

Music Therapist

Use music to reach people who talk therapy cannot: dementia wards, autism programs, palliative care. A music degree, a 1,000-hour internship, and a lot of contract work.

TYPICAL PAY

\$71,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$48k to \$104k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 6 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Long-term care homes, hospitals, schools, private practice

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Music at a strong level on at least one instrument, plus voice, plus piano or guitar. Programs audition you.
- 2 Music therapy degree** 2 to 4 years
Six programs are recognized by the CAMT (Canadian Association of Music Therapists): Acadia, Canadian Mennonite University, Capilano, Wilfrid Laurier, Concordia and the University of Toronto. Some are 4-year bachelor's degrees, others are graduate programs for people wh...
- 3 Clinical internship** About 6 to 12 months
1,000 supervised hours under an approved MTA (Music Therapist Accredited) supervisor, usually after coursework ends.
- 4 Certification exam** After the internship
Canadian graduates write the exam of the CBMT (Certification Board for Music Therapists), a US board, then apply to CAMT for the MTA credential.

Pros and cons

- + You get paid to make music with people
- + Reaches patients who cannot be reached any other way
- + Growing recognition in dementia and palliative care
- Few full-time jobs; most careers are patchworks
- Internship is long and mostly unpaid
- Emotionally heavy work with dying and grieving people

Good to know

The exam is American

Canadian music therapists earn the MTA (Music Therapist Accredited) credential from the Canadian association, but the exam they write belongs to the CBMT (Certification Board for Music Therapists) in the...

Only six schools

Just six Canadian universities run recognized music therapy programs, from Capilano in BC to Acadia in Nova Scotia. Most provinces have none, so many students move away to train.

Optional boosts

Registered Psychotherapist status in Ontario. Neurologic music therapy. Palliative and hospice care training. Master's degree.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Music therapist, wages (updated Nov 2025)

CAMT (Canadian Association of Music Therapists): MTA credential

CAMT: Canadian music therapy education programs

Music Therapy Association of Ontario: therapist credentials

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/music-therapist>



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