

Actor

Film, TV, theatre, voice and commercials. Good money per day of work, and most people do not get many days.

TYPICAL PAY

\$50,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$35k to \$83k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Film and TV sets, theatres, voice studios, audition rooms

How you get there

- 1 Perform in anything** From now
 School plays, community theatre, student films, improv. Nobody starts by being discovered.
- 2 Training** 3 to 4 years
 A conservatory such as the National Theatre School of Canada in Montreal, founded in 1960, or a university degree such as the Bachelor of Fine Arts in acting at Toronto Metropolitan University. Both take you by audition.
- 3 Get an agent** Varies, often years
 Agents submit you for auditions you cannot access alone. They take a percentage and cost nothing up front. Anyone asking for money to represent you is a scam.
- 4 Build union credits** 1 to 5 years
 Work your way from background and non-union projects to union contracts.
- 5 Keep auditioning** Forever
 There is no point where this ends. Working actors audition constantly between jobs.

Pros and cons

- + Union day rates are good money for the days you work
- + No degree or licence stands between you and the work
- + Every job is a new group of people and a new place
- Rejection is the daily experience, not the exception
- Income is unpredictable and often not enough to live on
- You need a flexible second job for years, maybe always

Good to know

Canada shoots a lot of other countries

Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal host large amounts of American film and television production. A lot of Canadian acting work involves playing an American in a Canadian city dressed as an American one.

Two unions, two worlds

ACTRA (the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists) covers recorded media and has more than 30,000 members. The Canadian Actors' Equity Association covers live theatre, opera and d...

Optional boosts

Self-tape technique. Accents and dialects. Stage combat and movement. Singing.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Actor/actress in Canada, wages (updated Nov 2025)
 ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists)
 Canadian Actors' Equity Association
 National Theatre School of Canada

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/actor>



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