

Stonemason

Cut and set natural stone into walls, steps and buildings that will still be standing in a hundred years.

TYPICAL PAY

\$57,390

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$39k to \$86k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Construction sites, historic buildings, stone yards, landscapin...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma or an equivalency certificate** Grade 12
 Math, shop and art all help. Physical fitness matters more here than grades.
- 2 Get on a crew** Weeks to months
 Start as a mason tender or laborer. Mixing mortar, hauling stone, cleaning joints. It is how you get seen.
- 3 Apprenticeship or on-the-job training** 3 to 4 years
 Unions and contractor associations sponsor programs covering blueprint reading, math, building codes and safety alongside paid work.
- 4 Setting stone yourself** From year 2
 You move from tending to laying: levels, lines, plumb bobs and pattern layout. This is where the craft actually starts.
- 5 Journeyman stonemason** After 3 to 4 years
 Fully qualified. From here you can specialise in restoration, go into landscaping stonework, or start your own business.

Pros and cons

- + Paid while you learn, with almost no cost to enter
- + You can point at buildings and say you built that
- + No license, so the skill travels to any state
- Federal projections show stonemason employment declining
- Brutal on the back, knees and hands over a career
- Outdoor work that stops for rain, snow and hard frost

Good to know

The trade is shrinking because stone got expensive

Federal projections expect stonemason employment to fall about 5 percent over the decade to 2035, roughly 500 fewer jobs, and the reason given is the rising cost of natural stone pushing builders towa...

Openings still come every year

Across all masonry specialties, about 18,400 openings a year are expected nationally, almost all of them from masons retiring or moving to other work rather than new positions.

Optional boosts

Historic restoration. Stone carving and lettering. Refractory work. Hardscape and landscape stonework.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Stonemasons
 Bureau of Labor Statistics: Brickmasons, Blockmasons and Stonemasons
 International Masonry Training and Education Foundation
 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/stonemason>



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