

# Construction Trades Helpers & Labourers, Construction Craft Workers

An employment guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## Construction Trades Helpers / Labourers (NOC 7611) and Construction Craft Workers

***May also be called:***

- demolition worker
- carpenter helper
- flagman/flagwoman
- roofer helper
- plumber helper

### 1. What Would I Do?

***Construction Trades Helpers / Labourers*** carry out a range of practical tasks to help tradespersons on construction sites. Your duties can change daily and vary according to the type of site you are working on.

Some main tasks include:

- Clean building sites by removing scraps of metal, wood and other garbage
- Unload equipment and supplies from trucks and haul them to where they are needed
- Build or dismantle scaffolding
- Guide crane operators and heavy equipment operators

- Mix, pour and spread materials such as concrete and asphalt
- Help tradespersons such as carpenters, bricklayers, cement finishers, roofers and glaziers in construction activities

**Construction Craft Workers** have a working knowledge of most of the major trades and are assistants to electricians, plumbers and boilermakers.

You may:

- install utility piping
- place concrete
- construct roads
- perform selective demolition
- perform underground work
- assist skilled tradespersons such as Carpenters, Bricklayers and Cement Finishers
- help Heavy Equipment Operators secure special attachments to equipment
- guide operators in moving equipment and perform labouring activities at construction sites

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Construction Trades Helper & Labourer**  
<http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7611>
- **Industry Training Authority profile for Construction Craft Worker**  
<http://www.itabc.ca/program/construction-craft-worker>

## 2. Am I Suited For This Job?

**Construction Trades Helpers & Labourers:** *need to be in good shape and have excellent stamina*

**Construction Craft Workers:** *need to be able to keep up with the physical demands of the job, enjoy working outdoors and using hand and power tools*

You should be prepared to work in all kinds of weather. You must be able to work well as part of a team and be able to follow instructions. A good base knowledge of power tools and machinery is helpful.

Worksites are dirty and noisy, and there is some risk of cuts and scrapes, falls, and strains. You may be expected to work at heights on ladders and scaffolding. Being safety conscious is essential.

There is a great deal of variety in this job. After a project is completed, you will move onto the next worksite. As a result, you may need to travel long distances to get to work.

### Sources:

- *Career Cruising* database (Profile for Construction Labourer and Apprenticeship programs for Construction Craft Worker). Available from the VPL Online Articles, Encyclopedias & More page: [http://www.vpl.ca/electronic\\_databases/alpha/c](http://www.vpl.ca/electronic_databases/alpha/c)
- WorkBC Career Profile <http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7611>

### 3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the average annual salary for **construction trades helpers / labourers** ranges from \$33,000 to \$44,000. Your wages are affected by location, employer, and the amount of work you can find each year.

The Industry Training Authority – ITA ([www.itabc.ca](http://www.itabc.ca)) forecasts that **construction craft workers** will make between \$18 - \$24 / hour.

In BC's regions, **construction trades helpers / labourers** can expect to make:

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
<b>British Columbia</b>	12.00	18.36	30.00
<a href="#">Cariboo Region</a>	14.00	20.00	29.58
<a href="#">Kootenay Region</a>	12.00	18.36	30.00
<a href="#">Lower Mainland - Southwest Region</a>	12.00	18.36	30.00
<a href="#">Nechako Region</a>	14.00	20.00	25.00
<a href="#">North Coast Region</a>	12.00	18.36	30.00
<a href="#">Northeast Region</a>	17.00	20.00	27.00
<a href="#">Thompson--Okanagan Region</a>	12.00	18.00	28.27
<a href="#">Vancouver Island and Coast Region</a>	12.00	16.15	26.00

Table from Job Bank Wage Report <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home-eng.do?lang=eng>

Some construction labourers belong to a union. This means that your wage rates and benefits are negotiated on your behalf by union representatives.

Unionized workers may also have access to benefits, such as life and health insurance, and paid sick leave.

Sources:

- WorkBC Career Profile <http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7611>
- *Career Cruising* database

## 4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

This is a large occupational group, with 22,700 workers employed in BC.

