

Librarians & Library Technicians

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



Vancouver Public Library

Funded by:

Financé par :



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

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1. Working as a Librarian or Library Technician

Job Description

Librarians perform some or all of the following duties:

- Recommend acquisition of books, periodicals, audio-visual, interactive media, and other materials for inclusion in library collections
- Provide reference services
- Select, classify, catalogue, and weed library materials
- Prepare bibliographies, indexes, reading lists, guides, and other finding aids
- Develop systems to access library collections
- Perform manual, on-line, and interactive media reference searches, make interlibrary loans, and perform other functions using Internet and electronic resources, to assist users in accessing library materials
- Provide specialized programs for children, seniors, and other groups
- Conduct library information and orientation training programs and tours
- Perform related administrative duties and supervise library technicians, assistants, and clerks.

Source: <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/QuickSearch.aspx?val65=5111>

Library technicians perform some or all of the following duties:

- Assist library users in accessing and locating books, films, and other library materials
- Catalogue new library acquisitions under the direction of a librarian
- Issue for circulation library books and other materials
- Perform manual and on-line reference searches and make interlibrary loans for users
- Assists in giving tours and providing other specialized library programs
- Assist in developing inventories, forms, and finding aids
- Implement and update classification plans and records scheduling and disposal plans
- Put archival materials on microfilm
- Transfer materials from current to semi-current status or put into permanent storage

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- Purge, sort, reduce, and sample archives
- Apply standards and policies for storage of archival materials.

Source: <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/QuickSearch.aspx?val65=5211>

Industry Overview

Librarian job prospects are expected to be average over the next few years. The majority of openings will result from the need to replace those who retire.

Librarians with strong computer skills and technology knowledge will have an advantage when job searching.

Employment for librarians has traditionally been concentrated in public and academic libraries. A new trend is emerging that offers private sector opportunities for those willing to work as information specialists. The fields of information brokering, consulting (information access and validation), and database marketing may provide growth in new employment opportunities for librarians.

Industry sources report that there is currently an insufficient supply of graduates with experience in management, specialized subject background knowledge, technological skills, children's librarians, and multicultural librarians.

Library technician job prospects are expected to be above average over the next several years. Of the new opportunities anticipated to become available in this occupational group, over half are anticipated to be due to retirements.

Industry sources report that there is strong employer demand for library technicians and assistants, and experienced records technicians and analysts. Individuals with knowledge or education in fields such as administration, computer science, or engineering will have an advantage. Also, advanced technical skills, including web development and management, are now highly sought after.

Source: Work BC, <http://workbc.ca/Careers>

[Search 5111 for librarians & 5211 for library technicians]

Librarians (NOC 5111)



Chart from WorkBC

Library Technicians (NOC 5211)



Chart from WorkBC

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The Regional Employment Projections for BC 2010-2015 provides job openings projections for **librarians** within these BC regions:

Region	2010 Estimated Employment	2015 Estimated Employment	Avg Annual % Change, 5 Years, 2010 to 2015
Vancouver Island	230	270	3.9%
Lower Mainland / Southwest	1,190	1,290	1.8%
Thompson-Okanagan	200	200	0.8%
Kootenay	40	40	-0.3%
Cariboo	50	50	0.0%
North Coast & Nechako	20	20	6.8%
Northeast	10	20	17.3%

Source: Regional Employment Projections, BC Stats. Projections for development regions.

<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/LabourIncome/EmploymentUnemployment/RegionalEmploymentProjections.aspx>

The Regional Employment Projections for BC 2010-2015 provides job openings projections for **library technicians & assistants, and archive technicians & assistants** within these BC regions:

Region	2010 Estimated Employment	2015 Estimated Employment	Avg Annual % Change, 5 Years, 2010 to 2015
Vancouver Island	320	360	2.6%
Lower Mainland / Southwest	1,540	1,660	1.6%
Thompson-Okanagan	250	250	0.3%
Kootenay	50	50	0.0%
Cariboo	60	70	3.9%
North Coast & Nechako	30	30	4.1%
Northeast	20	20	8.9%

Source: Regional Employment Projections, BC Stats. Projections for development regions.

