

## Construction and Extraction

### Helpers-Carpenters

**Help-Carpenters** assist experienced carpenters by performing duties of lesser skill. Duties include using, supplying, or holding materials or tools, and cleaning work area and equipment. They also position and hold timbers, lumber, and paneling in place for fastening or cutting, erect scaffolding, shoring, and braces, select tools and transport equipment to the work site, fasten timbers or lumber, hold plumb bobs, sighting rods, or other equipment that is used for establishing a reference point, align, straighten, plumb, and square forms for installation, cut timbers, lumbar, or paneling to specified dimensions, drill holes in timbers or lumbar, smooth and sand surfaces and edges, and perform tie spacing layout and measure, mark, drill or cut. The carpenter helper position is often the transitional job while apprenticing, on the way to becoming a carpenter.

Carpentry is physically demanding and often requires long periods of standing, climbing, bending, and kneeling. They commonly use loud machinery to cut wood and other materials. Upper body strength is needed to lift heavy materials and precision is essential when measuring and sawing wood. Carpenters and their helpers are at risk of injury when working with sharp tools, power equipment, and materials, and there is a high incidence of slipping and falling. They may have to work in inclement weather if the supervising carpenter works outdoors. Most carpenters work 40 hour weeks so their helpers may work similar hours.

#### Education/Training:

##### *How to Obtain:*

Generally a High School Diploma is not required. Many individuals learn on the job as helpers or laborers. Another option is to join an apprenticeship program, which typically lasts between 3 and 4 years. Apprenticeships can usually be located through local unions, contractors, or professional associations. In addition to on-the-job training, as helpers or laborers, apprenticeships will require classroom instruction, in areas such as:

- Safety
- First aid
- Blueprint reading
- Freehand sketching
- Basic mathematics
- Elementary structural design

- And various carpentry techniques

Training or apprenticeship opportunities are available through several organizations. The Residential Construction Academy (RCA) is a Home Builders Institute (HBI) initiative that aims to bridge the critical skills gap that exists within the residential construction industry. Another option is The United Brotherhood of Carpenters which provides information about finding training centers in localities. They can assist people interested in locating apprenticeships, or pursuing specialized certification.

*More Information on Apprenticeships:*

- Home Builders Institute:  
<http://www.hbi.org/page.cfm?pageID=69>
- National Contractors.Com:  
<http://www.nationalcontractors.com/carpenter/>
- United Brotherhood of Carpenters:  
[http://www.carpenters.org/CraftsAndSkills/Training\\_cs.aspx](http://www.carpenters.org/CraftsAndSkills/Training_cs.aspx)
- National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER):  
<http://www.nccer.org/default.aspx>
- National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI):  
<http://www.nari.org/certify/who/index.asp>

*Average Costs:*

Apprenticeship programs generally do not charge the apprentice for classroom instruction, provided the apprentice maintains employment with a contractor affiliated with the apprenticeship program, throughout the apprenticeship period of 3 to 4 years.