

Carpenter

Carpenters construct, erect and repair buildings and other structures made of wood, wood substitutes, steel and other materials.

Duties vary according to the type of job:

In residential jobs, carpenters crib the basement; build the house framework, walls, roof, exterior and interior finishes; and install doors, windows, flooring, cabinets, stairs, handrails, panelling, moulding and ceiling tiles.

In commercial or industrial jobs, they build concrete forms, scaffolding, bridges, trestles, tunnels, shelters, towers and other structures.

In maintenance jobs, they repair and remodel existing structures of all kinds. Some carpenters specialize in one type of work such as framing, bench work or finishing work.

Most carpentry tasks involve:

- Reading blueprints and/or getting instructions from a supervisor
- Doing the layout including selecting materials, planning sequences and methods of work, and measuring and marking materials to avoid costly mistakes or omissions
- Cutting and shaping materials and joining them with nails, screws, bolts or glue
- Checking completed units to be sure they are level, square, plumb and the right size, shape and location

Carpenters must work accurately and economically, and follow national and local building codes.

Working Conditions

Carpenters may work alone, in teams or with helpers. Working conditions vary from one job to another. On some jobs carpenters work primarily indoors, are permanently employed and work a regular 40-hour week. On other jobs, they work primarily outdoors, are subject to seasonal unemployment, and routinely work overtime in peak periods.

There is some risk of injury from slips and falls, falling objects, and sharp hand and power tools.



Skills and Abilities

The work is most rewarding for those who take pride in creating a variety of things with their hands and honing their expertise in woodcraft.

To be successful in the trade, carpenters need:

- The ability to stand, crouch and kneel for long periods of time
- Manual dexterity
- Balance for working on scaffolding
- The ability to lift between 11 and 25 kilograms
- The ability to solve arithmetic problems quickly and accurately
- The ability to get along well with others on a work team

Working in Alberta

To work as a Carpenter in Alberta, a person must:

- Be a registered apprentice, a certified journeyperson, hold a recognized trade certificate, OR
- Work for an employer who is satisfied that the worker has the skills and knowledge expected of a certified journeyperson, OR
- Be self-employed

Carpenters learn their skills by registering with Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training to participate in apprenticeship training and, upon successful completion, are awarded the Alberta Journeyman Certificate.

A carpenter who holds a valid trade certificate from Alberta or from another Canadian province or territory may apply to write the Interprovincial Exam and, if successful, be granted a Red Seal under the Interprovincial Standards Program. The Red Seal is recognized throughout most of Canada.

A carpenter who holds a certificate that was issued by another recognized apprenticeship authority in Canada (province, territory or federal jurisdiction) may apply for an Alberta Equivalency document under the Equivalency Program.

Carpenters who:

- Hold a non-recognized Canadian credential in an Alberta-designated trade, OR
- Can demonstrate skills and experience in an Alberta-designated trade that meets standards set for journeypersons in Alberta may be eligible to apply for trade certification under the Qualification Certificate Program
- Individuals possessing a valid Alberta Journeyman Certificate, an Alberta Occupational Certificate, or a credential that is recognized as equivalent to an Alberta trade or occupational certificate are eligible to receive a Blue Seal business credential after completing the necessary requirements.



Apprenticeship Training

The term of apprenticeship for a carpenter is 4 years (four 12-month periods) including a minimum of 1360 hours of on-the-job training and 8 weeks of technical training each year.

- An applicant who previously completed courses of study or work experience related to the Carpenter trade or holds a related journeyperson certificate and has the employer's recommendation, may qualify for credit that could reduce the term of apprenticeship.
- A person who has previous training or work experience in the trade and wants to determine their level of skill and knowledge for entry or advanced standing in an apprenticeship program may apply for a Prior Learning Assessment.
- A high school student can become an apprentice and gain credits toward apprenticeship training and a high school diploma at the same time under the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)

To learn the skills required of a Carpenter in Alberta and be issued an Alberta Journeyman Certificate, a person must:

- Satisfy the entrance requirements or pass the entrance exam
- Find a suitable employer who is willing to hire and train an apprentice

Most employers prefer to hire high school graduates and may select apprentices from among their current employees.

- With their employer, complete the Apprenticeship Application and Contract and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above
- Complete the required on-the-job training
 - during on-the-job training, apprentice carpenters earn at least 60 percent of the journeyperson wage rate in their place of employment in the first year, 70 percent in the second, 80 percent in the third, and 90 percent in the fourth year.
 - apprentices are required to provide their own tools
- Complete the required technical training each year
- Enroll in technical training
 - select an educational institution that offers training for Carpenter apprentices, and a time to attend training
 - determine requirements for enrolling at the selected institution, and forward completed enrollment form to the selected institution



- Review books and materials required for training
- Successfully complete all required exams
 - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating

Apprentices may attempt the Interprovincial Exam in the final period of their apprenticeship training and, if successful, be granted a Red Seal.

- Review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating

When apprentices attend technical training, they are required to pay the applicable tuition fee and purchase course supplies.

Grants, scholarships and other financial assistance may be available. For more information contact an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office.

Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program

To qualify for a Red Seal, a person must:

Hold a valid trade certificate in a trade that participates in the Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program:

- An Alberta trade certificate or completion of apprenticeship certificate, OR
- A journeyperson or completion of apprenticeship certificate issued by another Canadian province or territory

For applications based on Alberta certificates:

- Complete the Interprovincial (Red Seal) Examination Application - Alberta Certified (no application fee is required)
- Submit the application to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office

For applications based on non-Alberta certificates:

- Complete the Interprovincial (Red Seal) Examination Application - Canadian Certified
- Submit the application to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application form

Prepare for the exam:

- Review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
- Review available resource materials
- Successfully complete the required exam(s)



Equivalency Program

To qualify for an Equivalency document based on a recognized credential, a person must:

- Have a valid trade credential issued by another Canadian province or territory or by the Department of National Defence
 - completion of apprenticeship certificate issued before the trade began participation in the Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program, OR
 - completion of apprenticeship certificate issued in a trade that does not participate in the Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program, OR
 - other recognized trade credential
- Complete the Equivalency Application and deliver it in person to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office. Government issued photo identification is required.
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above

A person who has a recognized certificate, as described above, does not require an Alberta Equivalency document to work in the trade in Alberta. However, some employers may require an Alberta Equivalency document as proof that the certificate is equivalent to the requirements of the trade in Alberta.

Qualification Certificate Program

To qualify for a Qualification Certificate based on Canadian credentials, a person must:

- Have a valid trade credential issued by another Canadian province or territory or by the Department of National Defence, and the credential is NOT recognized as being equivalent to a trade certificate issued by Alberta
- Complete the Qualification Certificate – Canadian Credentials Application and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office.
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above
- Prepare for the exam(s)
 - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
 - review available resource materials



- Successfully complete the required exam(s)

To qualify for an Alberta Qualification Certificate *based on work experience*, a person must:

- Have at least 8,160 hours and 72 months of 'hands-on' work experience as a carpenter

Time spent on supervisory or foreman duties, counter work, heading the tool crib, or on a training course is NOT counted as 'hands-on' work experience.

- Complete the Qualification Certificate - Work Experience Application and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- Pay the non-refundable fees as identified on the application noted above

This application fee covers the verification and assessment of the applicant's work experience hours/months as well as one attempt at the Qualification Certificate theory examination. The Qualification Certificate practical examination requires a separate fee as identified on the application noted above.

- Prepare for the exam(s)
 - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
 - review available resource materials
- Successfully complete the required exam(s)

