

Barista

The easiest real job to get in Canada, and a skilled craft if you stay. Just know the pay ceiling is low.

TYPICAL PAY

\$34,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$31k to \$45k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 1 year

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Cafes, coffee chains, roasteries,
hotels, campus food courts**

How you get there

- 1 Apply** Days
Cafes and chains hire year-round, often with no experience asked for. Apply in person mid-afternoon when it is quiet.
- 2 Learn the till and the food** First weeks
Most shops start you on the counter and the oven before the machine.
- 3 Learn espresso** 3 to 12 months
Grind size, dose, extraction time, milk texturing, then latte art. Getting consistent takes months of daily practice.
- 4 Become the reliable one** 1 to 2 years
Opening shifts, closing the till, training new staff. This is what turns into a shift lead role.
- 5 Choose where it goes** 2 years and up
Cafe manager, roaster, wholesale coffee rep, quality grader, or opening your own shop.

Pros and cons

- + Hired in days with no experience or schooling
- + Daytime hours, evenings and most holidays free
- + A real craft you can get visibly better at
- The pay ceiling is low and close to the floor
- 5am alarms for opening shifts
- Repetitive wrist and shoulder strain from tamping and steaming

Optional boosts

Coffee skills certification. Roasting. Wholesale and machine service. Cafe management.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Barista in Canada, wages (updated Nov 19, 2025)

Specialty Coffee Association: education and certification

Ontario: minimum wage

Job Bank: Cook in Canada, wages, for comparison

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/barista>

Good to know

The narrowest pay range on this site

Job Bank puts baristas at \$15 low, \$16.55 median and \$21.50 high. Experience barely moves the number, which is why almost everyone who stays in coffee moves into roasting, wholesale or management.

The North pays the most for coffee too

Nunavut posts the highest median barista wage in Canada at about \$25.90 an hour, well above the national \$16.55. Remote communities have to pay more to staff anything.



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