

CONSTRUCTION JOBS

INFORMATION
PACK
ON TRADE
ROLES

JANUARY 2008

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CONTENTS

GENERAL	6
ROLES OFFERED BY WESTRIDGE CONSTRUCTION LTD	7
CARPENTER AND JOINER	7
The Job	7
The People	7
Entry Requirements	7
The Benefits	7
PAINTER & DECORATOR	8
The Job	8
The People	8
Entry Requirements	8
The Benefits	8
OTHER OCCUPATIONS IN CONSTRUCTION	9
WOOD	9
BENCH JOINER	10
The People	10
Entry Requirements	10
The Benefits	10
FORM WORKER	11
The People	11
Entry Requirements	11
The Benefits	11
SHOPFITTER	12
The Job	12
The People	12
Entry Requirements	12
The Benefits	12
WOOD MACHINIST	13
The Job	13
The People	13
Entry Requirements	13
The Benefits	13
INTERIOR OCCUPATIONS	14
CEILING FIXER	15
The Job	15
The People	15
Entry Requirements	15
The Benefits	15
DRY LINER	16
The Job	16
The People	16

Entry Requirements.....	16
The Benefits	16
FLOOR LAYER.....	17
The Job	17
The People	17
Entry Requirements.....	17
The Benefits	17
GLAZIER.....	18
The Job	18
The People	18
Entry Requirements.....	18
The Benefits	18
PARTITIONER.....	19
The Job	19
The People	19
Entry Requirements.....	19
The Benefits	19
PLASTERER.....	20
The Job	20
The People	20
Entry Requirements.....	20
The Benefits	20
RENDERER.....	21
The Job	21
The People	21
Entry Requirements.....	21
The Benefits	21
WALL AND FLOOR TILER.....	22
The Job	22
The People	22
Entry Requirements.....	22
The Benefits	22
PLUMBER.....	23
The Job	23
The People	23
Entry Requirements.....	23
TROWEL OCCUPATIONS.....	24
The Job	24
The People	24
Entry Requirements.....	24
The Benefits	24

CONSTRUCTION OPERATIVE.....	25
The Job	25
The People	25
Entry Requirements.....	25
The Benefits	25
STONEMASON	26
The Job	26
The People	26
Entry Requirements.....	26
The Benefits	26

GENERAL

A career in construction involves joining a team of specialist people all working together to build a strong, long-lasting future.

Whatever the role in the industry, from bricklayer or roofer to civil engineer or architect, every team member is as important as the next.

ROLES OFFERED BY WESTRIDGE CONSTRUCTION LTD

CARPENTER AND JOINER

The Job

A building isn't all about bricks and mortar. Timber is an essential part of just about every structure, and it's the carpenter and joiner's job to prepare it and put it into place. It's a skilled job that utilises special tools, and often involves many different kinds of wood.

The People

If you enjoy using your hands, have a good hand and eye co-ordination and enjoy being part of a team then a carpenter and joiner could be the ideal role for you. You'll need to be good at maths as you'll be calculating angles and measurements.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a carpenter, although GCSE's/Standard Grades in Maths, English and Technology will be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in an enable you to earn while you learn!

Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involved a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

PAINTER & DECORATOR

The Job

The role of a painter and decorator in the construction industry is normally more involved than simply decorating a room in a house. For example, oil rigs, bridges and steelwork all need heavy-duty coatings.

On the other end of the scale, stately homes or grand hotels also need painters and decorators who can skilfully apply gold leaf to ornate fixtures and fittings.

The People

As you'd expect, you'll need to be good with your hands to succeed in this role. Most of the work is carried out indoors, but you should be prepared to work outside and travel to different sites. Work can also range from large jobs to very intricate projects.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a painter and decorator, although GCSEs/Standard Grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test. You will also need a keen interest in art and design.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

OTHER OCCUPATIONS IN CONSTRUCTION

WOOD

Timber has been used for thousands of years, and it's still an important construction material. It is used throughout the industry, and working with it can be extremely varied and rewarding.

