

**CURRICULUM RESOURCE**

Explore the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen Website

**OALCF ALIGNMENT**

Competency	Task Group	Level
Competency A - Find and Use Information	A1. Read continuous text	2
Competency A -Find and Use Information	A3. Extract information from films, broadcasts and presentations	2
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B2. Write continuous text	2
Competency D - Use Digital Technology	N/A	2
Competency E - Manage Learning	N/A	2

**Goal Paths (check all that apply)**

- Employment
- Apprenticeship
- Secondary School Credit
- Postsecondary
- Independence

**Embedded Skills for Success (check all that apply)**

- Adaptability
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity and innovation
- Digital
- Numeracy
- Problem Solving
- Reading
- Writing

**NOTES:** This resource introduces the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website to learners interested in the construction trades. It provides an overview of the website and opportunities to learn some of the benefits of working in the trades. Learners will explore one or more specific skilled trades, find out about information sessions hosted by OBCT, and learn about programs that help women secure experience, training, and knowledge within the skilled trades.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Community Literacy of Ontario

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## Introduction



Construction is often thought of as a career for men – but that’s not true. The Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) committee includes hundreds of women working together to support the role of women in construction. They want women to feel welcome, motivated, and excited for a career in construction.

There are lots of benefits for women considering a career in the skilled trades, including:

- financial security
- independence
- job stability
- benefits and pension
- room for career growth

If you are a woman considering a career in construction, you could benefit from all of these things! The Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen committee wants to help you earn them. They offer women an opportunity to explore the trades, a mentorship program, training and events, and more.

In this resource, we will explore the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen website and learn how it can help you learn more about and prepare for a career in the skilled trades.

If you have access to a computer or tablet and internet service, you can follow along! Just open a browser and go to

<https://www.obctradeswomen.com/>



## The Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) Website

When you get to the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website, you will see a menu across the top of the page. It has six menu items you can click to visit different pages on the website.

**About** – This is where you can learn about the history of the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen Committee, read their blog, and find articles about women in the skilled trades.

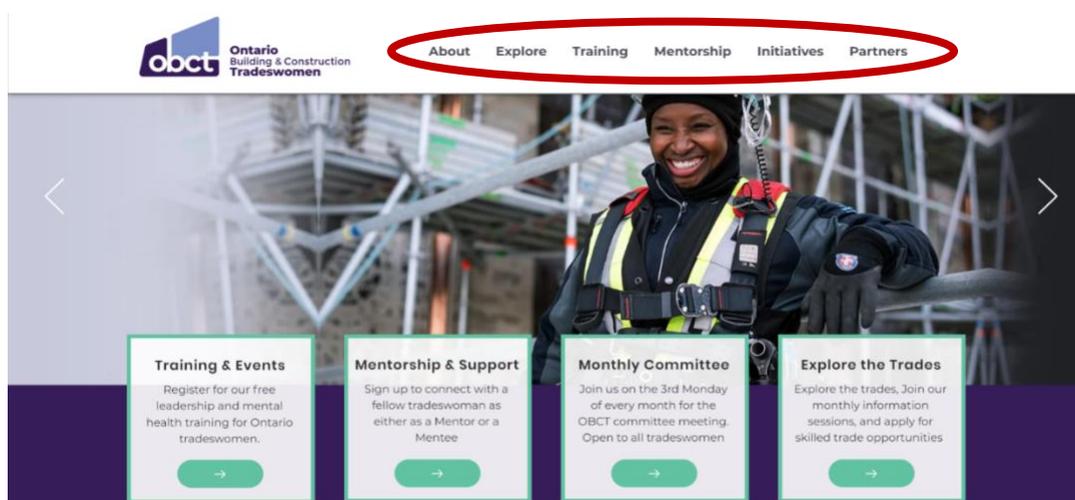
**Explore** – This is where you can learn about more than 40 different skilled trades offering opportunities for women, discover programs and opportunities in the trades, and register for information sessions to learn more about your future career.

**Training** – This is where you can learn about training, events, and workshops for women working in the construction trades.

**Mentorship** – This is where you can find a mentor and learn what's involved in working in the trades from someone with more experience.

**Initiatives** – This is where you can learn about different projects and initiatives led by the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen.

**Partners** – This is where you can learn about and connect to organizations that partner with or support the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen.



You can also reach some of these same pages using the buttons in the middle of the screen. Which one of the menu items do you think each of these buttons will take you to? Circle your choices below.

**Training & Events**

Register for our free leadership and mental health training for Ontario tradeswomen.

→

About

Explore

Training

Mentorship

Initiatives

Partners

**Mentorship & Support**

Sign up to connect with a fellow tradeswoman as either as a Mentor or a Mentee

→

About

Explore

Training

Mentorship

Initiatives

Partners

**Explore the Trades**

Explore the trades, Join our monthly information sessions, and apply for skilled trade opportunities

→

About

Explore

Training

Mentorship

Initiatives

Partners

Now click each link to see if you are right!

