



Guide to Apprenticeship

CANADIAN
APPRENTICESHIP
FORUM



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| SPONSORS

ABOUT SKILLS CANADA

Skills Canada encourages and supports a coordinated pan-Canadian approach to promoting skilled careers in trades and technologies to youth and their communities.

ABOUT CAF-FCA

CAF-FCA is an inclusive organization working with the apprenticeship community in all regions of Canada. It promotes apprenticeship as a valuable form of post-secondary education that leads to rewarding careers in high-demand occupations. CAF-FCA has representatives from business, labour, educators, equity-seeking groups and the jurisdictions.

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INTRODUCTION

This guide to apprenticeship is meant for individuals interested in learning more about apprenticeship.

The guide covers these topics:

1. defining skilled trades and apprenticeship

2. key steps in the apprenticeship process

3. pathways into apprenticeship

4. finding an employer sponsor

5. skills development

6. the benefits of apprenticeship training.

WHAT ARE THE SKILLED TRADES?

The skilled trades are occupations requiring hands-on activities that require applied skills and knowledge. They typically are in the construction, transportation, manufacturing and service sectors. Each province and territory in Canada define the trades in their jurisdiction. Some of the most common skilled trades in Canada are:

- + Automotive Service Technician
- + Carpenter
- + Construction Electrician
- + Cook
- + Hairstylist
- + Heavy Duty Equipment Technician
- + Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)
- + Plumber
- + Steamfitter/Pipefitter
- + Welder.¹

To learn more about a specific trade, check out the Skill Profiles by sector on the Skills Canada website:

[Construction](#)

[Manufacturing & Engineering](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Services](#)

[Information Technology](#)

To learn more about the trades that suit different skills and interests, check out the Trades Explorer tool: [Discover and Explore the Trades](#)

¹ CAF-FCA, *Apprentice Demand in Red Seal Trades*, (Ottawa: CAF-FCA, 2023).

WHAT IS APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeship is post-secondary and primarily work-based training that leads to a professional credential. Most of the training, approximately 80% of it, is done on-the-job. Apprentices develop their trade's skills by working alongside a highly qualified journeyman who provides training on-the-job. These mentors share their experience and pass along valuable insights about how to succeed in their trade. Some jurisdictions require the journeyman or employer to sign off on their apprentice's learning.

The remaining 20% of the training, sometimes called technical training, supplements on-the-job training. It is provided by an institution approved by the provincial/territorial apprenticeship authority. Examples of these training providers include polytechnics, public colleges, union training centres and private training organizations. Trainers teach apprentices theoretical concepts and offer additional practical training.

Apprenticeship is typically a two-to four- year training period. For most provincial/territorial apprenticeship models, the training alternates between periods of work and shorter periods of in-school. In some cases, though, the in-school training takes place in advance of the on-the-job training, or through alternative delivery such as self-directed learning.

To complete their apprenticeship and become certified, the apprentice must fulfill the requirements of the provincial/territorial apprenticeship authority. This may include completion of hours, all levels of in-school training, and performance of all trade activities, confirmed by their employer. In most cases, they must also pass a multiple-choice examination.² Once they are certified, journeymen are skilled trades professionals and a promising career is launched!

Figure 1: Apprenticeship: An Overview



Check out the What is Apprenticeship video: [Videos - Careers in Trades](#)

² CAF-FCA, "Alternate Technical Training Delivery in Canada: An Overview," Flexibility and Innovation in Apprenticeship Technical Training, *Canadian Apprenticeship Journal*, (Ottawa: CAF-FCA, 2017).

KEY STEPS IN THE APPRENTICESHIP PROCESS

Typically, there are required steps in the apprenticeship process which are important to keep in mind. These steps include finding an employer sponsor, registering, tracking hours and technical training levels, having the employer sign off on skills learned, and (in most cases) writing a final examination. Requirements differ based on your province or territory. The local apprenticeship office in your region or the apprenticeship website for your province or territory will be able to provide you more information.

