

Baker

Early mornings, flour to the elbows, and a product that has to be right before the doors open.

TYPICAL PAY

\$37,160

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$28k to \$49k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Grocery store bakeries, wholesale plants, small retail bakeries, hotel...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Get a part-time job at a bakery, a cafe or a grocery bakery counter. That job is worth more right now than any course.
- 2 Start as an assistant** 6 months to 2 years
Scaling ingredients, running the mixer, panning, baking off and cleaning. Most working bakers learned exactly this way.
- 3 Training, if you want it** 6 months to 2 years
A community college baking and pastry certificate, a culinary school associate degree, or a registered apprenticeship listed on the government apprenticeship site.
- 4 Certify** Optional, a few years in
The Retail Bakers of America runs a ladder of baking certifications, based on experience plus written and practical tests.
- 5 Run a bench, then a bakery** 3 to 10 years
Head baker, then production manager, then your own shop if that is what you want.

Pros and cons

- + Start with no tuition and no debt
- + A real craft that takes years to get good at
- + Afternoons and evenings are yours
- Low pay as an employee, and it does not climb much
- The shift starts in the middle of the night, every day
- Hot ovens, heavy sacks and repetitive lifting

Optional boosts

Laminated dough. Cake decorating. Natural leavening. Allergen and gluten free production.

Good to know

Most American bakers work in supermarkets

The picture of a baker is a little shop with a striped awning. In reality most bakers in the United States work in supermarket bakeries and large wholesale plants, mixing in hundred pound batches.

White flour has vitamins added by law

Enriched flour in the United States has B vitamins and iron added back after milling, and since 1998 it has also carried folic acid, added to cut birth defects. That is what the word enriched on the bag means.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Bakers
Retail Bakers of America: professional baking certification
Johnson and Wales University: culinary and baking programs
Apprenticeship.gov: Registered Apprenticeship, US Department of Labor

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/baker>



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