

Aircraft Maintenance Engineer

Inspect and repair aircraft, then sign them safe to fly. A Transport Canada licence, not a university degree.

TYPICAL PAY

\$78,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$50k to \$110k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 6 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Airline hangars, airports, repair shops, northern bush operators

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Grade 12 with math, physics and English. Shop classes help.
- 2 Approved college program** 2 years
A 2-year AME (aircraft maintenance engineer) diploma approved by Transport Canada: Centennial College in Toronto, BCIT (British Columbia Institute of Technology), SAIT (Southern Alberta Institute of Technology), Canadore College in North Bay, Red River College Polyt...
- 3 Work as an apprentice** 2 to 3 years
Join an airline, charter operator, repair shop or bush operator. Log every task in a personal logbook. Transport Canada wants roughly 48 months of experience in total, minus your college credit, so about 2 to 3 more years.
- 4 Transport Canada licence** After your hours
Pass the regulatory exams and prove your logged tasks. The M1 licence covers smaller aircraft, M2 covers large transport aircraft like airliners. E is avionics, S is structures. Minimum age is 21.
- 5 Add type ratings** Ongoing
Courses on specific aircraft, run by the airline or manufacturer, let you sign for those types.

Pros and cons

- + Federal licence recognized across Canada
- + No degree needed, licensed by your mid-20s
- + Airline pay, pensions and flight benefits
- Shift work: nights, weekends, holidays
- Your signature carries legal responsibility
- Outdoor line work in Canadian winters

Good to know

The signature is the job

An aircraft cannot legally fly after maintenance until a licensed AME (aircraft maintenance engineer) signs the maintenance release. That signature is why the licence exists and why licensed pay is higher.

Not that kind of engineer

Canada uses the title aircraft maintenance engineer. In the US the same job is called an airframe and powerplant mechanic. Neither is a university engineering degree.

Optional boosts

M2 licence. E licence (avionics). S licence (structures). Type ratings.

Where these numbers come from

Transport Canada: Obtaining an aircraft maintenance engineer licence
Transport Canada: Airworthiness Chapter 566, AME licensing and training
Transport Canada: Aviation
Job Bank: Aircraft mechanics and aircraft inspectors, wages (updated Nov 2025)

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/aircraft-maintenance-engineer>



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