

Millwright

Install, align and repair the heavy machinery that factories and power plants run on, to tolerances measured in thousandths of an inch.

TYPICAL PAY

\$65,700

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$46k to \$94k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 5 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Factories, power plants, paper mills, food plants, construction sit...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma or an equivalency certificate** Grade 12
Shop, math and physics classes help. You normally need to be 18 and pass a physical and a drug test.
- 2 Apply to an apprenticeship** Weeks to a year of waiting
Local unions of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters run the main millwright programs, and plants and contractors run their own. Applications open in windows, not all year.
- 3 Start work as a paid apprentice** Immediately
You are an employee from day one, working beside qualified millwrights.
- 4 Work plus classroom training** About 4 years
Registered apprenticeships run on a minimum of about 2,000 hours of paid work a year plus roughly 144 hours of classroom instruction. Millwright programs are usually about four years in total.
- 5 Journeyman millwright** After the hours
Finish the hours, pass the program's practical and written tests, and you are qualified. There is no state exam to sit.

Pros and cons

- + Paid from the first day, no tuition debt
- + A strong pension in the union side of the trade
- + Precision work that is genuinely satisfying
- Employment in this occupation is expected to grow little or decline
- Heavy lifting, heat, noise and confined spaces
- Shutdown work means long stretches away from home

Optional boosts

Laser alignment and vibration analysis. Welding qualification tests. Rigging and crane signaling. Hydraulics and mechatronics.

Good to know

The job is named after actual mills

Millwrights originally built and maintained water mills and grain mills, making the gears and shafts themselves out of wood. The machines changed completely. The name and the core skill, getting rotating par...

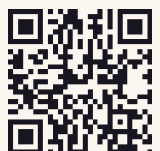
Thousandths of an inch decide everything

A shaft alignment that is out by a few thousandths of an inch, thinner than a sheet of paper, will chew through bearings and seals for years. Precision here is not perfectionism, it is the whole job.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Millwrights
United Brotherhood of Carpenters Millwrights
United Brotherhood of Carpenters
Apprenticeship.gov, the federal Registered Apprenticeship site

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/millwright>



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