

Electrician

Wire houses, factories and data centers. Get paid from your first week of training and never owe tuition.

TYPICAL PAY

\$63,190

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$43k to \$109k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 5 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Construction sites, homes, factories, utilities

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Algebra is the one that matters. Some districts run a pre-apprenticeship or a construction academy that gets you a head start.
- 2 Get into an apprenticeship** Weeks to a year of applying
Two main routes: the union programs run by the electrical training Alliance, a partnership of the IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers) and the National Electrical Contractors Association, or non-union employer programs. Both are free and both are com...
- 3 Register with your state** Days
Most states require apprentices to hold an apprentice license or registration before touching a wire. Your program handles the paperwork.
- 4 Work and study** 4 to 5 years
About 8,000 hours on the job over four to five years, plus several hundred hours of evening classes on code, theory and safety.
- 5 Journeyman license** After your hours
Sit your state's exam, mostly on the National Electrical Code. Pass it and you can work unsupervised.

Pros and cons

- + Paid from week one, no tuition and no student loans
- + Licensed and earning a full rate in under 5 years
- + Rapid growth, with data centers and electrification driving demand
- Hard on the body: ladders, attics, crawlspaces, cold sites
- Construction slows in a downturn and layoffs come with it
- Genuine electrical danger, which is why the rules are strict

Optional boosts

Master electrician license. Industrial and instrumentation work. PLC (programmable logic controller) training. Solar and electric vehicle charger installation.

Good to know

The rulebook changes every three years

The National Electrical Code is revised on a three-year cycle, and each state decides for itself which edition to adopt. That is why two neighboring states can legally require different wiring in the same sit...

Getting in is harder than getting through

Union apprenticeship programs often take only a small share of applicants, testing algebra and reading before an interview panel. People apply two or three years running. Once you are in, almost eve...

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Electricians (47-2111.00)

Apprenticeship.gov: apprenticeship job finder

Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation: electricians

electrical training Alliance, run by the electrical workers' union and the contractors' association

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/electrician>



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