your work hours, you can easily make about $80,000 a year with this job. Although you don't need a college degree to get a crime scene cleaning job, having one can boost that salary into six figures.

**8. Coal Miner**

This is one of the most *dangerous* jobs on the list as well as one of the *dirtiest* jobs. Coal miners work in horrible conditions with a fear that the mine could become deadly at any time. [Coal mines](http://science.howstuffworks.com/engineering/structural/abandoned-mine.htm) contain methane, and explosions can occur when falling rocks cause sparks. What's more, unstable mines can collapse and kill workers—or even explode from a build up of methane gas. They breathe in coal dust all day long, which can result in a lung condition called Black Lung and are constantly covered with black grime. Although technology has allowed for safer working conditions in the more recent years, the Bureau of Labor Statistics state that coal mining is still the second most dangerous profession. In West Virginia, where coal is a huge industry, coal miners earn an average annual salary of around $64,000.

**7. Embalmer/Mortician**

You cannot be afraid of dead people if you are going to take on the profession of being an embalmer or mortician. Embalmers are the people who prepare the body for the funeral. Duties include removing blood and replacing it with embalming fluid, performing reconstruction to disguise damage, and applying makeup.

When a person dies, the body quickly becomes pale and unsightly. That's where the embalming process comes in. It delays the decomposition of a corpse and cosmetically restores it to look presentable for the viewing. It also sanitizes the body to prevent spreading infection.

The details of embalming aren't pretty. It involves first washing the body with germicidal soap and massaging out [stiffness](http://health.howstuffworks.com/diseases-conditions/death-dying/rigor-mortis-cause.htm). Then embalmers drain the [blood](http://health.howstuffworks.com/human-body/systems/circulatory/blood.htm) and gases and inject disinfecting embalming fluid. Preparing the face involves securing the mouth shut with wires and the eyes shut with glue. Morticians then beautify the body with makeup, manicuring and [shaving](http://health.howstuffworks.com/skin-care/men/shaving-tips/shaving.htm). They also dress the body before the funeral for viewing. Many funeral home owners pull triple duty as embalmer, mortician, and counselor for grieving families.

Embalmers are exposed to toxic cleaning chemicals during the process and to diseases from handling the bodies. Regardless, this is a high demand job that pays on average $55,000 a year and requires an associate’s or bachelor’s degree with 1-3 years of apprenticeship.

**6. Urine Farmer**

This job is exactly what it sounds like—a farm that harvests urine. In particular, harvesting deer urine to use as an effective hunting lure. These urine farms most often have a collection room in which the deer stay in at night. The floor of the room has grates that allow the urine to drip through into vats. The urine is then hand collected, bottled, and stored in a walk-in fridge until selling it. If you thought nurses had it bad collecting urine samples from humans, imagine collecting gallons of deer urine! But these farmers can rake in the big bucks—on average $80,000 a year with no formal education.

**5. Crab Fisherman**

This highly dangerous, disgusting job is the most lucrative in terms of how much you can earn in a short amount of time.

If you've ever seen an episode of "[Deadliest Catch](http://electronics.howstuffworks.com/deadliest-catch.htm)," you probably have an idea of why that's true. Off the Alaskan shore, [crab fisherman](http://adventure.howstuffworks.com/outdoor-activities/fishing/fish-conservation/responsible-fishing/alaska-fishing.htm) face freezing waters and storms that give way to gargantuan ocean waves. If the fishermen can protect themselves from being [swept overboard](http://adventure.howstuffworks.com/fall-overboard.htm) in a storm, they'll still have to worry about the dangers of fishing machinery and coils on crab boats, which can also fling them overboard. And even if they avoid drowning, cold temperatures can give way to fatal hypothermia. These workers brave harsh conditions in shifts that can last as long as 21 hours to haul hefty catches.

These fishermen will earn upwards of $60,000 for only 2-3 months of work. But this work is grueling, gross and particularly stinky. Being out in the stormy seas with waves crashing over the boat and dealing with 800 pounds of crabs is not a walk in the park. Couple that with sea sickness, stinky fish, and working 20 hour days with the same crew day after day, and it’s no wonder this job has to pay so much.

**4. Port a Potty Cleaner**

Dealing with human excrement is a crappy job—but someone has to do it. Enter the porta-potty cleaners who earn an average of $50,000 a year to transport and clean these portable toilets. Using a tank and a vacuum wand, cleaners must suck up all the waste in a portable toilet. After picking up any stray toilet paper, they also wash down all surfaces that c­ould possibly be soiled, including the walls. This is when a high-pressure hose comes in handy. Usually, cleaning one portable toilet takes only a few minutes, and most workers clean from 10 to 60 of them a day. But it's not always that easy: Portable toilets that tip over require more damage control. Although these workers use large hoses to vacuum the toilets out and high powered pressure washers to hose them down, when things go wrong they go really wrong! Blocked hoses are a common issue, and in most cases cause human sewage to start spraying everything around it. The smell on the other hand is highly offensive no amount of nose plugs can keep it out. This job requires no formal education, but workers learn quickly how to efficiently clean messy port a potties!

**3. Oil Rig Worker**

If you don’t mind spending time away from your family, working long hours and getting dirty; working on an oil rig can pay big bucks. Oil rig workers make on average of $100,000 a year but pay a high price. Dangerous working conditions, being stuck out in the middle of the ocean, and getting your hands dirty everyday doing numerous tasks will all be a part of life.

[Offshore](http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/energy/offshore-drilling-controversy.htm) rig life involves spending weeks at a time sleeping, eating and working 12-hour days or nights on a man-made drill rig in the middle of the ocean. Aside from the cramped conditions, heavy machinery and explosive materials make this a perilous job that requires hardhats and steel-toed boots. And the business side of oil drilling isn't the only part that's booming—the machinery is extremely loud. Workers are typically required to wear earplugs on the job to prevent permanent [hearing](http://health.howstuffworks.com/mental-health/human-nature/perception/hearing.htm) loss, and they communicate through hand signals. Although this job has no formal requirements, heavy machinery experience and certification is necessary to keep your job—and perhaps your life. According to CNN Money, an oil rig worker has one of the most dangerous jobs in the United States.

**2. Plumber**

For the modern American, the idea of living without indoor [plumbing](http://home.howstuffworks.com/home-improvement/plumbing/plumbing.htm) is unthinkable. Plumbing may be one of the greatest advances of society because it offers us significant comfort and convenience. No longer do we have to step outside to brave harsh elements of nature to get water from a well or to enjoy the privacy of the outhouse. So when pipes get clogged or spring a leak, most of us can't last long without calling in a plumber.

Plumbers have the quintessential blue-collar job, often having to crouch under sinks or through the crawl spaces under houses. If these cramped and dirty conditions aren't bad enough, they deal with our revolting clogs and waste or dangerously hot pipes. Customers commonly call with plumbing emergencies at all hours, making schedules unpredictable.

But despite the drawbacks, plumbers make a nice living, as even entry level plumbers typically pull in between $45,000 and $60,000 a year after earning a two-year technical degree. On average, plumbers make about $62,000 annually.

**1. Proctologist**

The definition of a proctologist, according to the dictionary, is ‘a branch of medicine dealing with the structure and diseases of the rectum, and sigmoid colon’. Other than the $380,000 average salary these doctors earn ,we aren’t sure what else would provoke anyone to undertake this profession! Like a gastroenterologist, one will have to shell out a fair amount of time to earn a degree—an average of 10 years. Proctologists deal with nasty things such as warts, colon cancer, and fistulas. This profession is expected to be in high demand over the next ten years and the salary will only surely increase.