

The 5 Steps of the Apprenticeship Process

Step 1 – Research

Do research on the trades you're interested in. (There are over 140 recognized trades in Ontario). Complete some of the quizzes and self-assessment exercises under the Labour Market Info tab to see what skilled trades suit YOU - your skills, interests, abilities, and personality. Decide how long you plan to commit to completing an apprenticeship. Some trades can take up to 5 years to complete. Find out if there is a demand for the various trades and consider a career that you would love to pursue, not just the financial rewards. To learn more, call or visit someone familiar with or working in the trade.

What sources of information are there for my research?

In addition to speaking with employers, apprentices, and journeypersons in the trade you're researching, you may also use the following sources:

The Internet

Visit www.tradeability.ca a local resource devoted to the skilled trades, apprenticeships and apprenticeship training in Durham Region.

- All the web sites in the Labour Market Info section
- Additional web sites found in the Resources & Links section, search by specific trades or keywords
- <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/apprentices/services.html> for services for apprentices

In School

- Guidance Counsellors and the Cooperative Education department in your school
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program: <http://www.oyap.com>



Step 1 – Research (cont...)

Career & Education Planning Agencies

- What's Next?... Transition Strategies
www.whats-next.ca | 905-427-1700

Out of School - Employment Service Providers

- Durham College - Job Connect
www.jobconnectontario.org | 905-721-3093, 905-885-4842, 905-852-7848 and 905-721-3025
- Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre
www.unemployedhelp.on.ca | 905-579-1821 and 905-420-4010
- Northern Lights
www.northernlightsosh.com | 905-436-2957 and 905-426-8337
- Y.M.C.A. Durham Employment and Community
www.ymcatoronto.org | 905-427-7670
- John Howard Society of Durham Region
www.jobconnectdurham.ca | 905-427-8165 and 905-666-8847
- vpi Inc.
www.vpi-inc.com | 905-571-3811, 905-571-3301 and 905-420-6440
- JobsNow
www.OntarioJobsNow.com | 905-433-2325 and 1-866-441-2325

Others

- Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities:
905- 837-7721 or 1-800-461-4608
- Durham College - Skills Training Centre:
905-721-3111
- Trade Unions and Associations: see individual profiles or
<http://www.oyap.com/contacts.htm>

I want to pick my skilled trade. How do I find what's right for me?

To narrow it down, consider your skills, abilities, personality and interests. Read up on the various trades through this guide and other web sites, and do the assessments. Once you have decided what the top five skilled trades are that interest you, you can further investigate by job shadowing and doing informational interviewing.

TQAA? ACA? What's all that?

These are different provincial government acts that regulate the trades in several sectors. Check out our "Definitions" section to understand how they work. Restricted, unrestricted, voluntary and compulsory trades - what are they? These terms refer to the fact that some trades have restricted skill sets and you can't perform them unless you have the proper qualifications. See our "Definitions" section

How long is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is anywhere from 2 to 5 years, depending on the trade. At the time of registration, prior education and related work experience (where appropriate) are considered, to potentially reduce the length of the program. For the trades that are legislated by the TQAA (Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act), the training duration or number of required hours is a mandatory requirement and for the trades legislated by the ACA (Apprenticeship Certification Act) they are based on the completion of competencies. The training duration or number of hours for ACA trades is only a guideline and may in fact take less or more time to complete the apprenticeship.

What are Red Seal Trades?

The Red Seal Program establishes and enforces inter-provincial standards and allows workers to seek employment in different provinces without having to rewrite certification exams when they relocate to another province. The program currently endorses 45 trades.

For more information, visit: <http://www.red-seal.ca>

What are wages like as an apprentice? And how do I “earn while I learn”?

Wages differ for each trade and may vary across Canada depending on demand. Typically, as an apprentice in the construction sector, your wages would increase a certain percentage each year of your apprenticeship based on a journeyman’s wages. In the other trades the employer sets the wages. The wage ranges listed on the Skilled Trades profiles are based on employment in Durham Region.

How about once I’m a journeyperson?

Again, wages differ for each trade. It also depends on location and whether or not you work for a company that is unionized or non-union.

Tools - do I need to buy my own?

Be aware that for some trades you will be expected to purchase the tools of the trade. For instance, some garages provide their mechanics with tools, some don’t. The personal investment could be substantial. The “Loans for Tools” program, offered by the provincial government, assists with some costs for certain trades by providing short-term loans. Call the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for details, or visit them online at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/apprentices/tools.html>

In 2006, the Federal Government announced the Tradesperson’s Tool Deduction which you can claim on your General Income Tax Return under Employment Expenses.

For more information, visit them online at: www.cra-arc.gc.ca

Step 2 – Education

Consider your education options. If you are in high school, think about co-op and/or OYAP (Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program). Careful selection of courses will prepare you for your future career. The Durham District School Board has developed an excellent resource, “Durham’s Pathways to Student Success Focus Programs” which outlines all of the courses that you should take if entering a trade.

