

## Low Postures

The Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS) publishes job-related information on physical demands; environmental conditions; education, training, and experience; as well as cognitive and mental requirements. The job requirements reflect those necessary for workers to perform critical tasks in support of the critical job functions, and not the capabilities of individual workers. Low postures estimates are considered part of the physical demand for workers in the U.S.

There are four positions included in low postures:

- **Crawling** – moving about on hands and knees or hands and feet.
- **Crouching** – bending the body downward and forward by bending the legs and spine.
- **Kneeling** – bending the legs at the knees to come to rest on the knee or knees.
- **Stooping** – bending the body forward and down while bending the spine at the waist 45 degrees or more either over something below waist level or down towards an object on or near the ground. Stooping should be significant enough that when bending, if arms were extended, workers' hands would be at or below the knees. Stooping must be performed while standing.

The low posture estimates indicate the percentage of workers with the requirement to perform critical tasks in low postures and are provided as:

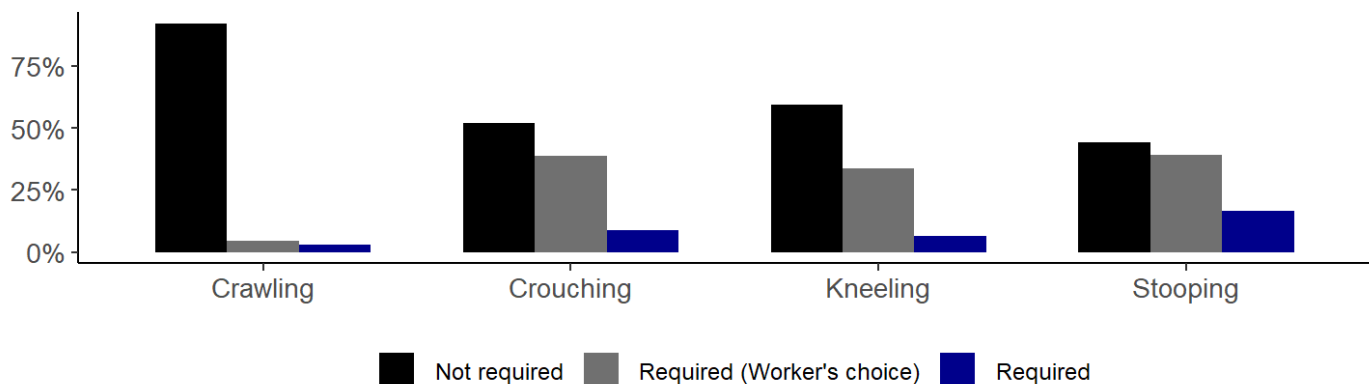
- **Not required** – when no low posture position is generally required to perform critical tasks.
- **Required** – when the job, the nature of critical tasks performed, or the physical settings of work environment dictates the use of specific low postures.
- **Worker's choice** – when none of the criteria from required apply and workers may choose the posture they use. For instance, workers may be able to either crouch or kneel to perform a job requirement.

Workers may be required to perform some critical tasks in a specific low posture and other critical tasks may allow for choice in low postures.

Low postures were not required for 43.2 percent of civilian workers. There were some occupations where more than 99.5 percent of workers were not required to perform critical tasks in low postures. For example, web and digital interface designers, economics teachers, and hearing aid specialists.

While 56.8 percent of civilian workers were required to perform critical tasks in low postures, crouching was required for 8.9 percent of workers. Another 38.9 percent of civilian workers were able to choose whether to crouch to complete critical tasks. (See Chart A.)

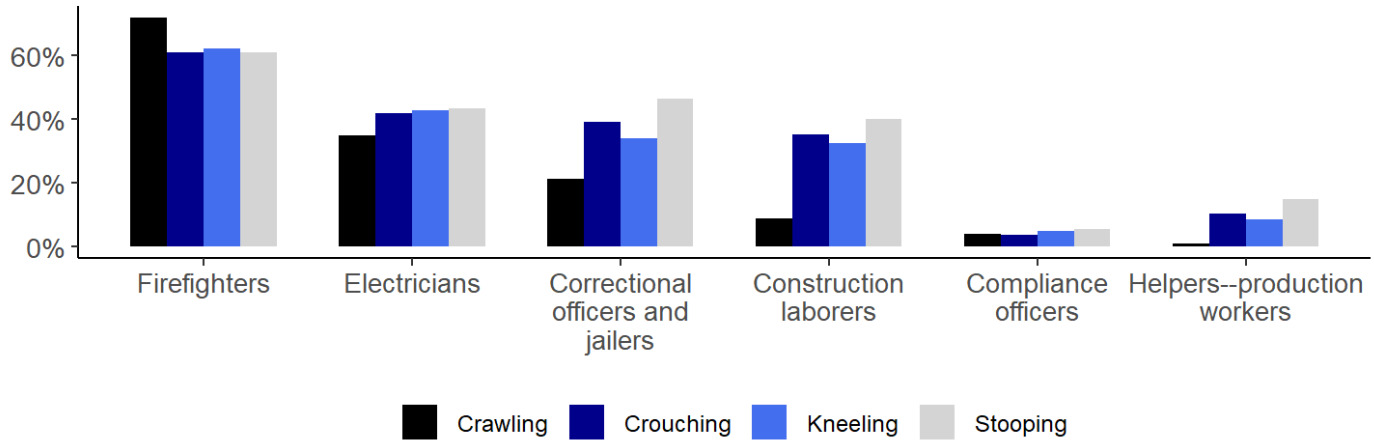
**Chart A. Percentage of civilian workers with low posture requirements, 2023**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

Crawling was required for 71.9 percent of firefighters, 61 percent were required to crouch, 62.3 percent were required to kneel, and 60.8 percent were required to stoop. (See Chart B.)

