



JOBS IN Construction

OUR LAND. OUR POSSIBILITIES.





JOBS IN Construction

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Introduction

When you choose a job in the construction industry, you contribute to the building of homes, offices, sports arenas, hospitals, and other facilities that shelter people. Jobs in the construction industry provide you with the satisfaction of seeing your work make an important contribution to the well-being of the community. Nunavut's arctic climate presents unique challenges for the construction sector that do not exist in southern Canada. For example, some communities and construction sites in Nunavut are far from suppliers. This means that building is generally left to experts who know what supplies are needed and when to get them shipped. Those working in the construction industry offer services that are essential to the safety and security of all Nunavummiut. According to the Nunavut Housing Corporation, there is a housing shortage in our territory. As a construction worker, you help provide an opportunity for all residents of Nunavut to have homes for a healthy, secure and independent lifestyle.



What is construction?

The construction industry's activities include the building of new structures, site preparation, as well as additions and other changes to existing ones. The industry also includes maintenance, repair, and improvements on these structures. Houses, apartments, factories, offices, schools, roads, and bridges are only some of the products of the construction industry.

I have heard that construction work is "contracted out" to other companies. What does a contractor do?

Construction is usually done or coordinated by general contractors, who specialize in one type of construction such as residential or commercial building. Although general contractors may do a portion of the work with their own crews, they often subcontract most of the work to heavy construction or specialty trade contractors. For example, a contractor will hire a specialty trade contractor such as a carpenter or electrician to do the work for them.

There are 4 steps of the construction process:

Planning: Surveyors, geologists, and inspectors assess the building site. They determine if it is safe to build and look for potential problems.

Site preparation: Involves cutting down trees and crushing rocks. If the site is in an undeveloped area without access to roads, power or water, construction workers will build a road and hook up water and power before they start building.

Construction: The actual building process requires various workers and many of them work in trades. For example, in a house, journeypersons, tradespeople and labourers lay the foundation, complete the framing and roofing, and install wiring and plumbing.

Finishing: Once the basic structure is complete, finishers prepare it for its use. This is technical work that requires finishers to do small tasks with their hands. For example, in a house, finishing work includes drywalling, paneling, flooring, painting and decorating, and installing windows, doors and staircases.

Will there be jobs in construction?

Because the construction industry provides essential services, there will always be a demand for skilled construction workers in Nunavut. When the economy is strong, there is more construction work available. For example, when other industries grow (such as the mining industry), this will lead to more construction projects. However, weaker economies slow down the amount of construction work because other industries are not starting new projects.

What jobs will there be in construction?

There are many types of jobs in the construction industry and require different levels of education and training. It is important to remember that many skills learned in the construction industry are transferable to other occupations. The skills you learn will last you a lifetime and open doors to other opportunities.



Entry-level jobs

Requires little or no previous experience but you should be willing to complete on-the-job training if needed.

| Job | Description |
|--------------------|---|
| Labourer | Puts up and takes down scaffolding; prepares materials, cleans worksite, and assists in demolishing buildings |
| Carpenter's Helper | Assists certified tradesperson in construction activities |
| Material Handler | Moves, loads, and unloads material used at the construction site. |
| Truck Driver | Delivers supplies and equipment |
| Surveyor's Helper | Assists in land surveying by holding and moving stakes and rods |

Skilled jobs

Requires some previous experience and training. You should be willing to complete on-the-job training if needed.

| Job | Description |
|-------------------|--|
| Bricklayer | Lays bricks, blocks and stones in walls and other structures |
| Drywall Finisher | Installs and finishes drywall sheets, plaster and ceiling systems |
| Concrete Finisher | Pours, smooths, and finishes concrete and restores, repairs and replaces finished concrete |
| Tilesetter | Covers walls, floors and ceilings with ceramic, marble and quarry tiles |

Apprenticeship trades

These jobs require that you be a journeyperson, tradesperson, or an apprentice. (See page 13 for more information about apprenticeship trades training.)

