So you want to be a nurse…

Even though all nurses might look the same, there are actually dozens of different types of nurses, and they all have different training and education. Generally, the more education a nurse has, the more responsibilities he or she has. Some even have the same responsibilities as doctors.

Nurses are always in demand, and job security is an appealing concept—especially in light of the recent economic turmoil. If you have an interest in medicine and science and are motivated to provide care for others, consider the types of nursing careers available and the education required for each as you decide on your future career.

PRENURSING STEPS:

1. Visit the Bailey Building: [http://www1.abtech.edu/content/Student-Services/Admissions/High-School-Student-Admission](http://www1.abtech.edu/content/Student-Services/Admissions/High-School-Student-Admission)
   a. Fill out an A-B Tech Admission Application
   b. Talk to a counselor about any college classes you have already taken

2. CNA I: Certified Nursing Assistant/Nurse Aide I (May be obtained at A-B Tech)

   A-B Tech is not alone in requiring certification as a Nurse Aide (Nursing Assistant) for admission into our nursing programs. This short-term training prepares you to work as a caregiver in a health care setting such as a nursing home, hospital or home health care.

   [https://www.ncnar.org/index1.jsp](https://www.ncnar.org/index1.jsp)
   [http://www1.abtech.edu/nursing-assistant](http://www1.abtech.edu/nursing-assistant)  Information hotline: (828) 398 7600

3. Testing:
   a. To gain admission to a nursing program, you have to be able to take multiple choice tests. One of these tests may be required: Accuplacer, SAT or ACT
   b. TEAS: Your score on the Test of Essential Academic Skills makes a big difference in your application

   [https://atitesting.com/Solutions.aspx](https://atitesting.com/Solutions.aspx)

4. Take some classes! You will improve your chances of success in the nursing program if you have already taken classes in biology, anatomy and physiology, English and math, as well as study skills and college success. If you have already taken some college classes or have a previous degree, ABTCC can evaluate your transcripts to see what will transfer.

5. Visit [http://www1.abtech.edu/content/directory/college-services-and-offices](http://www1.abtech.edu/content/directory/college-services-and-offices)
WHICH NURSING PROGRAM IS RIGHT FOR ME?

A-B Tech offers several pathways to become a nurse:

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)

Just as you need a license to drive a car, nurses need a license to practice. With a Practical Nurse license, a nurse can treat patients if a Registered Nurse (see below) is in charge. Some basic care an LPN provides might be: giving medications, changing bandages and recording your body’s vital signs- like temperature, heart rate and blood pressure.

Our 12 month LPN program includes training in science subjects like Anatomy (how the human body is built), Physiology (how the human body works), Pharmacology (what medicines there are and how they work), and practical patient care (how to help sick people get better). Once you have graduated from the LPN program, you will take a test called the NCLEX-PN to obtain your PN license.

Registered Nurse (RN)

To become a Registered Nurse (RN), you need an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN). An RN has many responsibilities. In addition to being in charge of LPNs, they also work closely with doctors to make sure a patient gets the best possible care. Like LPNs, an RN needs a nursing license.

Our ADN program is 22 months long. You will study subjects like Chemistry (how liquids, solids and gases work), Biology (how all living things work), Anatomy (how the human body is built), and Psychology (how the human mind works). You will also treat patients in medical offices and hospitals to get real life experience. This is called clinical training. Clinical training prepares RNs to work on their own and with doctors. Once you have graduated from the ADN program, you will take a test called the NCLEX-RN to obtain your RN license.

RIBN (Regionally Increasing Baccalaureate Nurses): This special program provides the graduate with a BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree) from Western Carolina University. All of the classes are located in Asheville, North Carolina, and most of the first three years can be obtained at A-B Tech. RIBN students obtain their RN license after the first 3 years, and then can work as nurses while finishing their BSN.

Bridge: We also offer the opportunity for those who have an LPN to obtain their ADN in one year. The program starts in the summer and finishes in May. At that time, graduates may obtain their RN.
THE FUTURE:

Is it worthwhile to spend the extra time (and money) pursuing a BSN, when an ADN or diploma can get you into the workforce sooner? In the end it’s a personal choice, but you should be aware that there is a growing movement to require all RNs to hold a bachelor’s degree; you’ll have greater career options with a BSN in hand. Also, bachelor’s degree programs offer more training in areas that are critical to nursing practice, such as leadership, critical thinking, and communication.

Advanced Practice Nurse (APN)

If you’re looking for more challenge and responsibility, consider pursuing graduate study to become an APN. There are four categories of APNs:

- Nurse practitioners-NPs can prescribe medications and, in 23 states, can practice independently without a physician. These individuals are often found in areas that do not have enough physicians to provide for the community’s health care needs.
- Clinical nurse specialists-CNSs become experts in a specialized area of nursing practice, such as pediatrics, emergency room care, diabetes, oncology, or stress.
- Certified nurse-midwives-CNMs help women to deliver babies in many settings (hospitals, birthing centers, and private homes).
- Certified registered nurse anesthetists-CRNAs administer anesthesia during surgical procedures, either on their own or with physician anesthesiologists.

In addition, there are local graduate programs to prepare nurses for leadership and administrative positions, as well as for teaching positions at nursing programs.

Because the need for nurses is so great, there is a great deal of federal funding available to pursue a nursing degree. www.CFNC.org has more information.

FUTURE NEEDS:

1. CPR: Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) from the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association (May be obtained at A-B Tech)

   http://www.heart.org/HEARTOR/G/CPRAandECC/CP/UCM_001118_SubHomePa.jsphttp://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/program-highlights/cpr-first-aid

2. Criminal Background Check and Drug Screen: Nurses are the most highly trusted health care professional in America. Visit the board of nursing website to find out more: www.NCBON.org

3. Nursing is a demanding job physically, emotionally and technically. The successful nursing student achieves a balance in life that allows him or her to maintain all three.