
Cashiers

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Significant Points

- Cashiers need little or no work experience, and are trained on the job.
- Overall employment is projected to decline; however, job growth will be strong for gaming cashiers.
- Opportunities for full-time and part-time jobs are expected to be good because of the need to replace the large number of workers who leave cashier jobs.
- Many cashiers start at minimum wage.

Nature of the Work

Supermarkets, department stores, gasoline service stations, movie theaters, restaurants, and many other businesses employ cashiers to register the sale of their merchandise. Almost all cashiers total bills on a cash register, receive money, make change, fill out charge forms, and give receipts. A few still use pencil and paper or an adding machine.

Although specific job duties vary by employer, cashiers usually are assigned to a register at the beginning of their shifts and are given a drawer containing a specific amount of money with which to start—their “till.” They must count their till to ensure that it contains the correct amount of money and adequate supplies of change. Cashiers also handle returns and exchanges. They must ensure that returned merchandise is in good condition, and determine where and when it was purchased and what type of payment was used.

After entering charges for all items and subtracting the value of any coupons or special discounts, cashiers total the customer’s bill and take payment. Forms of payment include cash, personal checks, credit cards, and debit cards. Cashiers must know the store’s policies and procedures for each type of payment the store accepts. For checks and credit and debit card charges, they may request additional identification from the customer or call in for an authorization. They must verify the age of customers purchasing alcohol or tobacco. When the sale is complete, ca-



Cashiers total bills on a cash register, handle money, and interact with customers.

shiers issue a receipt to the customer and return the appropriate change. They may also wrap or bag the purchase.

At the end of their shifts, cashiers once again count the drawers’ contents and compare the totals with sales data. An occasional shortage of small amounts may be overlooked but, in many establishments, repeated shortages are grounds for dismissal. In addition to counting the contents of their drawers at the end of their shifts, cashiers usually separate and total charge forms, return slips, coupons, and any other noncash items.

Most cashiers use scanners and computers, but some establishments still require price and product information to be entered manually. In a store with scanners, a cashier passes a product’s Universal Product Code over the scanning device, which transmits the code number to a computer. The computer identifies the item and its price. In other establishments, cashiers manually enter codes into computers and then descriptions of the items and their prices appear on the screen.

Depending on the type of establishment, cashiers may have other duties as well. In many supermarkets, for example, cashiers weigh produce and bulk food, as well as return unwanted items to the shelves. In convenience stores, cashiers may be required to know how to use a variety of machines other than cash registers, and how to furnish money orders and sell lottery tickets. Operating ticket-dispensing machines and answering customers’ questions are common duties for cashiers who work at movie theaters and ticket agencies. In casinos, *gaming change persons* and *booth cashiers* exchange coins and tokens and may issue payoffs. They also may operate a booth in the slot-machine area and furnish change to people or count and audit money in drawers.

Work environment. Most cashiers work indoors, usually standing in booths or behind counters. Often, they are not allowed to leave their workstations without supervisory approval because they are responsible for large sums of money. The work of cashiers can be very repetitious, but improvements in workstation design in many stores are alleviating problems caused by repetitive motion. In addition, the work can sometimes be dangerous; the risk from robberies and homicides is much higher for cashiers than for other workers, although more safety precautions are being taken to help deter robbers.

Gaming change persons and booth cashiers can expect a safer work environment than cashiers in other industries. However, casinos are not without their hazards such as exposure to fumes from cigarettes, cigars, and pipes and noise from slot machines.

About 46 percent of all cashiers work part time. Hours of work often vary depending on the needs of the employer. Generally, cashiers are expected to work weekends, evenings, and holidays to accommodate customers’ needs. However, many employers offer flexible schedules. Because the holiday season is the busiest time for most retailers, many employers restrict the use of vacation time from Thanksgiving through the beginning of January.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Cashier jobs usually are entry-level positions requiring little or no previous work experience. They require good customer service skills.

Education and training. Although there are no specific educational requirements, employers filling full-time jobs often prefer applicants with high school diplomas.

Nearly all cashiers are trained on the job. In small businesses, an experienced worker often trains beginners. The trainee spends the first day observing the operation and becoming familiar with the store's equipment, policies, and procedures. After this, trainees are assigned to a register—frequently under the supervision of an experienced worker. In larger businesses, trainees spend several days in classes before being placed at cash registers. Topics typically covered in class include a description of the industry and the company, store policies and procedures, equipment operation, and security.

Training for experienced workers is not common, except when new equipment is introduced or when procedures change. In these cases, the employer or a representative of the equipment manufacturer trains workers on the job.

Licensure. Gaming change persons and booth cashiers are required to obtain a license and background check from their State's gaming board and must meet an age requirement, usually set at 21 years old.

