



## Length of unemployment by occupation, 2006

**F**inding a job takes time. But just how much time depends, in part, on the occupation in which you're seeking employment.

Each month, the Current Population Survey asks unemployed people how long they have been looking for work. In 2006, as the chart shows, unemployed people in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations had been looking for work for the fewest median number of weeks, compared with people in other occupational groups. Why the difference?

One reason might be that workers in some occupations are more likely to wait for a specific type of job before accepting employment, especially if their former jobs paid well. Another reason is that finding work

quickly is difficult in some specialized occupations. And employment in other occupations, including those in construction, is cyclical; jobs begin and end more quickly, so people experience shorter, but more frequent, periods of unemployment.

The numbers in the chart are medians, which means that half of the people surveyed had been looking for work longer than the time shown, and half for shorter. In every occupational group, some workers had been unemployed for more than 6 months.

The workers were still unemployed when they were surveyed, so the total length of their unemployment is unknown. To learn more, call (202) 691-6378 or visit online at [www.bls.gov/cps](http://www.bls.gov/cps).

