

Personal Trainer

Coach people one on one to get stronger and healthier. Quick to start, low pay at first, and you are really running a small business.

TYPICAL PAY

\$40,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$32k to \$64k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Gyms, private studios, clients' homes, online

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Physical education, biology and any business course. Get your CPR and first aid.
- 2 Pick a route** Weeks to 4 years
 Fast route: a certification course such as canfitpro's Personal Training Specialist, about 20 hours of self-study plus a class, a theory exam and a live practical exam, both needing 80%. Longer route: a 2-year college diploma in fitness and health promotion, or a kinesiology degr...
- 3 Certify** 1 to 3 months
 canfitpro is the most common gym certification. CSEP (Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology) is the most respected and requires 2 years of related post-secondary study to sit the exam.
- 4 Get hired and build clients** 6 to 18 months
 Start at a gym: they hand you leads. Expect a year of hustle before your calendar is full.

Pros and cons

- + Start earning within weeks, no debt
- + Active, social work with visible results
- + Set your own hours and rates once established
- Low, unstable pay for most trainers
- Split shifts: early mornings and evenings, every day
- No benefits or pension unless you find a rare salaried job

Good to know

Most adults do not hit the guideline

Canada's movement guidelines call for 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity a week. Statistics Canada surveys have found only about half of adults get there, which is the whole market for trainers.

January is the gold rush

Gyms sign up more members in January than any other month, and trainers book most of their new clients then. By March many of those members have stopped coming, and the trainer's job is keeping the o...

Optional boosts

Strength and conditioning for athletes. Older adults and rehab-adjacent training. Online coaching. Group classes and small-group training.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Personal trainers and other fitness instructors, wages (updated Aug 2026)
 CSEP (Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology): Certified Personal Trainer
 canfitpro: Personal Training Specialist certification

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/personal-trainer>



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