
Why I Want To Be an Athletic Trainer

Ever since I was a little girl I have loved sports. When I became old enough my mom signed me up for sports around my hometown. For a while I was playing softball and basketball for the younger kids. Unfortunately, it never seemed as if I was good enough to play. When I got to the 6th grade I tried out for my middle school basketball team and softball team. Sadly, I didn't make either. At that moment I knew that playing sports wasn't for me, however, I still had a passion for sports and wanted to be around it in some way. When I got to my 8th grade year I started talking to my mom and my counselor, at the time, to see what career involved sports without me physically playing. My mom would say a coach or a referee and my counselor would say a sports announcer or an Athletic Trainer. I didn't quite understand what Athletic Trainers did, but the title itself sounded cool to me. I did a little research the rest of my 8th grade year and finally when I got my freshman year of high school I meet my high school's Athletic Trainer. I asked if I could shadow him at a few of the football and basketball practices just to get a little insight in to what he does for a living. I liked what he did, so I asked if could be alongside of him during an actual football game. I thought it would not feel any different from watching the game in the stands since I was in the band and we were almost always with the football team during the games. I was completely wrong because being in the stands playing versus being on the field is completely different. After that first game I fell I love with everything about this job. I loved how Athletic Trainers would be at ever practice, take care of the players, and have one on one time with the players without having to play. Not to mention, feeling the rush and excitement from having a player that spends so much time with you because of an injury and seeing the excitement on their face because they can play again. At that moment I knew deep down in my heart that Athletic Training was the path for me and my career.

According to the National Athletic Trainers Association, to become a certified Athletic Trainer you must graduate with a bachelor's degree or master's degree from an accredited professional Athletic Training education program. Once you have obtained your bachelors or masters, you will then have to pass the comprehensive test administered by the Board of Certification. Once you are certified, you must meet all ongoing continuing education requirements in order to remain certification status. Athletic Trainers must also work under the direction of a physician and within their state practice act.

When you become an Athletic Trainer you are not just limited to working in just a sports setting. A few of the most common work setting are working with a college, university, or secondary school because of the sports that that school has. Most people do not know that an Athletic Trainer can also work in a hospital, clinic, occupational health, physician extender, or professional sports setting. Although, Athletic Trainers help with the recovering of injures, they

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also help with the prevention of injuries which makes it perfect for Athletic Trainers to work with performing arts, NASA, ballet, movies, public safety, or industrial setting.

The annual salary for someone with the job title Athletic Trainer may vary depending on a number of factors including industry, company size, location, years of experience and level of education. According to recent data the average annual salary for an Athletic Trainer is \$41,145. However, if I change my location to Miami, FL the average annual salary is \$39,265. If I leave the location the same and factor in my education level to a Bachelor degree then my average annual salary ranges from \$38,133 to \$40,430. Ultimately, the more education I have the more money I can make. In the end money is not everything, but it does help give you a piece of mind knowing that you love what you do for a living and you get paid pretty good for doing it.

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