Other qualifications. People who want to become cashiers should be able to do repetitious work accurately. They also need basic mathematics skills and good manual dexterity. Because cashiers deal constantly with the public, they should be neat in appearance and able to deal tactfully and pleasantly with customers. In addition, some businesses prefer to hire workers who can operate specialized equipment or who have business experience, such as typing, selling, or handling money.

Advancement. Advancement opportunities for cashiers vary. For those working part time, promotion may be to a full-time position. Others advance to head cashier or cash-office clerk. In addition, this job offers a good opportunity to learn about an employer's business and can serve as a steppingstone to a more responsible position.

Employment

Cashiers held about 3.5 million jobs in 2006. Of these, 27,000 were employed as gaming change persons and booth cashiers. Although cashiers are employed in almost every industry, 26 percent of all jobs were in food and beverage stores. Gasoline stations, department stores, other retail establishments, and restaurants also employed large numbers of these workers. Outside of retail establishments, many cashiers worked in amusement, gambling, and recreation industries, local government, and personal and laundry services.

Job Outlook

Overall cashier employment is expected to decline, but job growth will be strong for gaming cashiers. Opportunities for full-time and part-time jobs are expected to be good because of

the need to replace the large number of workers who leave this occupation.

Employment change. Employment of cashiers is expected to decline 3 percent between 2006 and 2016. The rising popularity of purchasing goods online will negatively affect the employment growth of cashiers, although many customers still prefer the traditional method of purchasing goods at stores. Also, the growing use of self-service check-out systems in retail trade, especially at grocery stores, should have an adverse effect on employment of cashiers. These self-checkout systems may outnumber checkouts with cashiers in the future in many establishments. The impact on job growth for cashiers will largely depend on the public's acceptance of this self-service technology.

Job growth will be strong for gaming cashiers as more States legalize casinos and gaming becomes more popular. An increasing number of gaming venues will generate new jobs. However, many casinos are finding ways to use less cash in their operations, particularly the slot machines, which now generate tickets that can be accepted by other slot machines.

Job prospects. Opportunities for full-time and part-time cashier jobs should continue to be good because of the need to replace the large number of workers who transfer to other occupations or leave the labor force. There is substantial movement into and out of the occupation because education and training requirements are minimal and the predominance of part-time jobs is attractive to people seeking a short-term source of income rather than a full-time career. Historically, workers under the age of 25 have filled many of the openings in this occupation. In 2006, almost half of all cashiers were 24 years of age or younger.

Because cashiers are needed in businesses and organizations of all types and sizes, job opportunities are found throughout the country. But job opportunities may vary from year to year because the strength of the economy affects demand for cashiers. Companies tend to hire more cashiers when the economy is strong. Seasonal demand for cashiers also causes fluctuations in employment.

Earnings

Many cashiers start at the Federal minimum wage, which was \$5.85 an hour in 2007. Some State laws set the minimum wage higher, and establishments must pay at least that amount. Wages tend to be higher in areas where there is intense competition for workers.

Median hourly earnings of cashiers, except gaming in May 2006 were \$8.08. The middle 50 percent earned between \$6.99 and \$9.44 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-16	
				Number	Percent
Cashiers.....	41-2010	3,527,000	3,411,000	-116,000	-3
Cashiers, except gaming	41-2011	3,500,000	3,382,000	-118,000	-3
Gaming change persons and booth cashiers	41-2012	27,000	29,000	1,800	7

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

\$6.18, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$11.64 an hour. Median hourly earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of cashiers in May 2006 were:

Grocery stores	\$8.20
Health and personal care stores.....	8.15
Department stores	8.10
Other general merchandise stores	8.09
Gasoline stations	7.82

Median hourly earnings for gaming cashiers in May 2006 were \$9.94. The middle 50 percent earned between \$8.16 and \$12.22 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$6.98, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$14.50 an hour. Median hourly earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of gaming cashiers in May 2006 were:

Casino hotels.....	\$11.64
Traveler accommodation.....	11.61
Local government	9.50
Gambling industries	9.45

Benefits for full-time cashiers tend to be better than those for cashiers working part time. In addition to typical benefits, those working in retail establishments often receive discounts

on purchases, and cashiers in restaurants may receive free or low-cost meals. Some employers also offer employee stock option plans and education reimbursement plans.

Related Occupations

Cashiers accept payment for the purchase of goods and services. Other workers with similar duties include tellers, counter and rental clerks, food and beverage serving and related workers, gaming cage workers, Postal Service workers, and retail salespersons.

Sources of Additional Information

General information on careers in grocery stores is available from:

► Food Marketing Institute, 2345 Crystal Dr., Arlington, VA 22202. Internet: <http://www.fmi.org>

For information about employment opportunities as a cashier, contact:

► National Association of Convenience Stores, 1600 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314.

► United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, Education Office, 1775 K St.NW., Washington, DC 20006. Internet: <http://www.ufcw.org>