Out of high school, under 25 years of age, and you haven’t completed your Grade 12 but would like to get into a trade, contact one of the local youth Job Connect agencies. You and your employer may be eligible for a financial incentive if you complete your academic requirements. Academic upgrading courses are available through Durham College and the Continuing Education Departments with the various school boards.

High School Students: Is Co-op/OYAP for you?

A co-op placement can be a great way to see what the skilled trades are all about and earn a credit(s) toward your high school diploma. OYAP (Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program) is the next step towards a regular apprenticeship. In addition to earning credits toward your high school diploma you will also receive credit for hours toward the total number required for your particular trade apprenticeship. If you’re 16 years or older and have completed 16 credits toward the OSSD, you may qualify. For more information, contact your guidance counsellor, technological education teacher, or call your school board. Additional information is available at <http://www.oyap.com> and <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/training/apprenticeship/Skills/oyap.html>

The school board numbers are:

- Durham District School Board:
905-666-5500
- Durham Catholic District School Board:
905-576-6150
- Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland and Clarington Catholic School Board:
705-748-4861
- Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board:
1-877-577-7048

What are the entrance requirements for apprenticeship? What courses will help?

This varies. The entrance requirements are set by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. In some cases it’s Grade 10, however, most employers are looking for those with Grade 12. See the individual profiles for current information. With respect to courses, trades differ. However, a high school education with a strong foundation (70% overall average) in math, sciences, and communications is usually important. (If you haven’t completed the required academic level for your selected trade, there are incentives to complete your education. Contact your closest Job Connect agency for more information).

For course information visit:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/training/apprenticeship/skills/pathwaye.pdf>

Pre-apprenticeship Training - What is it? How do I find out more about it?

People who want a career in the skilled trades can apply to a program that provides the technical training necessary to become an apprentice in a specific trade. The program can last up to 40 weeks and includes an eight week placement to give each participant real work experience. Participation in the program is free. To find out what type of programs are available and where they are offered call the Employment Ontario Hotline at 1-800-387-5656.

Out of School: What about the one and two year skilled trades college programs? Are they helpful?

These college programs or 'techniques' courses teach you the basics of your chosen trade. They are offered through Durham College and other institutions and you receive a diploma or certificate upon completion. Generally, they are one or two years long. Taking such training is optional; however, it often makes you more attractive to a potential employer if you know the basics. It can also help you determine if you'd be interested in the particular trade. If you attend Durham College their Career and Employment Services department will also help with your apprenticeship search after you complete your program.

What formal schooling do I get during my apprenticeship?

Approximately 10% of your time is spent in formal schooling. You may be enrolled in a day release program (where you are in school one day a week) or in a block release program (where you go to school for a number of weeks each year, in one continuous block of time). This is determined by MTCU. Your formal schooling continues throughout your apprenticeship.

Who pays for the schooling portion of my apprenticeship?

A classroom fee is set and payable to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. This is much lower in comparison to the regular tuition fees. In some cases the employer may reimburse you or pay for a portion of this fee. If you're in an apprenticeship through a union, sometimes they will cover all costs. If you do have to pay, and you are enrolled in a block training session it's offset by the fact that you usually get Employment Insurance for the time you are in school.

Step 3 – Employment

This will be the most challenging step! Finding an employer or a union to hire you as an apprentice. You have a couple of options and the first one would be: register with the Candidate Manager System. Information on how this job matching service works and who to register with can be accessed through the link to the Candidate Manager System. Another option would be: contact one of the local Job Connect agencies or Employment Resource Centres who will be able to help you with your job search.

Once you've found an employer/sponsor, either you or your employer should contact your local Employment Ontario office. One of their Employment and Training Consultants will work with you and your employer to complete the required training agreement to register you as an apprentice.

What are key points to finding an employer who will hire me as an apprentice?

Finding an apprenticeship is just like finding any other job - you have to knock on doors and contact employers. It's hard work, and it could take months. During that time, you need to stay positive and motivated, just as in any other job search. Start by creating a well-written resume and cover letter. There are many resources in Durham Region to help you with that and to find where they are in your community visit: www.211toronto.ca and select on Job Search, Durham Region.

Need help developing a resume? Go to our home page and click on Create a Résumé.

You can also get the names and phone numbers of potential employers through the yellow pages, trade associations, business directories, web sites, and articles in the paper. Be aware that many positions are not advertised and are found through word of mouth. So networking (speaking to everyone about what you are looking for) is key.

You got called for an interview! Great! Now Take the Quiz! which you will find on our home page and see how prepared you are. When you go in person, be well groomed. The advice is to dress one step above what you would normally wear on the job. Be prepared and try to learn about your potential employer prior to an interview! It may also make the employer stop and think if you demonstrate knowledge of their side of things, for instance, the costs involved for them. Stay positive and enthused and above all, keep your goal in mind and don't give up.

What are the benefits for an employer to hire an apprentice?

