

Massage Therapist

Hands-on treatment of muscles and pain. Two years of college, mostly self-employed, and your body sets the limit.

TYPICAL PAY

\$62,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$45k to \$80k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 3 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

**Clinics, spas, sports teams,
home-based practice**

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Biology and anatomy if offered. A high school diploma and a police check are the entry requirements.
- 2 Massage therapy diploma** 2 to 3 years
 Two to three years at a public college or accredited private school. Ontario requires about 2,200 hours and BC programs run longer, up to about 3,000: anatomy, physiology, pathology, technique, and a student clinic treating the public.
- 3 Provincial exams** After graduation
 In Ontario the CMTO (College of Massage Therapists of Ontario) runs a written exam and a practical exam. BC and the other regulated provinces run their own.
- 4 Register and insure** A few weeks
 Register with your provincial college and buy malpractice insurance. Then you can use the title RMT (registered massage therapist).
- 5 Build a client list** 1 to 2 years
 Most new grads start on a clinic split or at a spa. It takes 1 to 2 years to fill a book.

Pros and cons

- + Working within 2 to 3 years, low tuition
- + Flexible hours and days
- + Steady demand from insurance-covered clients
- Pay is capped by how many hours your body can do
- No benefits, no pension, no paid time off
- An injury to your own hands or wrists can end the career

Good to know

Regulated in Ontario for about a century

Ontario has regulated massage therapy since the years just after the First World War, longer than most health professions. BC followed in the 1940s.

Some of the longest training in the world

Ontario's 2,200-hour standard, and BC's even longer programs, are among the highest massage therapy training requirements anywhere. Many US states require 500 to 750 hours.

Optional boosts

Sports massage. Manual lymphatic drainage. Prenatal and pediatric massage. Your own space.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Massage therapists, wages (updated Nov 2025)

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario

College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC (regulates massage therapy in BC)

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/massage-therapist>



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