

Carpenters

SOC: 47-2031 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$59,310

Median Salary

959,000

Employment

+4.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: High school diploma

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Medium Risk - 35.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job has some routine elements but still requires human judgment and interaction.

■■ Work-Life Balance

3.7/10 - Challenging work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

| | | | |
|--------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| Realistic | 9.4/10 | Investigative | 5.8/10 |
| Artistic | 4.0/10 | Social | 5.0/10 |
| Enterprising | 5.0/10 | Conventional | 6.0/10 |

■ Top Skills Required

Business skills, Detail oriented, Dexterity, Interpersonal skills, Math skills, Physical strength, Problem-solving skills, Reading comprehension skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Carpenters are skilled construction tradespeople who build, install, and repair **structures and components made primarily from wood and wood-based materials**. Their work forms the structural and finishing backbone of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings. From framing houses to crafting detailed interior finishes, carpenters translate plans into durable, functional spaces.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy hands-on work, precision, and seeing tangible results from their craftsmanship.

What Do Carpenters Do?

Carpenters construct and repair building frameworks and structures according to plans and specifications.

Common responsibilities include:

- Reading and interpreting blueprints and construction drawings
- Measuring, cutting, and shaping wood and other materials
- Building frameworks such as walls, floors, roofs, and stairways
- Installing doors, windows, cabinets, and trim
- Constructing concrete forms and temporary supports
- Repairing or remodeling existing structures
- Following safety standards and building codes

Types of Carpenters

Carpenters often specialize based on the type of construction or finish work:

- Residential Carpenters: Build and remodel houses and apartments.
- Commercial Carpenters: Work on offices, schools, and large buildings.
- Framing Carpenters: Construct structural frameworks.
- Finish Carpenters: Install detailed interior elements such as trim and cabinetry.
- Formwork Carpenters: Build molds for concrete construction.
- Restoration Carpenters: Repair or preserve historic structures.

Skills and Abilities Needed

Carpenters combine technical knowledge with craftsmanship and physical skill.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Training Pathway

Most carpenters develop skills through hands-on training:

- High School Diploma or Equivalent: Typical minimum requirement
- Apprenticeship Programs: Paid training combining classroom instruction and job-site experience
- On-the-Job Training: Learning skills under experienced carpenters
- Technical or Trade School (optional): Foundational carpentry education
- Continuing Skill Development: Learning new tools, materials, and techniques

Where Do Carpenters Work?

Carpenters work in diverse construction environments:

- Residential Construction Sites
- Commercial and Industrial Projects

- Remodeling and Renovation Firms
- Construction and General Contracting Companies
- Self-Employed or Independent Contracting

Work may take place indoors or outdoors and often involves travel between job sites.

How Much Do Carpenters Earn?

Earnings vary by experience, specialization, and location:

- Entry-Level Carpenters: Typically earn hourly wages during training
- Experienced or Specialized Carpenters: Often earn higher pay
- Master Carpenters or Contractors: May earn more through leadership or business ownership

Compensation can include overtime and project-based pay.

Is This Career Difficult?

Carpentry is physically demanding and detail-oriented. Workers must lift materials, work at heights, and maintain accuracy under varying conditions. The challenge lies in combining physical endurance with precision, safety, and adaptability on active job sites.

Who Should Consider Becoming a Carpenter?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy building and working with your hands
- Like solving practical, real-world problems
- Prefer active work over desk-based jobs
- Value craftsmanship and tangible results
- Want a skilled trade with steady demand

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in math, shop, or construction basics
- Practice measuring, cutting, and tool use
- Learn safety procedures and proper lifting techniques
- Gain experience through summer jobs or apprenticeships
- Explore trade school or apprenticeship options

Carpenters shape the built environment by turning raw materials into strong, functional, and lasting structures—combining skill, precision, and craftsmanship to create the spaces where people live and work.

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Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/construction-and-extraction/carpenters.htm>