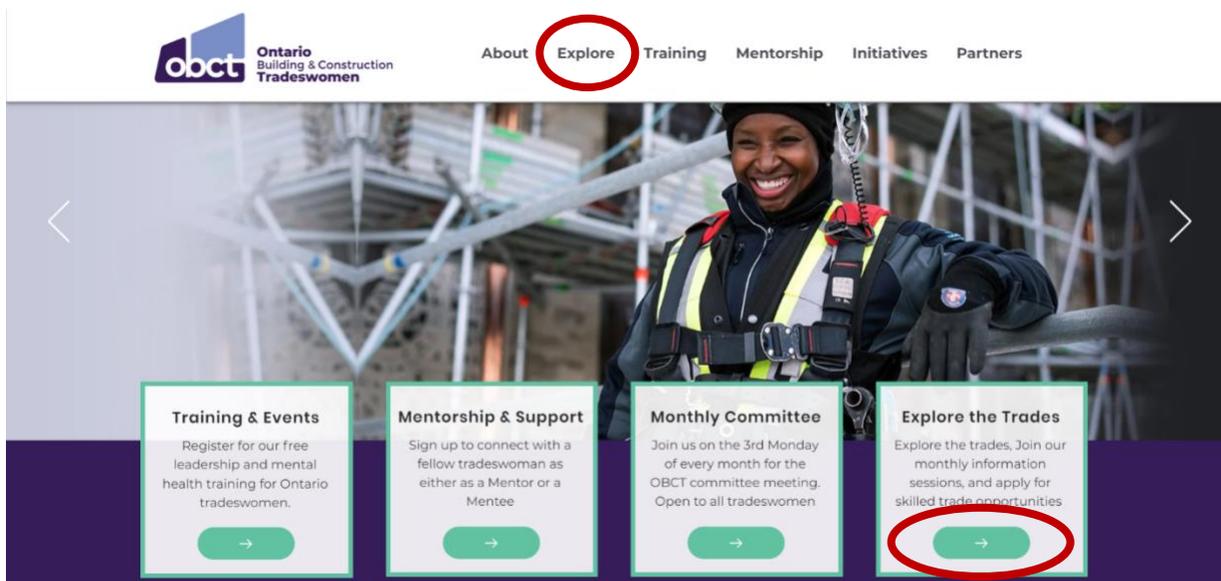
## Exploring the Trades

If you are just starting to look at a career in construction, you may not know what kinds of jobs might be available to you. That’s okay! There are many skilled construction trades, and the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website can help you explore them.

If you already know the kind of work you want to do, that’s great! Write the construction trade(s) or kinds of jobs you are interested in below. Then you can see whether those specific jobs are included on the OBCT website.

I am interested in these construction trades or kinds of jobs:

To explore the trades, we will click the word “Explore” in the menu across the top of the page or click on the arrow in the box that says, “Explore the Trades.”



The Explore section of the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website has four buttons across the top. You begin in the section called **The Skilled Trades** which has information about more than 40 different skilled trades offering opportunities for women.

We will look more closely at this section in a moment, but first, let's look at what you can learn by clicking the other buttons at the top of the page.



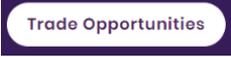
You can find a list of skilled trades **information sessions** that the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) host on the first Monday of every month. If you register for one of these sessions, you can talk directly to working tradeswomen about their experience working in the skilled trades. It is a great opportunity to connect with other women and get advice on how to start your skilled trades career.

**Task:** Click the  button and look at the sessions being offered. Note: If the dates you see are in the past, you can click the “RSVP here” link to find upcoming dates.

**Question:** Would you like to attend an information session? If so, what interests you about the session?

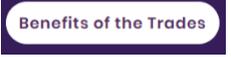


You can find links to organizations that offer **trade opportunities** for women to get experience and training in the skilled trades. These opportunities include pre-apprenticeship programs that introduce the work done in different trades. Many offer work experience as a general labourer so you can try the trade to see if it's a good fit for you.

**Task:** Click the  button and read the descriptions of some of the programs included.

**Question:** Do any of them interest you? If so, which one(s)?

You can find information about the different **benefits of the trades** for anyone thinking about a career in the trades, looking to change jobs, or already working in the trades.

**Task:** Click the  button and read about some of the things that are great about working in the skilled trades.

**Question:** Which of these benefits is most important to you?



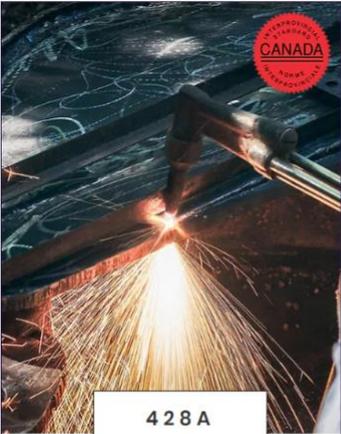
Now let's look at what you can learn about different trades on the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website.

