

# CARPENTER



## JOB DESCRIPTION

A carpenter makes and installs the wooden elements of a building. These include its large structural pieces, such as the roof beams, floor supports, and wall partitions, as well as the internal fixtures, such as staircases, kitchen cabinets, doors, and baseboards. Carpenters follow drawings and blueprints, and ensure that their work meets safety and quality standards.



## SALARY

Apprentice carpenter ★★★★★  
Experienced carpenter ★★★★★

## INDUSTRY PROFILE

Self-employment is common • Market dictated by the economic state of the construction industry • Many experienced carpenters take on contracting roles in construction

## CAREER PATHS

There are many opportunities for carpenters in the construction industry. While working, you can study for further vocational qualifications if you wish to specialize in areas such as cabinet making or building conservation.

### TRADE SCHOOL STUDENT

If you have an interest in carpentry, you can study for a certificate in carpentry or joinery in college to help you find employment. You can then study for higher diplomas if you wish to specialize.



**APPRENTICE** Some larger construction or kitchen fitting companies may employ you as an apprentice straight from high school, allowing you to learn on the job.



### FURNITURE MAKER

Makes pieces of wooden furniture, such as chairs, tables, and cupboards. Some also carry out restoration work on antique items and properties.



**CARPENTER** You may focus on one area of construction, such as making the frames of buildings, but most carpenters provide a wide range of services to their clients.



## SKILLS GUIDE



Ability to work in a team with site manager and coworkers, and strong multitasking skills.



Creativity to make decorative elements of furniture, unique trims, and fittings.



Good numerical skills for taking accurate measurements and making calculations.



Manual dexterity for using a wide range of hand and power tools to cut, shape, and join materials.



Physical strength for lifting heavy items and holding them in place while fixing them into position.



**MILL WORKER** Specializes in making wooden items in a workshop. These may include staircases, cupboards, doors, roof beams, and wardrobes.



**CABINET MAKER/KITCHEN FITTER** Installs and fits kitchen cupboards, worktops, and trims. Fitters follow layouts drawn up by a designer to achieve the look requested by their customers.



**SITE CARPENTER/FRAMER** Makes the wooden sections of a property on a building site. They also prepare scaffolds or forms (the molds that hold poured concrete).

## RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **PRODUCT DESIGNER** *see pp. 18–19*
- ▶ **BOAT BUILDER** Builds new boats or carries out repairs on existing vessels using a range of carpentry, engineering, and plumbing skills.
- ▶ **PAINTER AND DECORATOR** Applies paint, wallpaper, and other coatings to walls and surfaces of a building to improve its appearance.
- ▶ **ROOFER** Repairs and builds roofs on houses and commercial properties, using materials such as slates, tiles, and wood.
- ▶ **THEATER SET DESIGNER** Creates the sets that are used for stage shows. They use their artistic skills and knowledge of lighting and costumes to create the right visual setting for the production.

## AT A GLANCE



**YOUR INTERESTS** Woodwork • Engineering • Design technology • Construction • Mathematics • Art and design • Health and fitness



**ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS** College courses in carpentry or joinery are not essential, but will help you find work. Apprenticeships are important.



**LIFESTYLE** Working hours are regular, but early starts are common. Carpenters may need to work overtime on some projects.



**LOCATION** Some jobs require work on site in harsh weather. Carpenters may need to work away from home for long periods on jobs located far away.



**THE REALITIES** Can be physically demanding and the financial rewards are modest, but building something can be very rewarding.