

Farrier

Trim hooves and forge horseshoes. Self-employed, physically brutal, and well paid once your book is full.

TYPICAL PAY

\$72,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$45k to \$100k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Barns, stables, racetracks, farms,
your own truck**

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Time around horses matters more than marks. Ride, muck stalls, work at a barn. Shop class and metalwork help.
- 2 Farrier school, optional** About 8 months
Kwantlen Polytechnic University in BC runs a 30-week Certificate in Farrier Science with a 240-hour practicum beside a working farrier. Olds College in Alberta also runs a farrier science program.
- 3 Apprentice with a farrier** 1 to 3 years
The traditional route, and what most farriers did. You ride along, hold horses, pull shoes, then trim, then forge. Alberta's career site describes this as the usual way in.
- 4 Go out on your own** Ongoing
Buy a rig, build a client list one barn at a time. It takes years to fill a schedule.
- 5 Voluntary certification** Any time
Farrier associations run practical and written exams. Not required, but they set you apart with vets and show barns.

Pros and cons

- + Your own boss from early on
- + Real craft: fire, steel, and a living animal
- + Good money with a full client list
- Brutal on the back, knees and hands
- Kicks, bites and burns are part of the job
- Slow winters and no benefits or pension

Good to know

A horse needs a farrier every 6 to 8 weeks

Hooves grow like fingernails. Every horse in Canada needs a trim or new shoes several times a year for its whole life, whether the economy is good or bad.

Farriers are getting older

Job Bank reports 39% of workers in this trade group were 50 or over in 2023, with a median retirement age of 67. That is a lot of client lists looking for a younger farrier to take them over.

Optional boosts

Therapeutic and corrective shoeing. Sport and race horses. Draft horses. Competition forging.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Farriers (other technical trades), wages (updated Nov 2025)
Kwantlen Polytechnic University: Certificate in Farrier Science
alis (Alberta government career site): Farrier
Western Canadian Farriers Association

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/farrier>



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