Overall, woodworkers will need to enjoy using their hands, as well as a variety of both hand and power tools. Good hand-eye co-ordination is essential, as are accurate measuring skills.

Organisation and team working skills are also important. And with jobs being carried out both inside and out, there's the added advantage of variety to the work.

BENCH JOINER

Bench joiners prepare and assemble windows and staircases, ready for installation. They also create fitted furniture, such as wardrobes and cupboards for buildings. Become a bench joiner, and you will be mainly workshop based.

The People

Accuracy is the key in bench joinery, so you will need to be careful and methodical. You will need to be able to follow technical drawings and plans closely and have a high level of practical competence. You will have to be fit to work with all the timber and be able to work as part of a team.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

FORM WORKER

Formworkers make temporary structures out of wood or metal. These moulds then have wet concrete poured into them and, when the concrete is hardened, the structures are removed to reveal perfectly shaped pieces. Formworkers are used whenever anything is built of concrete, including bridges, foundations, beams and staircases.

The People

To be a formworker you will need to enjoy being part of a team. You will have to work to precise measurements with wood and metal, so a good head for figures is also important.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test. You will also need a keen interest in art and design.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

SHOPFITTER

The Job

A shopfitter's job is to plan, build and finish the shop interior. Starting with an empty room, they choose, cut and shape the materials that give a shop its own look and style.

Shopfitting is a skilled indoor job, and one that often means working through the night to get the job done. If you are creative, enjoy variety, and would like to work with a variety of different skills and materials, then this could be the ideal job for you.

The People

Shopfitters need a good eye for detail, and should definitely enjoy working with their hands. You will be at the 'finishing end' of construction, which means your work will be closely inspected by plenty of people.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test. You will start off by studying towards an NVQ/SVQ Level 2 or 3.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

WOOD MACHINIST

The Job

It is the job of the wood machinist to prepare floorboards, skirtings boards and window frames. Whilst the role does involve cutting and shaping on specialist equipment in a machine shop, it also includes setting up and operating the machines safely – so it helps to be mechanically minded. CAD-CAM is also used in a large number of companies.

The People

An interest in mechanics will be as important as a love of wood, as it will be your job to keep the workshop equipment in working order. You will also have to be just as good with your head as you are with your hands.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

INTERIOR OCCUPATIONS

Interior and finishing jobs demand people who are able to plan effectively, have creative skills and who can use basic maths, volumes and measurements.

Good attention to detail is also essential and above all, it is vital to be a team player. Job variety is also vast, as the interiors and finishing trade covers such a wide scope of careers.

CEILING FIXER

The Job

The role of a ceiling fixer usually involves fitting suspended ceilings, often in big modern buildings like shops, offices and hospitals. These ceilings often hide air-conditioning and other unsightly features.

The People

All the work undertaken will be indoors but you could be working high up, so a head for heights is important. You will also need a good technical brain as you will be reading plans and drawings, and you should also be good at managing your time efficiently.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

There is an NVQ/SVQ available in Interior Systems, which you may take. This includes setting out and interpreting projects and plans and learning the tools of the trade. You will also have health and safety training.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer. Payments to sub-contractors tend to be on an agreed price per square metre of ceiling installed.

Ceiling fixing provides a great deal of job satisfaction, and workers can progress on to supervisory and managerial roles, or even setting up their own business.

The Job

Not all finishes applied to walls and ceilings are 'wet', like plaster. 'Dry' finishes, such as plasterboard and wallboard, can be fixed up, joined together and decorated instead. A dry lining operative is the skilled worker who carries out this job.

The People

This is an indoor-only role but as in most construction work, you need to be fit. You should also have good numeracy skills, as you will be calculating surface areas and volumes. In addition, you will need to be able to read plans, diagrams and information sheets.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

This job also offers a good grounding for progression into technical, supervisory or management roles, or even to start up your own business.