<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/LabourIncome/EmploymentUnemployment/RegionalEmploymentProjections.aspx>

You can learn more about working as a **Librarian or Library Technician** in BC from:

- **WorkBC, Career Profiles** at <http://workbc.ca/Careers>
[For **Librarians** search 5111; for **Library Technicians** search 5211]

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Types of Employers

Librarians work for public, school, and university libraries, as well as government, medical, law, and business libraries and more recently corporations and non-profit organizations.

Library technicians frequently work in public and special libraries, including libraries of schools, colleges, universities, law firms, and medical offices. They are employed by libraries, archives, records management branches, and by other establishments with library or archive services.

Salary

In BC, **Librarians** can expect to earn:

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	20.00	30.00	39.56
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	20.00	30.00	39.56

Source: Job Bank Canada <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca>

Librarian earnings depend on a number of factors including the size, budget, location, and type of library. In BC, the average annual salary for Librarians is between \$44,000 and \$53,000 per year. After several years of experience, librarians usually make about \$65,000 annually. Those in supervisory or managerial positions can make around \$80,000 a year or more. The highest level positions can pay \$100,000 a year. According to a survey by the Special Libraries Association (SLA), the median salary for these librarians is about \$70,000 a year.

Full-time librarians may also receive employee benefits such as dental coverage, paid vacation time, and retirement benefits.

Source: **Career Cruising** database (Profile for "Librarians"). Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page <http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/>

In BC, **Library Technicians** can expect to earn:

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	15.59	20.00	24.00
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	15.59	20.00	24.00
Thompson--Okanagan Region	15.30	18.62	21.33
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	15.59	20.00	24.00

Source: Job Bank Canada <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>

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Some library technicians receive an annual salary, while others are paid by the hour. The average annual salary for Library Technicians in BC is between \$33,000 and \$44,000 per year. Those who advance to supervisory positions may make more than \$65,000 a year.

In addition to their salaries, most full-time library technicians also receive benefits including dental coverage, sick days, and paid vacation time.

Source: **Career Cruising** database (Profile for “Library Technician”). Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/>

Working Hours

Librarians: Most public and academic libraries are open evenings and weekends, so librarians may work at those times. Librarians working in government and corporate libraries typically work daytime business hours. Full-time librarians generally work 35 to 40 hours a week. Managers and directors, however, may work up to 50 hours a week. Corporate librarians in fast-paced industries, such as advertising or legal services, may work longer hours during peak times.

Library Technician work schedules often depend on the type of library they work in. Public libraries are usually open evenings and weekends, and some library technicians will be expected to work these shifts. Many school libraries are open only during school hours. Some law firms have legal libraries that stay open late, while most government libraries are open only during business hours.

Source: **Career Cruising** database (Profiles for “Librarian” and “Library Technician”). Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/>

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- good instructional, communication, organizational and computer skills
- must have the ability to understand research methods
- problem solving
- critical thinking
- must enjoy working with others
- task planning and organizing
- able to work independently
- significant use of memory
- attention to detail
- customer service oriented
- patient
- cultural sensitivity

Source: <http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/5111>

Career Cruising database (Profile for “Librarian”). Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page <http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/>

Education and Experience

Librarian:

A master's degree in library science or its equivalent from an institution accredited by the American Library Association (ALA) is usually required for employment. Employment is subject to demand, and qualification requirements are set by individual employers.

The occupation of **librarian** is not a regulated profession in Canada or BC. In Canada, the Canadian Library Association recognizes professional qualifications at the master's level from library schools in Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain.

Source: Canadian Library Association – Foreign Credentials

http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Foreign_Credentials1&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=5464

Library Technicians:

Working as a **library technician** typically requires the completion of a one or two year Library and Information Technology diploma program, but occasionally employers accept previous work experience as an equivalent.

For both librarians and library technicians, computer literacy is an essential skill. As libraries have become highly computerized environments. Experience with technology will increase prospects for employment.

Qualifications

This occupation is not regulated in British Columbia.

Information on ALA accreditation can be found at

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/accreditation/index.cfm>

A directory of ALA accredited institutions is available at:

<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/directory>

3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, trade journals, and electronic sources, as well as through professional associations' publications.

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.

