

Plumber

Water, gas and drainage in every building. Paid apprenticeship, licensed in about 5 years.

TYPICAL PAY

\$72,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$38k to \$98k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 5 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

**Homes, construction sites,
commercial buildings**

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Math and shop classes help. Some provinces let you start through a high school apprenticeship program.
- 2 Find an employer to sponsor you** Weeks to months
Plumbing companies, mechanical contractors, or a union hiring hall. A pre-apprenticeship program makes this easier.
- 3 Register as an apprentice** Days
With your provincial trades body.
- 4 Work and study** 4 to 5 years
9,000 hours in Ontario (about 8,280 on the job plus 720 in class over three blocks). Other provinces run 4 periods of roughly 1,500 to 1,800 hours each.
- 5 Certificate of Qualification and Red Seal** After your hours
Pass the exam. Red Seal lets you work in any province.

Pros and cons

- + Paid from the first day of training
- + Recession-resistant: pipes break in any economy
- + Clear path to owning a business
- Dirty and physical: crawlspaces, sewage, heavy pipe
- On-call and emergency work
- Hard on knees and back over a career

Optional boosts

Gasfitter licence (G2 or G1 in Ontario, B or A elsewhere). Steamfitter or pipefitter. Backflow prevention certification. Master plumber licence.

Good to know

Plumbers save more lives than doctors

Public health experts often say clean water and working sewers did more to raise life expectancy than any drug. Plumbing is public health.

The Red Seal is a passport

Plumber is a Red Seal trade, so a certified plumber can move from Halifax to Calgary without re-qualifying.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Plumbers, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Red Seal Program: Plumber

Skilled Trades Ontario: Plumber (306A)

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/plumber>



Scan for the full clicker