FLOOR LAYER

The Job

There are hundreds of different types of flooring – from linoleum and carpets to plastic or slate tiles, The floor layer is responsible for finding the right material for the job and then, once the surface has been prepared and the material cut to fit, putting the floor finish in place.

The People

This is an indoor-only role which can also include working late into the night to get the job done. You will also need a head for figures, to ensure that you not only cut flooring to the right size but also in the most economical way.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

The job offers a good grounding for progression into technical, supervisory or management roles, or even to start up your own business.

The Job

Glazing is a highly skilled job that involves cutting glass – as well as other window materials – to the right size and fixing them in place. Glaziers need a good knowledge of the right materials for the job, and can work on a wide range of projects, from replacing a broken piece of glass to fitting out a whole office block.

The People

Glaziers work both indoor and out, and often at considerable heights. As you would expect, safety is essential when working with glass. You will also need to be good at maths, to ensure that you cut glass to the correct size for the frame.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test, and you are likely to work towards an NVQ/SVQ in a glass related area, such as Glazing Installation and Maintenance.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

The job offers a good grounding for progression into supervisory roles, or even to start up your own business.

PARTITIONER

The Job

Most large modern buildings are divided into rooms by partitions. Partitioning is one of the last things to be done on a construction project, and by the time the partitioner arrives there could well be people working in the building already.

Once the partition has been fitted, it is finished by adding glass, applying coverings, painting and varnishing.

The People

Firstly, you will need to be fit, as partitioning can be very physically demanding. It is also a job for people who prefer to work indoors. As with all construction, teamwork is important, as is good organisation and planning.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

The job also offers a good grounding for progression into supervisory roles, or even to start up your own business.

PLASTERER

The Job

Most people know one part of the plasterer's work: applying wet finishes to walls, ceilings and floors. This is called solid plastering. That is by no means all they do, though.

There is also fibrous plastering, which involves making ornamental plasterwork in a workshop or on site – that is the kind you see on the ceilings of decorative buildings.

The People

As a plasterer, a good head for heights is important. You will also need to become an expert at using the specialist tools of the trade.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

Many plasterers progress to supervisory roles, while some choose to set up their own business.

RENDERER

The Job

Renderers work on new buildings or on the extension or maintenance of existing buildings, and provide an attractive finish to the outside. Two coats are applied, and different finishes can be applied to give different textures, such as pebbledash.

The People

There are roughly 27,800 solid plasterers in the UK, including renderers. Most work directly for a construction company or builder, or for a sub-contractor specialising in rendering. Renderers usually work in a team, so you will have to have good communication skills and get on with others.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

The job also offers a good grounding for progression into supervisory roles, or even to start up your own business.

WALL AND FLOOR TILER

The Job

Wall and floor tiling may sound straightforward, but it can be a complex job, using coloured and textured tiles to decorate the inside of a building.

The role is very varied. One week you might be working in a bathroom in somebody's home, and the next travelling abroad to fix huge heavy-duty tiles to a factory interior.

The People

With the job being so varied, tilers need to be flexible, adaptable, and happy to travel. You will also need a good head for figures, to ensure you calculate the right amount of tiles for the work area.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test. Most of the training will take place in the workplace and during this training you can expect to be working towards NVQ/SVQ Levels 2 and 4.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

Many tilers move on to technical, supervisory and managerial roles, and some even go on to own their own business.

PLUMBER

The Job

The role of a plumber is highly varied and ranges from installing systems to new buildings to the maintenance of existing ones.

Installation work includes central heating systems, sanitary systems, drainage and guttering. Heating systems may be powered using electricity, gas, oil, solid fuel or even solar energy.

Maintenance work includes routine servicing and emergency repairs. In addition, much of the work involves finding faults and carrying out repairs.