The Construction Sector Council predicts the job outlook for construction trades helpers will be balanced to good over the next 9 years. In BC, the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry is forecasting a strong demand for skilled tradespeople in BC's north, specifically Construction Trades Helpers / Labourers. Recent LNG data indicates that by 2018, a scenario with five LNG plants may produce an anticipated demand for 11,800 Construction Trade Helpers/ Labourers and Construction Craft Workers in BC.

### Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers



Chart from WorkBC

Sources:

- WorkBC Career Profiles <https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7611>
- Careers in Construction <http://www.careersinconstruction.ca/en/career/trades-helper-and-labourer>

## 5. How Do I Become A Construction Trades Helper or Construction Craft Worker?

Although there are no formal requirements to work as a **Construction Trades Helper/Labourer**, employers may prefer you to have a high school diploma or its equivalent. Some previous experience may be requested by employers. On the job training may be provided.

**Construction Craft Workers** complete a new two year education and apprenticeship program through the Industry Training Authority of BC. Requirements to enter the program include **minimum** of Grade 10 Math, English and Science; Grade 12 graduation is preferred.

The program includes approximately 120 hours of technical training and 4000 hours of work based training.

Construction Craft Worker is an Inter-provincially recognized Red Seal trade. With a Red Seal, you can work in this trade anywhere in Canada.

More information:

- **Industry Training Authority – Construction Craft Worker**  
<http://www.itabc.ca/program/construction-craft-worker>
- **Red Seal Program**  
<http://www.red-seal.ca/w.2lc.4m.2@-eng.jsp>

## 6. How Do I Find A Job?

### ***Where would I work?***

*Construction trades helpers / labourers & Construction Craft Workers work in a variety of settings including:*

- *Residential construction*
- *Commercial & industrial construction*
- *Road, sewer and bridge construction*
- *Heavy construction projects in the mining and LNG (liquefied natural gas) industry*

### ***Finding Advertised Jobs***

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

### ***Local Newspapers***

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in *The Province* on Sundays.

### ***Online Job Postings***

- **BC Construction JobStores**  
<http://www.bcconstructionjobstores.com/> (free registration required)
- **Careers in Oil & Gas**  
<http://www.careersinoilandgas.com>
- **Indeed.com**  
[http://ca.indeed.com/advanced\\_search](http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search)
- **WorkBC Job Postings**  
<http://www.workbc.ca/JobSeekers/SearchResults.aspx>
- **Job Bank**  
[http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/job\\_search.do](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/job_search.do)

### ***Finding "Hidden Jobs"***

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below help you with finding jobs in this "hidden" job market.

### ***Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers***

You can use company directories to produce lists of employers who employ construction trades helpers / labourers in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **British Columbia Construction Association Directories**

<http://www.bccassn.com/page/online%20directories.aspx>

- **BC Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association Members List**

<http://www.roadbuilders.bc.ca/members.php>

- **Reference Canada**

[http://www.vpl.ca/electronic\\_databases/alpha/r](http://www.vpl.ca/electronic_databases/alpha/r)

Go to the "Reference Canada" database, choose the "Custom Search" button, and select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "construction" and click LOOKUP.

Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Online Articles, Encyclopedias & More page.

**NOTE:** *You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database.*

## Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

### ***Networking and the Hidden Job Market:***

*When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain "Canadian experience." They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.*

### ***Volunteer opportunities***

- **Volunteer BC**

<http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/>

- **Habitat for Humanity**

<http://www.habitatgv.ca/> (can volunteer at construction sites or at ReStores)

*For additional tips see:*

- **Networking for Employment**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Networking for Employment]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]

## 7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience.

Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

*For more information see:*

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

## 8. Where Can This Job Lead?

Depending on your area of expertise and skill, you may transfer into positions in carpentry, concrete masonry, or scaffolding.

With experience and additional training, you can also move into more senior positions, including supervisory roles such as foreman.

## 9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **STEP**

<http://www.stepbc.ca/>

STEP is a no-fee employment program that helps immigrants get jobs in the construction industry

- **Careers in Construction**

<http://www.careersinconstruction.ca/en/careers/career-finder>

- **BC Construction Association**

<http://www.bccassn.com/>

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.***

*Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.*