

Industrial Electrician

Keep the motors, controls and power systems of a factory or plant running, and get paid while you learn the trade.

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

Factories, refineries, mines, mills, power plants

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma or GED (General Educational Development) test** Grade 12
Algebra is the gate. Most apprenticeship applications include a math and reading aptitude test you have to pass.
- 2 Get accepted into an apprenticeship** Weeks to a year of applying
Apply to a joint union and contractor training center, a large employer's own program, or find a sponsor through the federal apprenticeship finder. This is the competitive step.
- 3 Work and study together** 4 to 5 years
Around 8,000 hours on the job across four to five years, plus classroom nights covering theory, code, motors and controls.
- 4 Pass the journeyman exam** After your hours
Most states test you on the electrical code and practical calculations before issuing a license.
- 5 Specialize in industrial work** Ongoing
Motor controls, drives, programmable controllers and instrumentation. This is what separates an industrial electrician from a house wirer.

Pros and cons

- + Paid from day one, licensed in under five years, no student debt
- + The federal profile rates electricians as growing rapidly with lots of openings
- + Indoor, year-round work with steadier hours than construction
- Shift work, nights, weekends and callouts
- Real danger: arc flash and shock injuries are severe when they happen
- Hot, loud, dirty plants, and confined spaces

Optional boosts

PLC (programmable logic controller) programming. Variable frequency drives. Instrumentation. Robotics and automation.

Good to know

The electrical union is nearly a million strong

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers represents roughly 901,000 active members and retirees across utilities, construction, telecommunications, broadcasting, manufacturing, rail...

Finishing an apprenticeship pays

The United States Department of Labor reports that people who complete a registered apprenticeship start at an average of about \$86,000 a year across all trades, and report they earn over \$300,00...

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Electricians (47-2111.00)
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
electrical training ALLIANCE
Apprenticeship.gov, United States 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/industrial-electrician>



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