

Upholsterer

Re-cover furniture, car seats and boat interiors. No licence, learned in a shop, and a craft with more work than people to do it.

TYPICAL PAY

\$47,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$37k to \$64k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Upholstery shops, furniture factories, auto and marine trim sh...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 10 to 12
Shop and tech classes. Sewing classes help more than you would think. Re-cover a chair at home.
- 2 Helper in a shop or factory** 6 to 12 months
Stripping, cutting foam, stapling, learning fabrics. Furniture factories hire with no experience.
- 3 Course or vocational diploma (optional)** Months to 1 year
Quebec runs a vocational diploma in upholstery. Elsewhere, upholstery is mostly continuing-education courses and short private classes.
- 4 Full upholsterer** 2 to 4 years
Pattern cutting, sewing welts and pleats, spring tying, frame repair, estimating fabric. Speed and clean corners take years.
- 5 Specialize or open a shop** 5 years and up
Auto and marine trim, antiques, commercial seating, or your own custom shop.

Pros and cons

- + No licence, paid from day one
- + A real craft: you can see the before and after
- + Easy to go self-employed
- Physical: bending, lifting, staples, dust
- Pay is modest unless you specialize or own the shop
- Cheap imported furniture cut demand for re-covering

Good to know

Unregulated everywhere

Job Bank lists upholsterer as not regulated in any province or territory. Quebec is the only place with a voluntary trade certificate.

BC rates it good

Job Bank gives upholsterers a good outlook in British Columbia and a moderate one in Quebec and Alberta, while Ontario and Manitoba are rated limited. Marine work along the coast helps BC.

Optional boosts

Auto trim. Marine and aircraft interiors. Antique restoration. Commercial seating.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Upholsterer, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Job Bank: Upholsterer, employment requirements

Job Bank: Upholsterer, job prospects

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/upholsterer>



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