



Mechanical Contractors Association of Canada



MECHANICAL CONTRACTING CAREERS

GASFITTER

Do you like working with your hands? Could you work with precision tools? Do you like machines? Can you work independently? Do you enjoy interacting with people? Are you looking for on-the-job variety? Then Gasfitter could be the career for you!

Also known as

- Gas Customer Servicer
- Gasfitter Apprentice
- Gas Servicer
- Gas Technician

What the work is like

Gasfitters install, inspect, repair and maintain gas lines and gas equipment such as meters, regulators, heating units and appliances in residential, commercial and industrial establishments.

They are employed by gas utility companies and gas servicing companies.

Gasfitters work in the New Home Building and Renovation, Heavy Industrial, and Institutional and Commercial construction sectors. To learn more about the construction sectors, check out [Inside the industry](#).

Your duties

As a Gasfitter, your duties may include the following:

- installing, repairing and maintaining gas meters, regulators, gas lines and gas appliances
- testing and replacing defective equipment
- attending to gas-escape calls and assisting in the investigation of gas fires and explosions
- advising clients on safety features and maintenance of gas units
- converting cars or appliances to use natural gas fuels
- preparing work reports
- reading and interpreting drawings and blueprints

There are two types of gasfitters. Their jobs are very similar, with one main difference:

- **Gasfitter 1st Class** – works on all equipment
- **Gasfitter 2nd Class** – works on equipment with less than 400,000 BTUs (British thermal units)

Work conditions

The standard work week for gasfitters is 40 hours (8 hours a day, 5 days a week). As with many careers in construction, there are peak periods that will require you to work overtime. The number of additional hours you work each week depends on the construction sector and region you work in, and will vary from one job to the next. You may also have to be available on short notice to respond to emergencies.

Gasfitters may work indoors or outdoors. You will often work independently, but will interact with customers on most maintenance and repair jobs.

As with all careers in the construction industry, safety is the top priority. Gasfitters are trained to work safely and wear special equipment to protect themselves from injury.

Essential Skills

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) has identified nine Essential Skills that are necessary to succeed in the workplace. These skills provide the foundation for learning all other skills and apply to most construction careers. Best of all, you can learn and improve on these skills in school, on the job and during your everyday life.

The most important Essential Skills for gasfitters are the following:

- Document Use – reading and interpreting documents to extract information
- Numeracy – working with numbers to perform calculations
- Problem Solving – coming up with solutions to challenges

[Click here](#) to see how these skills are applied on the job. You can also [click here](#) to learn more about Essential Skills.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is one way of starting out in the construction industry. It involves both classroom studies and on-the-job training under the supervision of a certified Gasfitter, called a journeyperson.

As an apprentice, you earn while you learn and are paid by the hour for your on-site placements. Wages start at about 50% of a journeyperson's hourly rate and increase during your apprenticeship until you reach the full rate.

Entering an apprenticeship program

Requirements for gasfitter apprenticeship programs vary across Canada. To enter a gasfitter 1st Class apprenticeship program in most provinces and territories, you must have a Grade 9 education or equivalent and pass an entrance exam, or have gasfitter 2nd Class certification. To enter a gasfitter 2nd Class apprenticeship program you must be a certified Plumber or Steamfitter/Pipefitter.

Some provinces and territories offer secondary school apprenticeship programs that allow high school students to work towards a career as a Gasfitter.

For more information, check out the [Apprenticeship](#) section.

Program length

Gasfitter apprenticeship programs vary across Canada. Gasfitter 1st Class apprenticeship programs generally involve three 12-month periods, including at least 4,500 hours of on-the-job training, three eight-week blocks of technical training and a final certificate exam. Gasfitter 2nd Class apprenticeship programs generally involve two 12-month periods, including at least 3,000 hours of on-the-job training, and two eight-week blocks of technical training.

Related work experience or completion of a gasfitter program at a college or technical institute can reduce the time required to complete your apprenticeship.

Certification

Certification is required in Alberta, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia and the Yukon. Where certification is not available, it may be possible to study as an apprentice through your local labour organization. Check out [Related links](#) to find out who to contact. Certification tells employers and other workers that you are a skilled professional. It also helps you get jobs.

To be certified as a Gasfitter, you usually need to complete a three-year apprenticeship program. Once you successfully complete the required on-the-job training, technical training and exams, you are awarded a journeyperson certificate.

You may be eligible for certification in some provinces and territories if you have several years of on-the-job experience and have completed a high school, college or industry program in gasfitting.

In addition to certification, a provincial gasfitting licence is usually required.

To keep your skills current, you have to keep up with new technological developments by reading and talking with other gasfitters.

Where to study in Canada

In addition to the Canadian schools listed below, many employer and labour organizations offer training. For more information, check out [Related links](#).

Alberta

[Medicine Hat College](#)
[Northern Alberta Institute of Technology](#)
[Southern Alberta Institute of Technology](#)

British Columbia

[British Columbia Institute of Technology](#)
[Camosun College](#)
[College of the Rockies](#)
[Northern Lights College](#)

Manitoba

[Assiniboine Community College](#)

Northwest Territories

[Aurora College](#)

Nova Scotia

[Nova Scotia Community College](#)

Ontario

[Durham College](#)
[Georgian College](#)
[University of Guelph \(Kemptville Campus\)](#)
[Lambton College](#)
[Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology](#)

Saskatchewan

[Northlands College](#)

Specialty programs

In addition to the schools listed above, new Canadians and women can enrol in one of the following specialty programs.

For new Canadians with experience as gasfitters, [NorQuest College](#) offers a program called Transitions to Technical and Trades Careers.

For women, [Lambton College](#) and [Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology](#) offer integrated programs called Women in the Trades.

Salary ranges

Gasfitter hourly wages vary depending on the contract, the company, collective agreements, and local and national economic conditions. Typical hourly wage ranges for gasfitters (based on national or regional averages) are as follows:

Junior apprentices

Region	Typical hourly rate
National average	\$11-\$15
Atlantic Canada	\$11-\$15
Ontario and Quebec	\$11-\$14
Western Canada	\$13-\$19

Based on national averages, junior apprentices can earn annual salaries ranging from \$23,000 to \$31,000 per year, not including overtime.

Journeypersons

Region	Typical hourly rate
National average	\$16-\$23
Atlantic Canada	\$16-\$20
Ontario and Quebec	\$15-\$19
Western Canada	\$19-\$38

Based on national averages, journeypersons can earn annual salaries ranging from \$33,000 to \$48,000 per year, not including overtime.

Highly experienced journeypersons

Region	Typical hourly rate
National average	\$23-\$29
Atlantic Canada	\$23-\$29
Ontario and Quebec	\$23-\$26
Western Canada	\$24-\$43

Based on national averages, highly experienced journeypersons can earn annual salaries ranging from \$48,000 to \$60,000 per year, not including overtime.

Construction work can involve overtime, so your total annual salary will vary depending on the number of overtime hours you work.

In addition to the hourly rate, many construction workers receive statutory holiday and vacation pay. Depending on the contract, you may also receive benefits such as group insurance for health, dental, and vision care, as well as retirement packages and training benefits up to 30% of your hourly rate. If you are self-employed, it is up to you to arrange your own benefits.

Building your career

With experience and additional training, you can move into supervisory positions, including foreman, maintenance manager or service manager. You can also become self-employed and start your own contracting business.

As with most careers in the construction industry, your skills are portable. If you want to move, you can take your skills with you.

Job prospects

Construction careers across Canada are booming! To learn about the forecast for gasfitters, check out [Job prospects](#). There you'll find information on their expected demand by province for the next nine years.