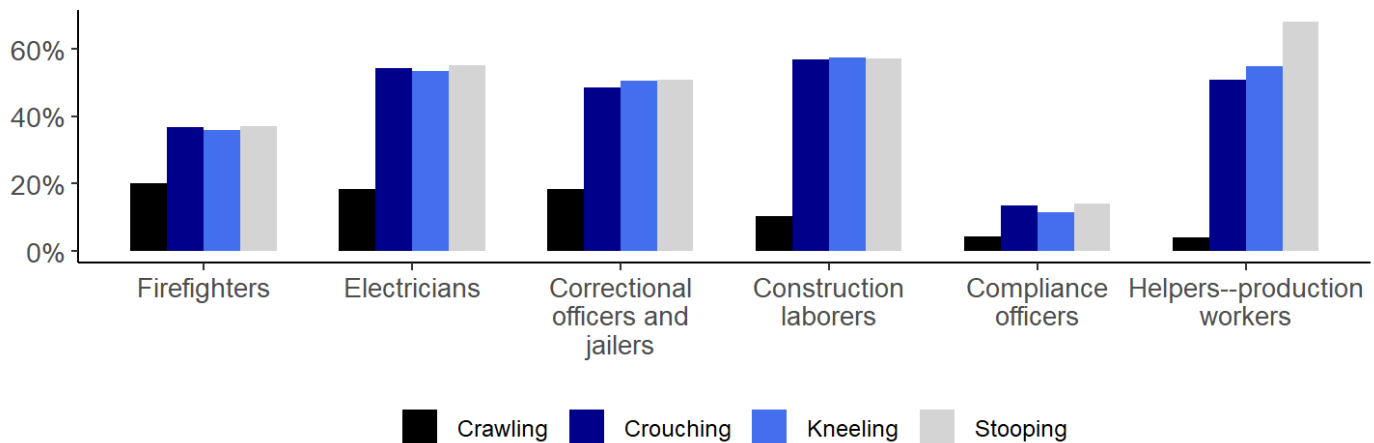
**Chart B. Percentage of workers with low posture requirements by occupation, 2023**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

Crawling is the only low posture that involves movement, and it is less easily replaced by other low postures. Although crawling is less interchangeable, there may be instances where workers have a choice whether to crawl or perform another posture. For example, electricians may have a choice of whether to crawl while working on low wiring, but they may also stoop, kneel, or crouch if they prefer. Crawling was required for 34.9 percent of electricians and 18.3 percent could choose to crawl. (See Chart C.)

**Chart C. Percentage of workers with choice of low posture by occupation, 2023**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

**Durations of low postures**

Low posture duration estimates are also published when possible. However, these measure the duration of low postures and are not available for individual postures (crawling, crouching, kneeling, and stooping).

Duration estimates provide the percentage of workers performing low posture by the portion (or range) within the workday spent performing critical tasks in low postures. For instance, 39.1 percent of cooks, fast food were required to perform critical tasks in low postures up to two percent of the workday (seldom) and 40.8 percent were required to perform tasks in low postures occasionally (two percent to 1/3 of the workday).

The sum of these estimates equals the total percentage of cooks, fast food with low posture requirements: 79.9 percent.

Similarly, while 98.7 percent of highway maintenance workers were required to perform tasks in low postures, 16.3 percent of these workers performed critical tasks seldom (up to two percent of the workday), 66.3 percent performed critical tasks in low postures occasionally (from two percent up to 1/3 of the workday), and 16.1 percent performed tasks in low postures frequently (from 1/3 up to 2/3 of the workday).

**Table 1. Percentage of workers with low posture requirement durations by occupation, 2023**

Occupation	Required	Seldom	Occasionally	Frequently
Highway maintenance workers	98.7	16.3	66.3	16.1
Automotive service technicians and mechanics	97.5	7.4	74.3	15.8
Motorcycle mechanics	95.5	36.7	53.3	5.5
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	87.1	28.8	55.3	3.0
Locker room, coatroom, and dressing room attendants	85.3	48.1	36.4	0.8
Textile cutting machine setters, operators, and tenders	83.3	7.6	75.1	0.6
Cooks, fast food	79.9	39.1	40.8	-
Metal-refining furnace operators and tenders	79.6	26.3	53.3	-
Food batchmakers	75.6	21.7	53.9	-
Team assemblers	64.2	19.1	35.3	9.8

Note: Dashes indicate that estimate was not publishable.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

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