

Floor Covering Installer

Carpet, vinyl, laminate and hardwood, cut and fitted on your knees in somebody else's building.

TYPICAL PAY

\$50,340

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$35k to \$82k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Houses, apartments, offices, schools, hospitals, retail fit-outs

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Useful but not always required. A driver's license matters more to most employers.
- 2 Get on as a helper** First months
Call flooring contractors directly. The job is carrying rolls, tearing out old floor and cleaning up while you watch the installers.
- 3 Learn to cut and seam** 1 to 2 years
Carpet seaming, vinyl welding, laminate and wood layout, subfloor preparation. This is where the skill is and where the money starts.
- 4 Registered apprenticeship, if you can get one** 3 to 4 years
Union floor coverer apprenticeships pair paid work with classroom hours and step your wage up on a schedule. They usually run three to four years.
- 5 Certify or go out on your own** After your hours
Industry certification through a training alliance or a contractor association, then either a senior installer role or your own crew.

Pros and cons

- + Paid from your first week, no tuition and no debt
- + A finished room to look at every single day
- + Easy to start your own business with a van and tools
- Knees, back and shoulders take real damage over a career
- Carpet work is shrinking as people switch to hard flooring
- Piece rate means a slow day is an unpaid day

Good to know

Carpet is losing and the job is changing with it

The federal outlook for carpet installers is a decline in employment, because American homes keep switching to vinyl plank, laminate and wood. Installers who only lay carpet are shrinking their own market.

The subfloor causes most failures

Flooring that buckles, gaps or lifts is usually blamed on the product, but the cause is nearly always moisture or an uneven surface underneath. Good installers test the slab before they open a single b...

Optional boosts

Hardwood and engineered wood. Sheet vinyl and heat welding. Concrete moisture testing and subfloor preparation. Tile and stone.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Carpet Installers (47-2041.00)
INSTALL (International Standards and Training Alliance), flooring training and certification
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America
FCICA, the Flooring 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/floor-covering-installer>



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