

MANUFACTURING CAREER GUIDE



Careers in manufacturing are in demand as companies in Kansas that produce everything from food to fuselages continue to grow and embrace new technology. Use this guide to see if one of the many hands-on or problem-solving careers in manufacturing is right for you. Then visit [LevelUpKS.com](https://levelupks.com) to discover if you're eligible to earn a degree or certificate for **FREE!**

BY THE NUMBERS

AVERAGE SALARY

\$25.76/hour | \$53,463/year

DEMAND
HIGH

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Certificate to Associate Degree
(less than 1 year to 2 years)
Apprenticeship

EDUCATION LOCATIONS

20+ community and technical
colleges

HIGH-DEMAND CAREERS

- Welder
- Machinist or CNC Machinist
- Industrial Engineering Technician
- Computer Aided Drafter
- Industrial Machine Mechanic
- Automation Engineering Technician
- Aerospace Technician
- Manufacturing Technician
- Nondestructive Testing Technician
- Wind Turbine Service Technician
- Electrical Engineering Technician

Read the guide to learn more about each position.

IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

If this sounds like you, you may be a good fit.

- Enjoy working with your hands
- Like to see physical results from your work
- Are detail-oriented
- Work well as part of a team
- Like to follow a plan, but also enjoy troubleshooting and problem-solving

TYPES OF EDUCATION

- **Certificates** – short, skill-focused programs
- **Associate Degrees** – general education and specific training
- **Apprenticeships** – on-the-job training with education

MANUFACTURING CAREERS CERTIFICATES



GET STARTED IN 1 YEAR OR LESS

WELDER

Average Salary: \$23.30/hour | \$48,460/year
Education Required: Certificate to Associate Degree
Time to complete education: Less than 1 year to 2 years, Apprenticeship

Welders use their skills to join metals together with different techniques and forms. Welders use high heat and heavy machinery to repair or create structures and machinery. They interpret blueprints and use a variety of techniques to fine-tune details in welding projects.

AEROSPACE TECHNICIAN

Average Salary: \$23.55/hour | \$48,982/year
Education Required: Certificate
Time to complete education: 1 year to 1.5 years

Aerospace Technicians assemble, maintain, fit, fasten, and install parts of airplanes, space vehicles, or missiles, such as tails, wings, fuselage, bulkheads, stabilizers, landing gear, rigging and control equipment, or heating and ventilating systems. Technicians can earn certifications in airframe or powerplant technology or both.

MACHINIST OR CNC MACHINIST

Average Salary: \$24.00/hour | \$48,510/year
Education Required: Certificate
Time to complete education: Less than 1 year to 1.5 years

Machinists set up and operate machine tools like lathes, milling machines, grinders, and CNC technology to cut, shape, and finish materials to produce precision parts and instruments. They read blueprints, calculate dimensions, inspect finished parts for accuracy, and may perform routine maintenance on the machines they operate.

MANUFACTURING TECHNICIAN

Average Salary: \$24.11/hour | \$50,144/year
Education Required: Certificate to Associate Degree
Time to complete education: 1-2 years, Apprenticeship

Manufacturing technicians use a combination of skills from multiple trades to maintain and repair machines, mechanical equipment, or building structures. Tasks may include pipe fitting, HVAC maintenance, insulating, welding, machining, carpentry, fixing electrical or mechanical equipment, installing and aligning new equipment, and repairing buildings, floors, or stairs.

INDUSTRIAL MACHINE MECHANIC

Average Salary: \$25.00/hour | \$52,000/year
Education Required: Certificate
Time to complete education: 1-2 years, Apprenticeship

An industrial machine mechanic installs, maintains, and repairs machinery used in industrial settings. They troubleshoot mechanical issues, perform upgrades to adapt to new production requirements, and may also dismantle or move machinery and heavy equipment according to plans and blueprints.

NONDESTRUCTIVE TESTING TECHNICIAN

Average Salary: \$27.60/hour | \$57,400/year
Education Required: Certificate to Associate Degree
Time to complete education: 1-2 years, Apprenticeship

Nondestructive testing technicians use noninvasive tools such as radiography, ultrasonic, visual, liquid penetrant, eddy current, or magnetic particle inspection to test quality and safety during the manufacturing process of aircraft or other industries.

