

Underground Miner

Drill, blast and haul ore a kilometre below ground. High pay with no degree, in exchange for shift work in the dark.

TYPICAL PAY

\$87,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$58k to \$116k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 3 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Underground mines in northern Ontario, Quebec, Nunavut, Saskat...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
 The standard minimum. Math, shop and science help. A driver's licence is expected.
- 2 Safety tickets and fitness** Weeks
 First aid, WHMIS (workplace hazardous materials training), and a medical. Mines test for drugs and alcohol.
- 3 Common Core, in Ontario** About 5 weeks
 Ontario law requires new underground workers to complete the Basic Underground Hard Rock Miner Common Core (Program 770010). NORCAT (a mining training centre in Sudbury) runs it in 5 weeks: 2 days of theory, then practical work in a training mine. Other provinces u...
- 4 Underground labourer or trainee** 6 to 18 months
 Scaling loose rock, moving supplies, learning the mine. You get signed off on specialty modules one at a time: bolting, drilling, mucking, driving underground trucks.
- 5 Production or development miner** 1 to 3 years in
 Running a jumbo drill, a scoop or a bolter on a crew, usually on bonus.

Pros and cons

- + Six figures possible without a degree
- + Paid to train, no student debt
- + Strong unions, pensions and benefits
- 12-hour shifts, nights and rotations away from home
- Real danger: rockfalls, equipment, explosives
- Mines close when prices fall; layoffs happen

Good to know

Sudbury has a training mine

NORCAT (a mining training centre in Sudbury) runs its Common Core program in a real underground mine used for training, so new miners learn to scale, bolt and drill in actual rock before they ever start a job.

Mining pays a quarter of Ontario's exports

The Ontario Mining Association says mineral exports reached \$64 billion in 2023, about one quarter of everything the province exports, and warns the sector does not have enough workers coming through...

Optional boosts

Jumbo drill operator. Blasting certificate. Mine rescue team. Shift boss or supervisor.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Underground production and development miners, wages (updated Nov 2025)
 Ontario Mining Health, Safety and Prevention Review: training and Common Core (Regulation 854)
 NORCAT: Basic Underground Hard Rock Miner Common Core (Program 770010)
 Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MIHR)

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/underground-miner>



Scan for the full clicker