

Just the Job Information Sheet

Job title

Carpenter/Builder

Job description

As a builder, you could construct both residential and commercial structures - anything from houses to sky-scrapers.

Most builders are qualified carpenters with the knowledge and skills to oversee the entire construction process. This includes laying foundations, erecting framing, cladding and roofing with materials such as timber, concrete, steel and brick.

Kiwi builders are internationally renowned for their ability to oversee complete builds, encompassing a wide range of sub-skills.

As a builder, you can expect to have a varied career as you work on different projects. You will also spend time outdoors doing activities which require some physical fitness.

After a few years, you could even get the opportunity to own your own business and be your own boss!

Qualifications required

The BCITO's National Certificate in Carpentry is a level 4 qualification and is the industry standard to work as a professional builder. People who gain the qualification will be able to work in residential, industrial, commercial or multi-storey construction.

If the qualification is completed through the BCITO, it is done under the instruction of an experienced builder who provides on-job coaching and support throughout the apprenticeship arrangement, and with the guidance of a BCITO Training Advisor. Both the employer and the BCITO Training Advisor are vital to the apprentice's success. BCITO Training Advisors are qualified assessors and experienced tradespeople themselves, and therefore conduct the assessment process.

A graduate of the National Certificate in Carpentry is able to:

- Demonstrate broad practical and theoretical carpentry knowledge
- Provide solutions to familiar and sometimes unfamiliar problems
- Apply a range of processes relevant to carpentry
- Be able to communicate effectively with members of the industry and customers
- Demonstrate self-managed learning and performance under broad guidance
- Demonstrate some responsibility for the performance of others

A number of electives allow for some flexibility depending on the type of work available to the apprentice.

The carpentry qualification is also a prerequisite to undertake further study in construction supervision and management

Training costs

Through the BCITO, the current (as at July 2012) total cost of apprenticeship training towards the National Certificate in Carpentry is approximately \$3500 over 4 years. This includes all resource materials such as books and work diaries.

Other providers also offer the National Certificate in Carpentry, although costs vary quite dramatically.

Career path

To become a qualified builder in New Zealand, one must first secure employment with a builder willing to train under an apprenticeship arrangement. This can be done direct from school, or after completing a pre-trade course.

Once in employment, the new apprentice can be signed into the National Certificate in Carpentry (level 4) through the BCITO. Training usually takes around 4 years to complete, at which time the apprentice becomes a qualified builder.

But completing a qualification is only the first step to becoming a true building professional. The newly-qualified builder should then become a Licensed Building Practitioner through application to the Department of Building and Housing. This license, along with a qualification, proves that the building professional is able to adhere to the high standards set by NZ's building industry and Government.

Many long-term career pathways exist for building professionals. For example, some builders aspire to supervise large projects or manage construction companies. This usually involves undertaking higher-level qualifications in supervision or construction management. It is not uncommon these days for some builders to end up going to university to broaden their career prospects in management.

And of course, many builders own their own businesses and enjoy the freedom this brings. The building industry has endless opportunities for those with big aspirations.

Other careers this profession could lead to

Quantity surveying and architectural technology are also options requiring further study. These specialisations are important aspects of the building industry in NZ.

How to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry

To get an apprenticeship in carpentry, you need to get a **job** with a builder who is willing to train and support you through your apprenticeship. The BCITO can then arrange your training.

In some circumstances the BCITO may even be able to help you to find a job, especially if you have got some building experience, have completed a pre-trade course or did Gateway at school.

Visit BCITO.org.nz/lookingforwork and register your details – if anything comes up, they'll be in contact.

Otherwise, there are a few things you can do to ensure you get a good job:

- ✓ Speak to friends and family to see if they know any building or construction professionals you can speak to. **Personal contacts** are always better!

- ✓ Make sure you have a good, current **CV**. Visit careers.govt.nz for tips and examples on CVs and cover letters. You can also approach your school careers advisor for help.
- ✓ Get a **driver's license** if you haven't already! And think about transport; how will you get to and from work?
- ✓ Check out Seek.co.nz, Trademe.co.nz and the jobs section in your local paper. Employers actively looking to hire will often advertise.
- ✓ When you get an interview, make sure you **impress** upon the employer how keen you are to get into the industry and the fact that you want to do an apprenticeship. A '**can-do**' attitude will go a long way!

Other places to source information about this career

www.bcito.org.nz

Other relevant points

The building industry in NZ is a great pathway to career success. And there has never been a better time to get into it. With demand for most professional trades set to soar in coming years, qualified professionals will have plenty of opportunity to get ahead.