

Outdoor Sport & Recreation Guides

An employment guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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Outdoor Sport & Recreation Guides (NOC 6532)

May also be called:

- canoeing or rafting guide
- fishing guide
- hot air balloonist
- hunting guide
- mountain climbing guide
- outfitter

1. What Would I Do?

Outdoor guides lead groups of people on wilderness trips, such as hikes or fishing. You usually specialize in a particular type of outdoor activity such as skiing, fishing or rock climbing.

Your duties include:

- plan routes and meals and gather necessary supplies
- arrange transportation
- guide individuals or groups
- give advice on safety and emergency measures, and the use of equipment

- provide instruction for activities such as canoeing, rafting and mountain climbing
- follow environmental guidelines and prevent violations of laws and regulations
- give first aid in emergency situations
- prepare meals for group and set up camp

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Outdoor Sport & Recreation Guides**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers/Browse-Career-Profile/6532>
- **Outdoor Adventure Guide. Go2HR**
<https://www.go2hr.ca/careers/outdoor-adventure-guide>
- **Career Cruising** (Profile for Outdoor Guide)
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page <http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

If you crave variety and enjoy leadership, you may be suited for this job.

You should have a passion for outdoors and adventure. You must also enjoy working with and helping people.

Excellent customer service and instructional skills are essential.

The job can be physically demanding. Your work takes place outdoors in various weather conditions and work locations may be rugged and dangerous.

Often the work is seasonal, and, depending on the type of guiding, the hours can be irregular.

Emergencies are rare, but when they do happen they can cause a great deal of stress. Being well-organized and prepared for any situation is important.

Sources: Career Cruising & Go2HR

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the average annual salary ranges from \$53,000 - \$66,000. Your wage depends on experience, type of activity and employer.

You may be paid by the hour, by the day, or by the trip. Earnings can range from \$50 to more than \$130 a day for highly experienced guides. Mountain guides and heli-skiing guides tend to earn the highest rates, which can be up to \$300 or more a day.

In BC's regions, you can expect to make:

| Location | Wage (\$/hr) | | |
|---|--------------|--------|-------|
| | Low | Median | High |
| British Columbia | 12.00 | 18.22 | 28.50 |
| Lower Mainland - Southwest Region | 12.25 | 16.00 | 25.00 |
| Thompson--Okanagan Region | 12.00 | 20.00 | 35.63 |
| Vancouver Island and Coast Region | 12.00 | 17.50 | 25.00 |

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

Sources:

- WorkBC & Career Cruising

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

There are good opportunities available if you are just getting started as an outdoor guide. However, you might need to start at the bottom as an apprentice or volunteer.

There is a lot of turnover in this industry because the salary isn't often that high compared to other careers.

Employment Outlook

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Chart from WorkBC

Sources:

- WorkBC & Career Cruising

5. How do I become an Outdoor Guide?

Training or requirements *usually* include:

- Previous experience in the relevant sport or activity
- Standard first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- Additional health and safety training
- Some specialties require special training or certification; for example, mountain guides and sea kayaking guides must be accredited
- Ability to deal with physical demands of the position

In B.C., there is no standard training or education requirement to work as an outdoor guide. In general, the higher the level of risk, the higher the level of training and certification you require.

Depending on the type of job, you may need a variety of certifications to gain employment in all four seasons.

Additionally, most jobs require a Class 4 or 5 driver's license and driving record checks are often requested. A criminal record check is needed if you work with children.

For further information, see:

- **go2HR, Outdoor Adventure Guide 101**
<https://www.go2hr.ca/sectors/recreation-and-entertainment/outdoor-adventure-guide-101-what-you-always-wanted-know-couldnt>
- **go2HR, Tourism Training Directory**
<https://www.go2hr.ca/training/training-directory>

6. How Do I Find A Job?

Where do Outdoor Guides work?

- adventure tourism companies
- resorts and lodges
- parks
- may be self-employed

Although the work is seasonal, you may work year round changing employers with each season.

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

- **go2HR**
<https://www.go2hr.ca/jobboard>
- **Cooljobs Canada**
http://www.cooljobscanada.com/job_search.aspx
- **Indeed.com**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
- **Jobtrekker.ca**
<http://www.jobtrekker.ca/>

Finding “Hidden Jobs”

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will 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 are in the outdoor adventure business. Contact them directly to find out if they’re hiring.

- **go2HR Tourism Companies**
<https://www.go2hr.ca/tourism-companies>
- **Guide Services in British Columbia, Canada Trails**
<http://www.canadatrails.ca/guides/gdesbc.html>

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/>
- **GoVolunteer.ca**
<http://govolunteer.ca/>
- **BC Parks, Ministry of Environment, Volunteers**
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/volunteers/opportunities/>

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?

The experience outdoor guides have in leading and serving people is great preparation for any job that involves working with people. Your experience can lead to work in the hospitality industry or in sales.

Depending on your specialty, you could move into a variety of jobs including:

- teaching rock climbing
- working with whitewater rafting companies
- working in an outdoor supplies store

Sources: go2HR and Career Cruising

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **go2HR**
<https://www.go2hr.ca/careers-tourism>
- **discover Tourism, Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council**
<http://www.discovertourism.ca/>
- **Association of Canadian Mountain Guides**
<http://www.acmg.ca/default.asp>
- **BC Fastest Growing Industries: Tourism**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Tourism]
- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**
<http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

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/>.