Acting as a career involves more than just performing in movies. Working actors perform in live theater productions, at theme parks, in commercials, and on television shows. As actors start their careers, many work multiple jobs, such as working as extras in films or TV, to support themselves financially.

While many actors live in large metropolitan areas, such as Los Angeles or New York, production companies all over the U.S. hire actors on a regular basis. Travel is often necessary, and competition for acting positions is extremely high. Acting can be a tiring career, both physically and emotionally; actors often spend hours at a time at repetitive auditions and rehearsals. Rejection is constant for new actors starting their careers.

**Career Requirements**

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| --- | --- |
| **Degree Level** | Not required; bachelor's degree helpful in learning the craft |
| **Degree Field** | There are no formal education requirements to become an actor but a bachelor's degree in theater arts, drama, acting/ and performing |
| **Experience** | Having more, may be helpful in learning technical skills. Experience is of great importance in this career, as experience will leads to bigger, and higher paying roles |
| **Key Skills** | Creativity; speaking, literacy, and reading skills; memorization; physical stamina; persistence, discipline, and dedication; ability to communicate with a wide variety of people |
| **Salary (2015)** | $18.80 (median hourly wage for actors) |

*Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)*

There are no formal education requirements to become an actor but a bachelor's degree in theater arts, drama, acting and performing, may be helpful in learning technical skills. Experience is of great importance in this career, as experience leads to bigger and higher paying roles. Skills an actor needs include creativity, speaking skills, literacy and reading skills, memorization, physical stamina, persistence, discipline, dedication, and ability to communicate with a wide variety of people.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Statistics, the median hourly wage for actors as of 2015 was $18.80. It is important to note though, that wages vary greatly. The range from the lowest 10% to the highest 10% of earners was $9.27-$48.79.