

CAREER PROFILES

Food Counter Attendants and Kitchen Helpers:

Workers in this field typically include Counter Attendants, Food Preparers, Kitchen Helpers, Food Service Helpers, and Dishwashers. **Counter Attendants and Food Preparers** prepare, heat, and finish cooking simple food items and serve customers at food counters. **Kitchen Helpers, Food Service Helpers, and Dishwashers** clear tables, clean kitchen areas, wash dishes, and perform various other activities to assist workers who prepare or serve food and beverages.

Wage/Salary Information:

\$22,677.08 is the median annual salary found in local job-postings.

\$14.00/hour is the median wage reported locally.

Commonly Listed Skills in Job Postings:

- Teamwork
- Food handling
- Oral and written communication
- Detail oriented
- Customer service oriented
- Cash handling
- Self-motivated
- Adaptability
- Problem solving
- Creativity
- Bilingual
- Time management
- Multitask
- Management
- Interpersonal
- Manual dexterity
- Computer use
- Conflict resolution
- Critical thinking

Job Duties:

Food Counter Attendants take customers' orders and use deep fryers, grills, ovens, dispensers, and other equipment to prepare fast food items such as sandwiches, hamburgers, fries, milkshakes, and other foods and beverages. Food Counter Attendants portion, assemble, and wrap food or place it directly on plates for service to patrons, and package take-out food. They use equipment to prepare hot beverages such as coffee and tea specialties, and serve customers at counters of buffet tables. Food Counter Attendants also stock refrigerators and salad bars and keep record of the quantities of food used and may receive payment for food items purchased.

Kitchen Helpers wash and peel vegetables and fruit, and wash work tables, cupboards, and appliances. Kitchen Helpers remove trash and clean kitchen garbage containers. They unpack and store supplies in refrigerators, cupboards, and other storage areas. Kitchen Helpers also sweep and mop floors, and perform other duties to assist cook and kitchen staff.

Food Service Helpers clear and clean tables and trays in eating establishments and bring clean dishes, flatware, and other items to serving areas and set tables. Food Service Helpers replenish condiments and other supplies at tables and in serving areas. They remove dishes before and after courses and perform other duties such as scraping and stacking dishes, carrying linen to and from laundry area and running errands.

Dishwashers wash dishes, glassware, flatware, pots, and pans using dishwasher or by hand and place dishes in storage area. They also scour pots and pans, and may clean and polish silverware.

Working Conditions:

Food Service Counter Attendants and Food Preparers work days, evenings, weekends, and holidays. Hours tend to be irregular but flexible and split shifts are common.

Food Service Counter Attendants and Food Preparers typically stand for long periods of time and often carry heavy trays. They work in kitchens that are hot, humid and fast-paced.

New technology has reduced the manual nature of the job with machines that can do some of the food and coffee preparation. This often means that tasks require fewer people and less hands-on involvement from workers.

Career Pathways:

Although these may be viewed as low-skilled jobs, there is significant mobility within the field. Movement into other occupations within food preparation and service, such as cook or waiter, is possible with further training and experience. On-the-job training is usually provided.

Workers in this field are employed by restaurants, cafes, hotels, fast food outlets, cafeterias, hospitals, and other establishments. Below are potential career paths for Food Counter Attendants and Kitchen Helpers:

- Bartender Helper

- Bus Boy/Girl
- Cafeteria Counter Attendant
- Caterer Helper
- Cook's Helper
- Dishwasher
- Fast-Food Preparer Food Service Helper
- Food Preparer
- Ice Cream Counter Attendant
- Kitchen Helper
- Salad Bar Attendant
- Sandwich Maker

Check out more possible career pathways on [WEexplore](#).

Education and Training Pathways:

There is currently no formal training program for this career. Employers may provide on the job training to teach the skills and competencies needed for the job.