Job White Pages

- Available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/jobfreewaycom>
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page
Access at VPL locations only

Online Job Postings

- **BC Library Association**
<http://www.bcla.bc.ca/> (click on JOBS) (links to <http://www.libraryjobs.ca/>)
- **Canadian Library Association**
<http://www.cla.ca/>
Job postings from across Canada
Click "Library Careers" then choose "Job Search" from the drop down menu, or go direct to:
http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Job_Search&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=1964
- **Indeed.com**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards
- **LibraryJobs.ca**
<http://www.libraryjobs.ca/>
Job postings from across Canada
- **Public Libraries in BC**
<http://www.bclibraries.ca/home/> (complete list of public libraries websites)
Some positions in public libraries may only be posted on a library's website; check the "careers" or "jobs" section of your local library's website here.
- **UBC School of Library, Archival and Information**

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<http://blogs.ubc.ca/ischoolnews/>

Employment and placement opportunities in libraries

- **Working.com**
<http://working.canada.com/vancouver/index.html>

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **Canadian Library Association (CLA)**
Career Development and mentorship program
http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Career_Development&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=2486

For additional tips on job hunting see:

- **Networking for Employment**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca> [Search Networking for Employment]

Identifying the Right Position

When you browse job advertisements, you'll find a range of different job titles that are relevant.

For **Librarians**, look for these related job titles (NOC 5111):

- Associate Librarian
- Bibliographer
- Cataloguer
- Classifier – Library
- Iconographer
- Information Specialist
- Library Co-coordinator
- Library Consultant

For **Library Technicians**, look for these related job titles (NOC 5211):

- Aide, Library
- Assistant Librarian
- Assistant Music Librarian
- Assistant, Library
- Community Museum Technician
- Documentation Technician
- Library Aide
- Library Supervisor
- Library Technical Assistant
- Music Library Assistant
- Record Library Assistant
- Records Management Technician
- Records Technician
- Reference Aide
- Reference Assistant
- Technical Indexer - Library

Creating a List of Potential Employers

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You can use directories to produce lists of libraries and library-related businesses in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring. You can photocopy from the print directories at Central Library, or use the online directories from a computer connected to the Internet.

- **BC Electronic Library Network**

<http://www.eln.bc.ca/institutions/select.php>

Directory of academic libraries in BC

- **BC Libraries**

<http://www.bclibraries.ca/home/bc-libraries>

Directory of public libraries in British Columbia

- **BC Science Clusters Directory**

Directory of science and high tech companies in the Lower Mainland

Many of these companies will make use of information personnel

Available at the Central Library CB380 B8625

- **Directory of Libraries in Canada**

This book lists all libraries in Canada

Available at the Central Library 020.5 C2124

- **Reference Canada**

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "library" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library 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. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

4. Applying for a Job

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

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

To learn about applying for jobs in Canada, use the following pathfinders which are available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]
- **Networking for Employment**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Networking for Employment]
- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

Industry Associations

Library associations in BC and Canada provide assistance and information on training and certification. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **BC Library Association (BCLA)**

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

The British Columbia Library Association is a non-profit, independent, voluntary association. Our more than 800 members include librarians, library personnel, library trustees, and other interested individuals; corporate, government, school, and academic libraries; publishers and library supply companies.

- **Canadian Library Association (CLA)**

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

The CLA act as the national voice of the Canadian library and information community and delivering a range of value-added services to professional librarians, library technicians, and the organizations that employ them.

- **Library Technicians and Assistants Interest Group (LTAIG) of BC Library Association (BCLA)**

<http://www.bcla.bc.ca/ltaig/default.aspx#.UuxCZyeB1ME>

LTAIG is an interest group that functions under the umbrella of the British Columbia Library Association (BCLA). LTAIG works to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and concerns, represent the common interest of library technicians and library assistants, coordinate education and networking activities for its members.

- **Special Libraries Association – Western Canada Chapter (SLAWCC)**

<http://wcanada.sla.org/>

Information on special libraries in Western Canada, includes information on networking and educational opportunities.

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Industry Journals

Search the Vancouver Public Library catalogue for journals related to your profession. Examples at the Central Library:

- BCLA (BC Library Association) Browser
<http://bclabrowser.ca/index.php/browser>
- CLA (Canadian Library Association) Digest
http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CLA_Digest&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=12267

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public 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/>.