| Job | Description |
|----------------------------|---|
| Carpenter | Constructs, maintains and repairs buildings; some specialize in framing or finishing |
| Cabinetmaker | Constructs and repairs wooden cabinets, fixtures, furniture, windows and doors, etc. |
| Communications Electrician | Installs, repairs and maintains telecommunication systems |
| Electrician | Installs, repairs and maintains electrical systems |
| Floorcovering Installer | Installs carpet, wood, linoleum, ceramic and vinyl floor surfaces |
| Gasfitter | Installs, inspects, repairs and maintains gas lines and equipment |
| Glazier | Cuts and installs glass materials in buildings |
| Heavy Equipment Operator | Operates construction equipment |
| Housing Maintainer | Maintains and repairs residences |
| Insulator | Applies insulation materials to plumbing, heating and cooling systems, walls, floors and ceilings |
| Oil Burner Mechanic | Installs, services and repairs oil burning systems |
| Painter/ Decorator | Applies paint, wallpaper and other finishes |
| Roofer | Installs, repairs and replaces roofs and roof coverings |
| Sheet Metal Worker | Makes, installs and repairs sheet metal products for heating and ventilation |
| Steamfitter/ Pipefitter | Installs and maintains piping systems for water, steam and fuel |
| Welder | Joins or separates seams in metal |
| Plumber | Installs, repairs and maintains pipes, fixtures and appliances for water and sanitation |



Administrative jobs

You should have a high school diploma and relevant training or experience; or significant experience working in similar office positions.

| Job | Description |
|--------------------------|---|
| Administrative Assistant | Creates documents and manages information |
| Clerk | Organizes the office; types and files documents |
| Materials Clerk | Takes inventories and places orders for materials, equipment and stock |
| Accounts Clerk | Prepares and processes bills, invoices, accounts payable and receivable and budgets |

Technical jobs

You need a technical college diploma, which often takes one to two years to complete.

| Job | Description |
|---------------------|---|
| Home Inspector | Inspects homes for condition of roofs, structure, insulation, etc. |
| Planning Technician | Does project planning, estimating, measuring and scheduling of work |

Semi-professional jobs

Usually requires a college diploma, although experience and training is acceptable to some employers.

| Job | Description |
|---------------------------|---|
| Contractor/ Supervisor | Supervises, coordinates and schedules activities of workers |
| Project Manager | Manages construction project from start to finish according to schedule, specifications, and budget |
| Health and Safety Officer | Inspects buildings and work site with regards to sanitation, pollution, hazardous goods and safety |
| Building Inspector | Reviews permit applications and blueprints to ensure the job meets national safety standards |

Professional jobs

Often requires a university degree.

| Job | Description |
|-----------------|--|
| Architect | Designs buildings or structures, prepares cost estimates and material specifications |
| Civil Engineer | Designs, evaluates and manages larger scale projects |
| Land Surveyor | Directs and conducts legal surveys to set property boundaries |
| Project Manager | Plans, organizes, directs and controls all activities of the company |

Job contracting to the construction industry

The entire building process from start to finish involves people who are not directly employed by the construction industry. If the job is too big for one company to handle, they will contract out to other companies.

Construction companies advertise “tenders”, which is an offer to do work or supply goods at a fixed price. The tender describes the contract and requests that interested companies submit a bid to provide a service. Tenders are usually advertised in newspapers or on company websites. Other companies will submit a bid to provide the service. The general contractor then reviews the bids and awards the contract to the company that offers the most appropriate bid.

Some examples of jobs and services related to the construction industry include:

- Supplying construction materials
- Supplying food to workers
- Surveying the construction site
- Making special clothes or equipment for workers
- Renting equipment to the construction company
- Providing communication services for remote locations

Working conditions

Workers in the construction industry must be in good physical health as you may be required to lift and carry heavy objects, as well as operate large equipment and power tools.

Hours: Most employees in this industry work full time, and may work over 40 hours a week depending on your work load. Construction workers can be required to work evenings, weekends, and holidays if required. On construction projects which are far from town, the crew often works 12 hours a day and live on-site in camps.

