

BX Career Exploration

With the help of regional periodicals and input from BX members - experts working directly in the industry - information regarding salary, benefits, required education and information regarding the outlook for the career in Central Ohio has been compiled.

Skilled Trades Career Path

Carpenter

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, math (geometry), carpentry, mechanical drawing and drafting.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Blueprint reading, shop math, cabinet-making, wood shop, safety training and construction trades shop.
- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, apprenticeship training, the military, two-year college or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$12.08
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$25,120
- **Median Salary Range:** \$31,550 - \$55,340
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Carpenters usually begin as an apprentice and can become a journeyman, crew leader or superintendent. Each position requires more difficult, skilled work, greater job responsibility and leadership skills.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Physical labor is required, including lifting heavy loads, knowledge of building codes and blue print reading. Specialties include rough, finish, form, metal stud and acoustical ceilings carpentry.

Drywall Installer

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, basic math and carpentry.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Shop math, advanced carpentry, safety training, mechanical drawing and blueprint reading.
- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, apprenticeship training or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$11.96
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$24,880
- **Median Salary Range:** \$30,560 - \$51,690
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Drywall installers begin as helpers and as they gain more responsibility may become supervisors or crew leaders.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Installers apply drywall, which is a thin layer of gypsum sandwiched between two layers of heavy paper, to walls and ceilings. Workers usually specialize as either installers or finishers.

Electrician

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, physical science, physics and math (algebra).
- **Other Recommended Education:** Shop math, blueprint reading, electrical shop, safety training and power mechanics.
- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, apprenticeship training, on-the-job training, the military or two-year colleges.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$14.74
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$30,660
- **Median Salary Range:** \$38,020 - \$66,360
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Experienced electricians can take on more responsibility by becoming supervisors and crew managers.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Electricians work with wiring and other parts using their hands, often involving delicate and small objects in confined areas. They must be able to differentiate colors.

Excavator/Heavy Equipment Operator

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, math (geometry), drafting and mechanical drawing.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Surveying, physical geography, blueprint reading and safety training.
- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, the military or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$13.26
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$27,580
- **Median Salary Range:** \$33,410 - \$57,530
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Excavators, with experience, may advance to become supervisors and work on more complicated projects.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Excavators use heavy equipment to clear and level a building construction site, moving trees, shrubbery, dirt and/or existing buildings.

Glazier

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Math, mechanical drawing and shop class.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Construction trades shop, blueprint reading and safety training.
- **Training Options:** High school, apprenticeship training, vocational school or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$11.47
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$23,860
- **Median Salary Range:** \$30,790 - \$49,050
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Glaziers usually begin as helpers carrying glass. Advancements include pay increases and greater job responsibility, including supervisory positions.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Glaziers select, cut, install and remove all types of glass as well as plastics, marble and other materials. They work inside and outside, on many different kinds of structures.

Ironworker

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, math, mechanical drawing and shop class.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Blueprint reading, welding, safety training, metal and machine shop.
- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, apprenticeship training, on-the-job training, or the military.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$13.31
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$27,680
- **Median Salary Range:** \$34,480 - \$66,930
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Ironworkers can advance into a supervisory or crew leader position.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** They work with iron, steel, aluminum and bronze to build highways, bridges and office buildings. Workers specialize as either structural or reinforcing ironworkers.

Laborer

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, basic math and shop class.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Wood shop, carpentry and safety training.
- **Training Options:** High school, apprenticeship training, vocational school or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$9.46
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$19,670
- **Median Salary Range:** \$23,930 - \$41,720
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Many construction companies prefer to promote qualified laborers who can take on more responsibility, so the promotion to a skilled or supervisory position is highly likely.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Laborers provide much of the physical labor at building, highway and other construction jobsites. They clean and prepare sites, dig trenches and set braces to support excavations, to name a few responsibilities.

