

Telecommunications Technician

Install and repair the cable and fiber that carry phone calls and internet. Paid from your first week, no degree needed.

TYPICAL PAY

\$74,330

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$45k to \$104k

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

Bucket trucks, poles, underground vaults, customer premises, centra...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grades 9 to 12
Take any electronics, shop or technology class your school offers. Physical fitness matters more here than grades.
- 2 Get hired as an installer** Weeks to months of applying
Cable and phone companies and their contractors hire at entry level and train. This is the most common way in.
- 3 Learn the trade on the job** 6 to 18 months
Ladder and pole safety, aerial lifts, copper, coaxial cable and then fiber. Classroom blocks mixed with ride-alongs.
- 4 Certify in fiber** Short courses, ongoing
Splicing and testing fiber optic cable is the skill that separates pay levels in this trade now.
- 5 Senior technician or lead** 3 to 6 years
Fault finding, network maintenance, training new hires, or moving into central office and network operations work.

Pros and cons

- + Good pay for a job that needs no degree and no debt
- + Paid from day one and trained on the clock
- + Union representation is common, which is rare now in a skilled job
- Heights, traffic and electricity make this genuinely dangerous work
- Outside in every kind of weather, all year
- On-call nights, weekends and storm restoration travel

Optional boosts

Fiber optic splicing and testing. SCTE (Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers) credentials. Network certifications. CDL (commercial driver's license).

Good to know

The pay is high for the entry requirement

The median for this job is \$74,330 a year and the usual requirement is a high school diploma plus on the job training. Very few careers pay that much without asking for a degree first.

Fiber is spliced by melting it

Joining two fiber optic strands is done with a fusion splicer, which aligns hairs of glass and welds them with an electric arc. A bad splice shows up as light loss on a test set, which is why testing is a certified...

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers (49-9052.00)
SCTE (Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers)
Apprenticeship.gov, the federal registered apprenticeship site
Communications Workers of America

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/telecommunications-technician>



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