

Fact Sheet: Carpentry & Joinery

A job profile:

Carpenters and joiners use their skills to make structures and fittings such as window, doors, stairs, furniture and shop fittings from wood and wood materials.

Carpenters and joiners cut, shape and join wood using a wide range of tools including hammers, planes, chisels, screwdrivers and measuring tapes. Also, they often use power tools and cutting machines.

Carpenters and joiners have to study drawings, make calculations and select suitable materials to meet design requirements.

There are many different types of carpenters and joiners. Here are a couple of examples:

- Bench joiner – usually based in a workshop making things like doors, window frames and roof beams
- Site carpenter – when based on-site doing things like fitting door handles and locks, or repairing broken furniture.

Health & Safety is an important aspect of the job, so carpenters and joiners often need to wear some form of protective clothing. They may be based in a workshop, or on a building site.

Opportunities:

Work Location

Opportunities for Carpenters & Joiners occur on building sites in towns, cities and in rural areas throughout the UK.

Employers include building, construction and civil engineering companies of all sizes. These range from local building firms employing one or two operatives, to nationally known firms employing hundreds of operatives.

Hours of Work

Carpenters & Joiners work a 39 hour week. Overtime, including Saturday working may be available.

Becoming A Carpenter & Joiner – Entry Requirements, Training & Personal Qualities:

Entry

Many people join this occupation via the Apprenticeship NI programme. There are various relevant qualifications available from organisations like City & Guilds and Edexcel. These courses may be in a more general subject area, such as construction.

Training

Apprenticeships will usually involve work and college-based training. You will also receive training in subjects like health and safety.

The Institute of Carpenters offers qualifications in carpentry and joinery. There are various levels of qualifications, the one that you take depends on the amount of experience or training you have.

Personal Qualities

As a Carpenter & Joiner, you'll need:

- Good hand skills
- To be physically fit
- Number skills, as you'll have to work out measurements and angles
- To pay attention to detail and have an eye for shape and colour
- A head for heights for any work up ladders or on scaffolding
- To be aware of the importance of health and safety in the construction industry

As you may have to travel around locally, a driving license is useful for this type of work.

This job might not be suitable for people who suffer from skin conditions, such as eczema, or breathing complaints, such as asthma.

Career Progression

In the construction industry, it is possible to work up from a craft level position to a managerial role, e.g. Construction Manager.

Other useful websites to explore:

- www.citbcsni.org.uk/careers
- www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers
- www.goconstruct.org
- <http://www.instituteofcarpenters.com/>