Landscape Contractor

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, advanced math, natural and earth sciences.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Blueprint reading, agronomy, horticulture, safety training and botany.
- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, on-the-job training or a bachelor's degree.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$8.44
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$17,550
- **Median Salary Range:** \$19,890 - \$30,320
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time, cellular phone and company truck.
- **Promotion Potential:** Landscapers, depending upon education and skill, can advance to grounds manager or other supervisory positions and owners.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Landscapers plant and maintain trees, hedges, flowers, etc. on properties to beautify the grounds and enhance property values. They usually follow plans drawn by a landscape architect.

Mason

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, math and shop class.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Construction trades shop, blueprint reading, safety training and shop math.
- **Training Options:** High school, apprenticeship training, vocational school, the military or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$13.93
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$28,970
- **Median Salary Range:** \$35,860 - \$62,810
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Masons usually begin as material helpers then advance to full-fledged craft workers or supervisors.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Masons build stone, brick and block fixtures, including exteriors and floors. They often work from a set of drawings and sometimes work with large and heavy pieces of stone.

Mechanical Contractor

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, math, science, mechanical drawing, applied physics, chemistry and computer courses.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Air conditioning and refrigeration mechanics, welding, blueprint reading, safety training and electronics.
- **Training Options:** High school, apprenticeship training, vocational school, the military, two-year technical degree or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$13.08
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$27,210
- **Median Salary Range:** \$34,170 - \$56,650
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Advancement usually takes the form of higher wages, and mechanical contractors may advance to supervisory positions or move into estimating.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Mechanical contractors are involved in the installation, repair and maintenance of heating, air conditioning and refrigeration systems. They work in many different buildings in all kinds of weather.

Painter

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, math and shop class.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Blueprint reading, shop math, paper hanging, painting and safety training.
- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, apprenticeship training or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$11.22
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$23,340
- **Median Salary Range:** \$28,040 - \$46,080
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.

- **Promotion Potential:** Painting trainees perform simple painting tasks, and with experience advance to paperhanging and paint mixing. Skilled painters may move into supervisory positions as they take on more responsibility.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** They apply paint, stain or other finishes to buildings and other structures. They choose the correct paint or finish for the surface to be covered, and sometimes remove the old finish before applying a new one.

Plumber

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, math (geometry), drafting, applied physics and chemistry.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Blueprint reading, welding, plumbing, hydraulics, heating, ventilation, safety training and air conditioning shop.
- **Training Options:** High school, apprenticeship training, vocational school, the military, two-year technical degree or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$14.23
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$29,590
- **Median Salary Range:** \$37,530 - \$67,150
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Plumbers may take on more responsibility or advance into supervisory positions.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Plumbers install, maintain and repair many different types of pipe systems for various uses.

Roofer

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, basic math and mechanical drawing.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Blueprint reading, shop math, safety training and construction trades shop.
- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, apprenticeship training or on-the-job training.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$11.10
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$23,090
- **Median Salary Range:** \$28,130 - \$47,040
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation and sick time.
- **Promotion Potential:** Roofers may advance to become a company supervisor or crew leader, or they could become an estimator.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Roofers work at many different heights to repair and install roofs of tar or asphalt, slate, fiberglass, tile, wood or other materials.

Surveyor

- **Suggested High School Courses:** Reading, math (geometry, algebra, trigonometry), drafting, mechanical drawing and computer courses.
- **Other Recommended Education:** Surveying, physical geography, advanced math, topographic drafting, mapping and safety training.

- **Training Options:** High school, vocational school, two or four-year degree, the military or on-the-job training. Can become a licensed surveyor, with a required four-year degree.
- **Average Starting Hourly Pay:** \$15.45
- **Average Starting Salary:** \$32,130
- **Median Salary Range:** \$42,010 - \$74,860
- **Paid Benefits:** Can include retirement, health and life insurance, paid vacation, sick time and company truck.
- **Promotion Potential:** Surveyors start as an apprentice and with experience advance to technicians, then senior survey technicians and licensed surveyors, with required four-year degree.
- **Tasks & Functions of the Job:** Surveyors measure distances, directions and angles between points and elevation of points, lines and contours on the earth's surface. They may work outdoors extensively.