When an employer offers you an apprenticeship, they are preparing to invest a lot of time and money in you. It's an investment they may never get back and it could run into thousands of dollars over several years - all for one apprentice! However, there are a number of benefits such as:

- Employers may not be aware of the incentives available to them. Prior to your interview we suggest you find out more about these incentives by visiting: <http://tradeability.ca/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=3477&Lang=en> and <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/employers/services.html>
- It ensures them an employee that is not only trained to provincial industry standards but also understands their unique workplace conditions.
- Apprenticeship training allows them to benefit from the government-supported in-class training portion of the program, while supporting their future workforce needs and those in the industry.
- An apprenticeship program allows them to have within their company a pool of experienced employees of different ages so that they will be better able to plan to meet future workforce needs due to expansion plans or the retirement of older trades' persons.
- Recruiting potential apprentices through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program can be a cost-effective solution to training and retaining young workers.
- A recent survey of apprentices found that participants developed a loyalty to the company that hired them, which leads to a more stable workforce.

Step 4 - Training

I've found my employer. What happens next?

Congratulations! Now you or the employer should contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and arrange for an Employment and Training Consultant to register you as an apprentice. An Employment and Training Consultant will come to your workplace where you will be asked to sign the apprenticeship training agreement/contract of apprenticeship between yourself, the employer and MTCU. There is a one time nominal fee involved when you are registered which is payable by the apprentice. You are now on your way to learning on the job, completing your hours, and achieving the required on-the-job competencies.

MTCU is responsible for providing you with your Training Standard or Schedule of Training and scheduling you for your in-school training. They will also advise you of when and where you have been registered to attend in-school training. The school will contact you prior to your scheduled training and you will be responsible for paying your classroom fees prior to starting your classes.

An Employment and Training Consultant will be assigned to you and they will be your contact regarding training or inquiries regarding your apprenticeship. The phone number of the MTCU Pickering Office is (905) 837-7721 or 1-800-461-4608.

In early 2007, the Federal Government announced the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant which is a financial incentive available to apprentices registered in one of the Red Seal trades. This grant is awarded upon completion of your first and second year of your apprenticeship.

To learn more about this grant and how to apply visit: www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/goc/apprenticeship.shtml

Step 5 – Certification

What certificates do I get, and when?

Certificate of Apprenticeship - Once you have completed your in-school training, the mandatory hours required for the trades that are legislated by TQAA and all of the skills have been signed off in your Training Standard/Schedule of Training, contact your Employment and Training Consultant. It is up to you to apply for this Certificate and provide the necessary documentation. MTCU does not automatically send them out. They will require a letter from your employer stating that you have completed the required number of hours of your apprenticeship, along with your Training Standard/Schedule of Training and proof that you have completed your schooling. It is important to apply and receive this certificate because it may impact your wages.

Certificate of Qualification (CofQ) - To receive journeyman status, which is also referred to as a ticket and/or licence, you will have to write the provincial qualification exam required in your trade. This exam is mandatory for the Restricted and Compulsory trades; however, it is advisable to write this exam even if you are in an Unrestricted or Voluntary trade. There is a fee to write your exam and is payable at the time you book your exam through your local MTCU Apprenticeship office. The exam is approximately 3 hours in length and to pass the exam, you require a minimum score of 70 per cent. If you are unsuccessful in achieving this minimum grade you can make arrangements to re-write at a future date. Some employers may require that you have passed this exam as a condition of employment as it ensures that your skills and knowledge meet the industry standards. Once you have passed your exam, a full sized Certificate of Qualification will then be issued as well as a wallet sized card.

You're a Journeyman!

Once you have the required expertise, there are many options open to you. You can take further learning, as some apprenticeships are springboards to other careers. Some of these careers could be other skilled trades, or you can use your experience as a base for technological or engineering studies at a college or university. You can also open your own business! Furthermore, as the need for skilled tradespersons increases, there will be a parallel need for teachers and instructors. You can travel, see Canada or the world, and usually have the luxury of knowing that you'll find rewarding work wherever you go because - you've got the skills that everyone is looking for.

You have worked hard to earn your Certificate of Qualification and it is important to protect it.

If you are certified in one of the Compulsory or Restricted trades, you are required to renew your certificate every three years. There is a fee payable to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to renew your certificate. You will receive a dated sticker for your Certificate of Qualification plus a new wallet card. Generally, you will receive a reminder notice about your renewal date; however, if you don't, it is up to you, the journeyman, to ensure that you renew your licence on a timely basis. For more information refer to the back of your wallet card or contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities - Certification Branch at P.O. 5888, Station "F", Toronto, ON M4Y 2T1 or call 1-800-448-9656 (within Ontario), 416 326-5525 (outside Ontario). Late fees may be applied if you allow your certificate to expire.



Any questions?

Contact us at:

local: 905-666-3620

toll free: 1-800-483-4845

e-mail: info@tradeability.ca



**EMPLOYMENT
ONTARIO**

This Employment Ontario project is
funded in part by the Government of Canada.