

Entrepreneur

You start and run your own company. About half of small businesses with staff are gone within ten years.

TYPICAL INCOME

\$33,600

a year, varies widely

INCOME RANGE

\$21k to \$55k

most to the successful few

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 5 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Anywhere: a home office, a shop, a truck, a kitchen, a laptop

How you get there

- 1 Learn an industry from the inside** 1 to 10 years
Work in the field you want to start in. Most lasting businesses come from someone who knew the customers and the costs.
- 2 Test the idea cheaply** 1 to 6 months
Sell to real customers before you spend on a lease, an app or stock. A paying customer is the only real proof.
- 3 Register and set up** 1 to 4 weeks
Choose a structure, register in your province, get a Business Number, open a business bank account and check municipal licences.
- 4 Survive the first years** 1 to 5 years
Watch cash every week. Most businesses that close run out of cash, not ideas.
- 5 Pay yourself properly** Ongoing
A business that pays you a fair wage plus a profit is the goal. Many never get there; some sell or close and go back to a job.

Pros and cons

- + You decide what to build and how to run it
- + No ceiling on income if the business works
- + You can build something you can later sell
- Owners earn less than employees at the median
- No paycheque, benefits or paid vacation unless the business pays for them
- Long hours, especially in the first years

Optional boosts

Small business enterprise centres. Futurpreneur mentors. College continuing education. University and college incubators.

Good to know

Most self-employment income is small

In 2024, about 3.3 million Canadians reported self-employment income on their taxes. The median was just \$6,100, because most of it is side work alongside a job.

Almost every employer is a small business

Of the 1.10 million businesses with employees in Canada in December 2024, 98.2% were small businesses with fewer than 100 employees.

Where these numbers come from

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada: Key Small Business Statistics 2025
Statistics Canada: employment income by class of worker, 2021 Census, table 98-10-0598-01
Statistics Canada: income of individuals by income source, table 11-10-0239-01
Futurpreneur Canada

Numbers checked October 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/entrepreneur>



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