

# Librarian

Run collections, help people find what is true, and keep a public space open to everyone. Needs a master's degree.

TYPICAL PAY

**\$86,000**

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

**\$48k to \$141k**

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

**6 to 7 years**

after high school

DEMAND

**Moderate**

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

**No**

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Public libraries, universities, schools, law firms, government**

## How you get there

- 1

**High school**

Reading, writing and research habits matter more than any single course.

Grade 12
- 2

**Bachelor's degree**

Any subject. History, English, science and computing all work. Your subject becomes your specialty later.

3 to 4 years
- 3

**Work in a library while you study**

Shelving, circulation desk, student assistant. This is the single best thing you can do for your application and your first job.

During your degree
- 4

**Master's degree in library and information studies**

The professional degree. It must come from a program accredited by the ALA (American Library Association), which accredits Canadian schools as well as American ones.

About 2 years
- 5

**First posting**

Often casual or term work first, then a permanent job. Being willing to move to a smaller city speeds this up a lot.

Months to 2 years

## Pros and cons

- +

Work that is genuinely public service

+

Stable pay, pension and benefits once permanent

+

Endless variety of questions and subjects

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Two degrees and no guaranteed job at the end

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Many people start on casual and part-time hours

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Budget cuts hit libraries first

## Good to know

**A cross-border degree stamp**  
Canadian library schools are accredited by the American Library Association, not by a Canadian body. Employers across North America ask for that accreditation, which is one of the few cases where a Unit...

**Book challenges are rising fast**  
The Canadian Federation of Library Associations reported that challenges to library materials in Canada jumped from 172 in 2024 to 512 in 2025. Defending what is on the shelf is now part of the job.

## Optional boosts

Law librarian. Health sciences librarian. Data and metadata work. Archives.

### Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Librarian, wages (updated Nov 2025)  
Canadian Federation of Library Associations  
University of British Columbia: Master of Library and Information Studies  
American Library Association (accredits Canadian library schools)

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/librarian>



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