

Esthetician

Facials, waxing, lashes and skin treatments. A short program, low starting pay, and your regulars decide your income.

TYPICAL PAY

\$42,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$31k to \$62k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Spas, salons, medical clinics, your own studio

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
 Grade 12. Some high schools offer cosmetology with a working salon.
- 2 Esthetics program** 6 to 12 months
 Private schools like Blanche Macdonald in Vancouver, or a public college certificate. Programs cover skin science, facials, waxing, manicures, pedicures, makeup and sanitation.
- 3 Licence or trade certificate, where required** Weeks
 Nova Scotia licenses estheticians through its Cosmetology Association. Manitoba runs esthetics as a compulsory apprenticeship trade. Saskatchewan has voluntary Esthetician trades. Ontario, BC, Alberta and Quebec have no provincial licence.
- 4 First job and a book of clients** 1 to 3 years
 Spa or salon on base plus commission. Building regulars takes 1 to 3 years.
- 5 Specialize** Ongoing
 Lashes, brows, laser, or medical esthetics in a clinic. Each is a short extra course.

Pros and cons

- + Working within a year
- + Calm, one-on-one, people leave happier
- + Flexible once you have regulars
- Low pay for the first years, often commission
- Evenings and weekends
- Back, neck and wrist strain, dry hands

Good to know

A big field

Job Bank counts about 71,300 people in Canada working as estheticians, electrologists and related jobs, which includes nail technicians and tattoo artists. Most are self-employed or work in sm...

Manitoba treats it like a trade

In Manitoba, esthetician is a compulsory apprenticeship trade with nail technician and skin technician streams, run by Apprenticeship Manitoba. Most other provinces have no licence at all.

Optional boosts

Lash extensions and brow lamination. Laser hair removal and skin lasers. Chemical peels and microneedling. Sugaring and Brazilian waxing.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Esthetician, wages (updated Nov 2025)
 Job Bank: Estheticians, employment requirements by province
 Saskatchewan Apprenticeship: designated trades
 Cosmetology Association of Nova Scotia

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/esthetician>



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