Figure 2: Key Steps in the Apprenticeship Process

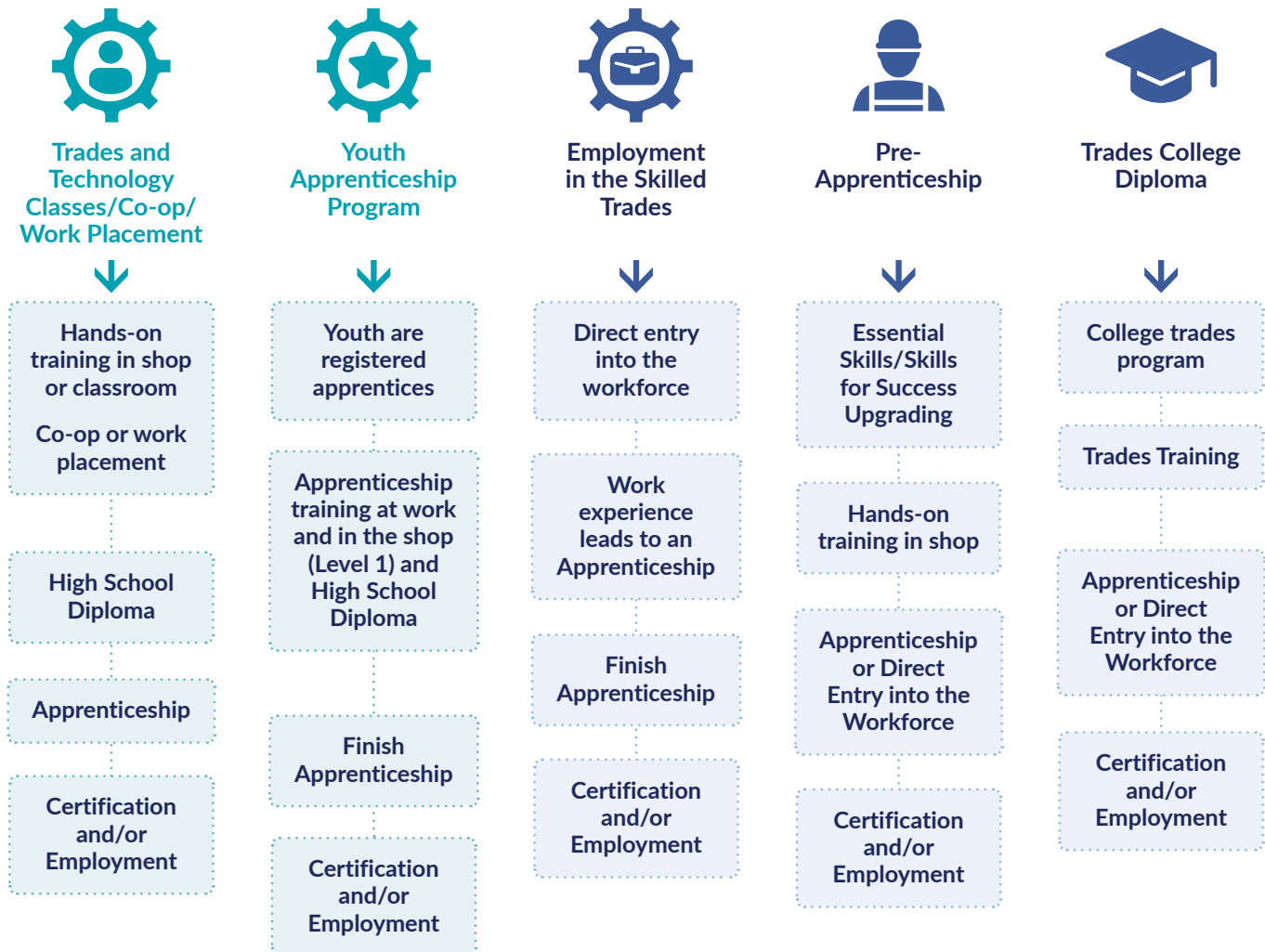


PATHWAYS INTO APPRENTICESHIP

There are many entry points into a career in the skilled trades. You can pursue an apprenticeship in high school or after high school. Many people also enter the skilled trades as a second career. Common pathways into apprenticeship include enrolling in Youth Apprenticeship Programs or co-op programs at high school, pursuing a college trades diploma or a pre-apprenticeship program or direct entry into the

skilled trades workforce. These various pathways may lead to a formal apprenticeship and result in certification and/or employment in the skilled trades workforce. Connect with your provincial/territorial department or authority or local post-secondary institution to find out about the specific pathways into apprenticeship in your province or territory.

Figure 3: Examples of Pathways into Apprenticeship





FINDING AN EMPLOYER SPONSOR

To find out about current jobs available in your area, check out the [Canada Job Bank](#) and search by trade and location. [ApprenticeSearch.com | Connecting Employers and Apprentices Across Canada](#) will also connect you with employers interested in hiring apprentices.

IMPROVING MY SKILLS

To do well in the trades, there are a lot of core skills you need. These are called Skills for Success, and they include things like math, reading, writing and problem solving. You might have learned these at school and in jobs you have had already. If you would like to improve your skills, check out [Build Your Skills - SkillPlan](#). This online resource allows you to practice your Skills for Success. Workplace videos show how tradespeople apply the skills in a real-life situations.

THE BENEFITS OF APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Apprenticeship training provides a variety of benefits and is a pathway to a great career!

