

Tile Setter

Lay ceramic, porcelain and stone tile on floors, walls and showers. A 3 to 4 year paid apprenticeship with real money for fast, precise hands.

TYPICAL PAY

\$72,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$50k to \$92k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

3 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**New homes, condo towers,
bathrooms, commercial lobbies**

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Grade 12. Math and shop classes help. Ontario students can start early through OYAP (the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program).
- 2 Find a sponsor** Weeks to months
A tile contractor, a flooring company or a union hall that will register you as an apprentice. Many people start as a helper first.
- 3 Register the apprenticeship** Days
With your provincial trades authority: Skilled Trades Ontario (where the trade is called Terrazzo, Tile and Marble Setter), Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training, or SkilledTradesBC.
- 4 Work and study** 3 to 4 years
About 5,500 hours in Ontario: 4,780 on the job plus 720 hours in class, usually three blocks of about 8 weeks at a college.
- 5 Certificate of Qualification and Red Seal** After your hours
Pass the provincial exam. Add the interprovincial Red Seal endorsement to work in any province.

Pros and cons

- + Paid from day one, no student debt
- + Indoor work year-round
- + Fast, skilled setters out-earn the hourly rate
- Kneeling all day: knees, back and wrists take a beating
- Heavy: boxes of tile and bags of thin-set all day
- Piecework means a bad day costs you money

Optional boosts

Large-format porcelain and slab. Natural stone and marble. Waterproofing systems. Terrazzo and mosaic.

Good to know

It is a Red Seal trade

Tilesetter is one of the Red Seal trades. Pass the interprovincial exam and your certificate is good from BC to Newfoundland.

Cutting tile makes silica dust

Porcelain and stone contain crystalline silica. Breathing the dust from dry cutting can scar your lungs over a career. Wet saws and respirators are not optional.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Tilessetters, wages (updated Nov 2025)
Red Seal Program: Tilesetter
Skilled Trades Ontario
SkilledTradesBC

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/tile-setter>



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