

PLUMBING CAREERS IN ENGLAND

The plumbing industry has a range of opportunities for young people looking for a highly skilled, customer focused and energetic career. Here are some of the occupations within the plumbing industry:

Modern buildings require sanitation, heating, hot and cold water systems in addition to sheet lead weathering. A qualified plumber is responsible for the installation and maintenance of these systems.

PLUMBER

GAS FITTER

Skilled gas fitters use their knowledge to ensure that gas systems and appliances are installed, tested and maintained to a high standard.

Industrial and commercial plumbers concentrate on designing, installing and maintaining complex sanitation systems and providing hot and cold water services to large buildings such as offices, schools, hospitals and factories.

INDUSTRIAL/ COMMERCIAL PLUMBER

SHEET METAL WEATHERING

SPECIALIST

Specialist plumbers develop and install intricate weathering systems to protect buildings from rainwater. Generally this type of work is carried out on listed, historical and commercial buildings.

WHAT SORT OF PERSON DO YOU NEED TO BE?

- Are you good at working with your hands?
- Are you prepared to undertake a physically demanding job, working in a variety of environments, often on site, at heights and in all sorts of weather?
- Do you have full colour vision?*
- Are you presentable and of smart appearance?
- Are you able to work both on your own initiative as well as in a team?
- Are you able and willing to follow all safety instructions given by persons in authority?
- Are you a good communicator with the ability to take direction and advice from supervisors, managers and other people in positions of authority?

* For safety reasons, if you are colour blind or colour confused you may have to undergo specialist assessment to ascertain your suitability



WHERE DO I GO NEXT?

You can contact your local careers advisor and / or contact one of the following organisations that will be able to advise you on your next step to becoming a plumber:

- SummitSkills Careers Advice Line: 08000 688 336
- SummitSkills website: www.summitskills.org.uk
- JT Limited: www.jtlimited.co.uk or telephone 08000 852 308
- BEST: www.best-ltd.co.uk or telephone, 01902 497606
- Your local college
- Your local Connexions office: www.connexions.gov.uk
- Your Local Learning and Skills Council: www.lsc.gov.uk can also give you details of local training providers in your area

You can also start looking for a suitable apprenticeship by sending a letter with your CV to employers in your area.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

Your training will take between three and four years.

TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

For those aged between 16 and 19 years old an apprenticeship scheme is the best way to become a plumber. For those outside this age group, modern apprenticeship schemes may be available depending on certain entrance criteria. Please call the Careers Advice Line for specific details.

What does this involve?

- An apprenticeship is a work-based training programme that offers you paid employment while you learn.
- During your apprenticeship you will gain valuable work experience to develop all the practical and technical skills you will need to become a competent plumber while you will also work towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 MES Plumbing.
- In addition to training for specific jobs, apprentices also gain core skills and there is also the opportunity to progress to an advanced apprenticeship.
- As an advanced apprentice, you'll be fully employed by a committed employer in the industry and with an appropriate wage, aiming for an advanced craft or technical role as a qualified plumber.
- An advanced apprenticeship generally takes four years to complete and leads to an NVQ Level 3 in your chosen career area. NVQs are widely recognised by employers.
- In return you'll be expected to show commitment and attend the training centre to gain your qualifications.
- Your training will be structured so that you spend some of your time at a training centre completing your NVQ as well as the Key or Core Skills and Technical Certificates. The rest of your time will be on-the-job learning from skilled colleagues.
- Generally, a training provider will appoint a training officer who will monitor your progress, help and support you, your employer and the training centre staff. They will work out a training programme for you and make sure that all the training you receive is beneficial to you achieving your goal.
- Above all it is very important that both you and your employer make a commitment to complete the full course of training.

QUALIFICATION CHART

The chart shows you what you will be studying while on your apprenticeship programme. Your learning and training programme will depend on the occupation route chosen.

Programme	Occupation Route	Technical Cert.	Key Skills	Other Learning
Apprenticeship	NVQ Level 2 – MES Plumbing	Certificate in Basic Plumbing Studies	Communication Level 2	Employment Rights and Responsibilities (mandatory)
Advanced Apprenticeship	NVQ Level 3 – MES Plumbing	Certificate in Domestic Plumbing Studies	Application of Number Level 2	Water Regulations Assessment Unvented Hot Water Assessment ACS Gas Qualifications

Any reference to training providers in this documentation does not imply endorsement or approval by SummitSkills. Other suitable training providers may also be available in your area.