Environment: Because of Nunavut’s arctic climate, construction workers must be prepared for wind and snow, which can impact hours worked. Exposure to weather is common because much of the work is done outside or in partially enclosed structures.

Safety: Construction workers often work with potentially dangerous tools and equipment. They are more prone to injuries than are workers in other jobs. However, workers' safety is very important. Take advantage of safety training and courses when they are offered.

Wages: Wages are very competitive.

For more information about jobs in demand, go online to www.jobfutures.org/ and click on "Nunavut" on the screen. Check out Nunavut Job Bank to find out what career opportunities are available. You can also try talking to someone who is in the construction business.

Where to get training

Nunavut Arctic College

Nunavut Arctic College offers training courses for work in construction.

Relevant courses include:

- Carpentry (Pre-Employment) and Apprenticeship Carpentry
- Trades: Introductory Programs
- Management Studies
- Office Administration
- Housing Maintainer Apprenticeship Program

These courses will provide you with an introduction to the construction industry. Many jobs will require additional schooling or on-the-job training.

Southern colleges

Courses that might interest you include:

- Construction Technology
- Engineering Technology
- Resource Management



University programs

Professional jobs in the construction industry require a university degree. There are many universities across Canada that offers fields of study such as:

- Engineering
- Architecture
- Geology
- Geography
- Urban and Regional Planning

Universities also offer programs that can lead to employment in the construction industry, but are on the administrative side. Some of these include:

- Human Resources
- Business Management
- Accounting

Where can I find more information about courses or degrees that can lead to employment in construction?

Call Nunavut Arctic College. There are three campus locations in Nunavut: Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay. Also, there are 24 Community Learning Centres across Nunavut. You can also visit www.nac.nu.ca to find out more about program offerings and more.

For southern college and university information, go to www.cicic.ca/2/home.canada. You will find a directory listing all of the colleges and universities in Canada.

Check with your regional **Service Canada Centre** for college information in the south, or look on the Internet for online course offerings.

Contact someone who works in the construction industry to find out what it's like on a day-to-day basis.

Apprenticeship training

In 2006, the Nunavut Housing Corporation developed a strategy for construction-related jobs in Nunavut where local workers get the opportunity to become apprentices while building homes for Nunavummiut. This program directly benefits the community and might be of interest to you.

Apprenticeship is a high-quality, post-secondary option that gives you the opportunity to combine on-the-job and in-school technical training. Once completed, you will have the skills to become a certified tradesperson. Many of the jobs in the construction industry and its service industries require certification in a trade. With certification, you can make more money, work independently and find jobs much more easily. It is important to pick a trade that suits you based on your interests and skills.

What steps do I take to start an apprenticeship program?

There is not a set level of education needed to take an apprenticeship but many employers want apprentices with high school diplomas.

You need to pass the Trades Entrance Exam.

Find an employer to hire you, or take a pre-employment trades program through Nunavut Arctic College.

Register as an apprentice and sign a work agreement with your employer.

Contact your local Career Centre to get more information about apprenticeship or occupational certification or visit www.apprenticeshiptrades.ca to learn more about becoming an apprentice.

Financial assistance

The Nunavut Student Financial Assistance Program is available if you require financial help during your studies. To see if you qualify, contact:

FANS (Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students)
Nunavut Department of Education
PO Box 390
Arviat, NU X0C 0E0

Telephone: (867) 857-3085
Toll-free: 1-877-860-0680
Email: fans@gov.nu.ca





How to apply for a job in construction

To apply for a job, send your résumé and a cover letter to the Government of Nunavut and to all of the companies where you would like to work. Your regional Career Centre can help you write your résumé and cover letter.

Remember! Some companies post electronic applications online. If you want to be considered for any position, make sure you fill out the application if it is posted on the company's Internet web page.

If you are interested in a career in the construction industry, try reading different job postings to get an idea of some of the job skills and responsibilities required for certain positions. Look for advertised construction jobs in the newspapers or on the company websites.

The following websites are a good start for your job search:

- www.nunatsiaqnews.com and click on "Jobs" under the Current Ads section
- www.gov.nu.ca and click on "Employment" for jobs with the Government of Nunavut