All these jobs need a range of hand and power tools, which are used for cutting, bending and joining pipes.

The People

There are roughly 28,000 plumbers in the UK. Most of them work for a plumbing or maintenance firm, but many are self-employed.

On larger jobs, plumbers work in a team, depending on the type of work, sometimes deal directly with clients. There's also the chance to work alongside other occupations like carpenters, painters and electricians.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

The main qualification is the City & Guilds 6988 Foundation Certificate in Plumbing, and is available to study at most colleges. This combines theory training with practical skills on and off site.

There are full and part time courses available at colleges where you will work towards NVQ/SVQ levels 2 and 3. Part time applicants may need to be in relevant work to be accepted. There are also self-study courses available but these only offer theoretical training, which is not enough to qualify.

For more information, contact Summitskills, the council for electrotechnics, heating, ventilating, air conditioning, refrigeration and plumbing industries, on 0800 688336. They will be able to offer help and advice on getting into the industry.

TROWEL OCCUPATIONS

The Job

Bricklaying is the most recognised construction profession for those who do not work in the industry. However, they probably do not realise just how many different materials bricklayers can work with or the different effects they can create.

Bricklayers also use a variety of specialist tools to spread and joint mortar and cut bricks or blocks to size.

The People

As a bricklayer you will need a good head for heights and be happy to work outdoors. Bricklaying can also be quite physical, so good fitness is important. You will also need to be precise, accurate and be able to follow instructions from architects. As a bricklayer you should get the opportunity to travel around, and sometimes work overseas.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test. Many colleges offer courses in bricklaying, awarding you with an NVQ/SVQ upon completion.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

The job also offers a good grounding for progression into technical, supervisory and managerial roles, or even to start up your own business.

CONSTRUCTION OPERATIVE

The Job

General construction operatives have an extraordinary wide range of skills, so it is probably no surprise to hear they are well in demand. They can be involved in tasks as diverse as concreting, formworking or timbering.

The People

If you enjoy a variety than this could be the ideal role for you. One day you could be installing timber in trenches. The next you could be concreting the floor of an office block. There are a lot of safety procedures to get to grips with, but above all, you will have to be flexible, and happy to work indoors, outdoors or at great heights.

Entry Requirements

There are no set entry requirements to train as a bench joiner, although GCSEs/Standard grades in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory.

Apprenticeships are the usual route in and enable you to earn while you learn. Entry to an apprenticeship scheme will usually involve a selection test.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer. You can also work overtime for extra cash.

The job also offers a good grounding for progression into supervisory roles, or even to start up your own business.

STONEMASON

The Job

Stonemasonry has been around for thousands of years, and today it is a traditional skill that is still very much in demand – both in repairing old buildings and creating new ones. It can be a really rewarding career, and you could get to work on some extremely impressive projects.

The job involves considerable skill and the use of both modern and traditional tools. Once you have got to grips with the basics, you can choose to specialise in either restoration or new build.

The People

You will need to be both creative and practical, and an interest in history helps, as much of the work involves the restoration of old buildings.

Entry Requirements

There are no specific academic requirements to train as stonemason, although an interest in art and design and GCSEs passes (A-D) / S Grades (1-4) in Maths, English and Technology may be helpful for the calculations, measurements and theory. Employers will usually test team skills and ability to take instructions before employing you.

Prospective stonemason can expect to learn the trade through an apprenticeship or traineeship, lasting 3 to 4 years. There is a highly accredited City & Guilds stonemasonry course available at several colleges, which combines on-site practical skills and college based theory training.

The Benefits

The Building and Allied Trades Joint Council (BATJIC) agrees wage rates annually. A good basic wage is available and can be boosted with the incentive schemes that many companies offer.

Self-employed professionals can expect to earn a far higher annual income than those in full time employment. Many masons prefer to stick to their craft, rather than transfer into the office-based technical, supervisory and managerial roles, although these routes are still possible.

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