**Listed salaries are approximate and intended as estimates only. Actual offers may differ based on education, geographic location, economic conditions, and other factors.*

READY TO GO?

Visit [LevelUpKS.com](https://levelupks.com) and complete the form to find out if you can earn a degree or certificate for **FREE!**

Level Up Kansas is a free service for Kansans 18+



MANUFACTURING CAREERS CERTIFICATES AND ASSOCIATE DEGREES



GET STARTED IN 1-2 YEARS

COMPUTER AIDED DRAFTER

Average Salary: \$25.28/hour | \$52,582/year

Education Required: Certificate to Associate Degree

Time to complete education: 2 years

Drafters use software to convert the designs of architects and engineers into precise technical drawings that guide the construction process. Most workers specialize in architectural, civil, electrical, or mechanical drafting and use technical drawings to help design everything from microchips to skyscrapers.

WIND TURBINE SERVICE TECHNICIAN

Average Salary: \$27.51/hour | \$57,226/year

Education Required: Certificate

Time to complete education: 1.5 years

Technicians install, inspect, diagnose, adjust, and repair wind turbines. They perform maintenance on wind turbine equipment, including resolving electrical, mechanical, and hydraulic malfunctions. This role often involves climbing tall towers and working in various weather conditions.



INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN

Average Salary: \$27.51/hour | \$57,226/year

Education Required: Certificate to Associate Degree

Time to complete education: 1-2 years

Industrial engineering technicians work with engineers to improve manufacturing processes and efficiency. They may perform studies to analyze workflows, monitor production efficiency, troubleshoot problems, and design and implement solutions to improve productivity and quality.

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN

Average Salary: \$27.51/hour | \$57,226/year

Education Required: Certificate to Associate Degree

Time to complete education: 1-2 years

Electrical engineering technicians work with engineers to design, build, test, and maintain electrical systems and equipment. They may work on wiring, circuit boards, and electrical components. They may also conduct tests, collect data, and ensure systems function according to specifications and safety standards.

AUTOMATION ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS

Average Salary: \$28.05/hour | \$58,346/year

Education Required: Associate Degree

Time to complete education: 2 years

Automated engineering technicians work with engineers to oversee automated systems and machinery and improve processes. They design, build, test, and maintain equipment, such as robots, conveyor belts, and control systems, to ensure they operate efficiently.

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MANUFACTURING CAREERS



JOBS AT A GLANCE

| CAREER PATH | AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE | AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARY | LESS THAN ONE YEAR CERTIFICATE | 1-2 YEAR CERTIFICATE | ASSOCIATE DEGREE |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Welder | \$23.30 | \$48,460 | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Aerospace Technician | \$23.55 | \$48,982 | ✓ | | |
| Machinist or CNC Machinist | \$24.00 | \$48,510 | ✓ | | |
| Manufacturing Technician | \$24.11 | \$50,144 | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Industrial Machine Mechanic | \$25.00 | \$52,000 | ✓ | | |
| Nondestructive Testing Technician | \$27.60 | \$57,400 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Computer Aided Drafter | \$25.28 | \$52,582 | | | ✓ |
| Wind Turbine Service Technician | \$27.51 | \$57,226 | | ✓ | |
| Industrial Engineering Technician | \$27.51 | \$57,226 | | | ✓ |
| Electrical Engineering Technician | \$27.51 | \$57,226 | | | ✓ |
| Automation Engineering Technician | \$28.05 | \$58,346 | | | ✓ |

READY TO GO BUT NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

We're here to help. Level Up Kansas is a **FREE** service for Kansans 18+. We provide unbiased information about certificates and 2-year degree programs at Kansas community colleges and technical colleges. We can also provide resources to help you find existing scholarships and financial aid opportunities that may be available to you.

To get started, visit [LevelUpKS.com](https://levelupks.com), explore community or technical college programs, and complete the form to work with our free navigator service. We'll help you figure out your next steps.

STILL HAVEN'T FOUND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

Don't give up. Check out the career guides for Healthcare, Manufacturing, Construction Trades, Early Childhood Education, and Computer Science on our website.