DO WORK THAT IS INTERESTING AND ENGAGING

Apprentices find work in the skilled trades interesting because they get to:

- learn on a worksite instead of an office or a lecture hall
- solve practical problems
- apply their learning in a real-life work setting

EARN-WHILE-YOU LEARN

Debt loads after completion of apprenticeships are much lower compared to other college and university programs since apprentices “earn while they learn.” Apprentices receive access to:

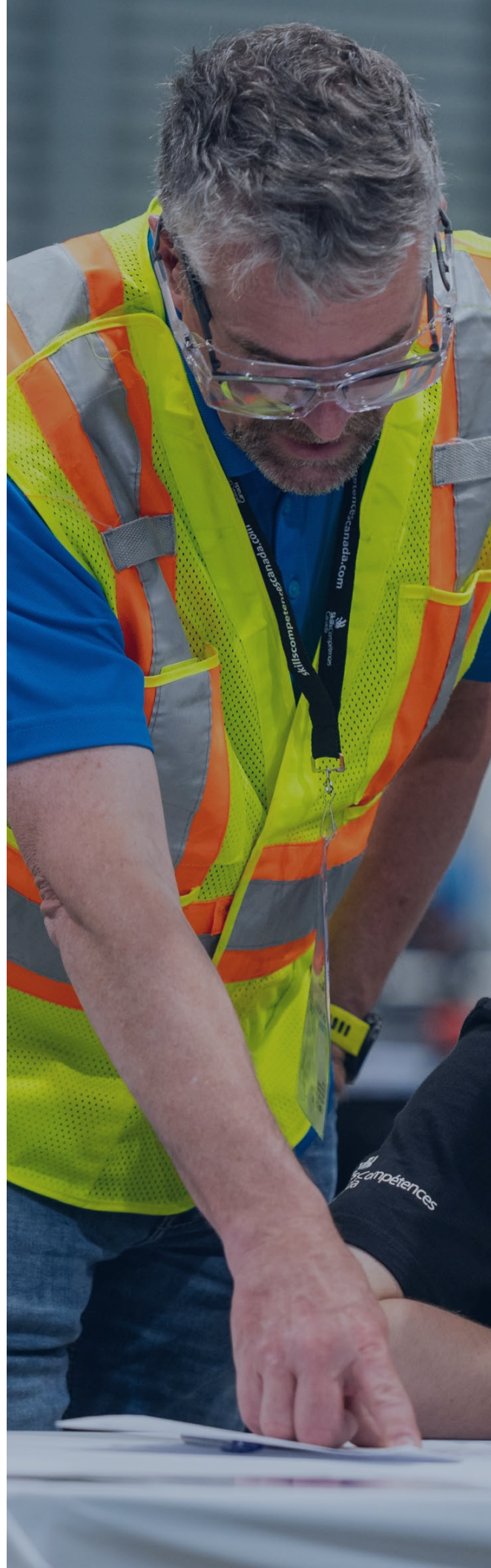
- Wages paid by the employer when at the workplace
- Employment Insurance paid during technical training

Apprentices may access additional financial supports:

- **Canada Apprentice Loan:** This loan helps individuals cover the cost of their training up to \$4,000 per period of technical training. Apprentices can access the loan for up to 5 periods of technical training. The loan is interest-free for up to six years, as long as the apprentice has a confirmed registration in a Red Seal Trade apprenticeship program. The apprentice does not have to make any loan repayments as long as the loan is in interest-free status.³

Provincial/territorial financial supports may also be available. See what is available in your province or territory by searching CAF-FCA’s [Skilled Trades Hub](#).

³ For more information about the Canada Apprentice Loan, see: <https://www.pca-cal.ca/en/Apprentice-Loan-Information/Determine-your-eligibility>.





USE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

Apprentices work with cutting edge advanced technology on-the-job and at technical training such as:

- Integrating information and communication technologies into machinery, equipment and vehicles of all types, including electric cars (i.e. sensor-based diagnostic technologies, program on-board controllers and correct malfunctions that originate in electronics systems).
- Using 3D visualization technologies to program machinery and to cut, drill and grind components for later installation on a building site based on architectural and engineering drawings and modelling software.

OBTAIN A NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL

Apprentices may earn a Red Seal endorsement which has these benefits:

- Facilitates mobility by having a nationally and internationally recognized credential
- Helps individuals obtain employment
- Supports career advancement
- Provides higher wages throughout one's career

ADVANCE YOUR CAREER

Apprenticeship is the foundation to a career where you can advance and learn continuously. With journey person certification and experience you can:

- Own a business
- Mentor and teach others your trade
- Further your education through additional training

To learn more, check out the [Consider a Career in The Skilled Trades](#) and the [Why Apprenticeship](#) videos.

To hear more from journeypersons about why they chose the apprenticeship route and the value of the skilled trades career path, check out the video and profiles on the [CAF-FCA YouTube channel](#).



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Are you interested in learning more? Check out your province/territory's apprenticeship authority's website, as well as the Careers in Trades, Skills Canada, and Red Seal Program websites to learn more about trades you are interested in.

Any specific questions about individual apprenticeship systems in your location should be directed to the provincial or territorial officials who regulate and administer apprenticeship systems or the post-secondary institutions in your region that provide skilled trades training.