Begin by clicking [The Skilled Trades](#) at the top of the page.

You will see boxes with information about many different trades, including Boilermaker, Brick and Stone Mason, and Cabinetmaker.

## Explore the Skilled Trades

The Skilled Trades
Information Sessions
Trade Opportunities
Benefits of the Trades



428 A

**Boilermaker**  
Construction Boilermaker

Learn more >



401 A

**Brick & Stone Mason**  
Brick and Stone Mason

Learn more >



438 A

**Cabinetmaker**  
Cabinetmaker

Learn more >

Take a moment to scroll through the different trades on this page. Are the construction trade(s) you are interested in included here?

Yes       No

If not, you may find a similar trade or a new opportunity you hadn't thought of before!

In this resource, we will look at one of the electrical trades to see what you can learn about the trade on the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website. When we are done, you will look at another trade on your own.

Scroll down until you find the box for Electrician (Construction and Maintenance).



In the upper right corner of the box, you will see a red circle with the words “Interprovincial Standard Canada” in it. This is a symbol identifying a **Red Seal** trade. If you complete your training and pass a Red Seal exam in one of these trades, you will be qualified to work in any province in Canada.

You will see a code under the photograph that reads 309A. This is a **trade code**. There is a different code for every apprenticeship trade in Ontario.

The trade code can help you identify the difference between similar trades. For example, if you look at the box for Electrician (Industrial) you will see it has a different code.

**Question:** What is the trade code for an Industrial Electrician?

To learn more about Construction and Maintenance Electricians, click [Learn more >](#)



At the top of the Electrician (Construction and Maintenance) page, you will once again see the trade code and the Red Seal.

## Compulsory and Non-Compulsory Trades

You will also see the word **Compulsory**. Let's talk about what "compulsory" means in the skilled trades.

There are two categories of trades in Ontario:

1. **Compulsory** refers to skilled trades that you can only train for through an apprenticeship.
2. **Non-compulsory** refers to skilled trades that you can train for through an apprenticeship, but you can also train for by going to a trade school or taking a program at an Ontario college or other training provider.

Here are the steps to becoming an apprentice in a compulsory or non-compulsory trade.



The first step to becoming an apprentice in any trade is to find someone who is fully certified in that trade (called a journeyperson) who wants to hire you.



Once they agree to hire you as their apprentice, you would sign a contract with your employer and with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development that officially makes you an apprentice.



You would then begin working, and your employer would teach you the skills you need to do the work that they do. While you are working for them, you will get paid – that is a big advantage of apprenticeship!



You would also attend in-school training. By going to school and passing tests, you show that you are ready to move up to the next level of your apprenticeship. You might attend full-time training classes for eight to twelve weeks about once a year. Sometimes training is offered one day a week for most of the year.



The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development would send you an email letting you know when and where your in-school training is available. It will usually be at a trade union or an Ontario college. It might be in a location near where you live, but it might also be out of town. It's important to know that you may need to travel for your in-school training.



There is a fee for your in-school apprenticeship training. The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development pays for a lot of it, however. Apprentices usually only pay tuition of a few hundred dollars for each level of their in-school training.



During your in-school training, you will be away from work so you will not usually get paid by your employer. You may qualify for Employment Insurance payments when you are attending in-school training. When you pass your in-school training and tests, however, you will return to work and get a raise in pay for having moved up a level in your apprenticeship!

As we said earlier, you can apprentice in a non-compulsory skilled trade as well. If you choose to attend a full-time Ontario college certificate or diploma program, or register for trade school instead, you may find you spend most of your time attending classes and studying. You will have less time to work and will pay full price for the tuition and books required for your classes. This can be challenging for some people who want to work in the skilled trades.

There is a step you can take if you are interested in a non-compulsory trade that can help you decide whether to work towards an apprenticeship or to consider training at a trade school or in an Ontario college program.

**Talk to employers in the non-compulsory trade you are interested in.** Ask them about the training programs at trade schools and colleges and whether they would recommend them or not. You may just find an employer who wants to sponsor you as an apprentice in the process!

**EMPLOYMENT  
ONTARIO**

If you would like help meeting an employer in the skilled trades, Employment Services can help. Visit <https://feat.findhelp.ca/> to find an Employment Services centre near you.

## Check Your Learning

Review the information you just learned about compulsory and non-compulsory trades to answer the questions below.

1. What kinds of trades do you have to train for through an apprenticeship?

- Compulsory       Non-compulsory

2. What kinds of trades can you train for through an apprenticeship, by going to a trade school, or attending a program at an Ontario college?

- Compulsory       Non-compulsory

3. What is the first step to becoming an apprentice in any trade?



4. True or False: While you are working as an apprentice, you will get paid.



- True       False



5. True or False: You may need to travel out of town to attend your in-school apprenticeship training.

True

False



6. Fill in the missing words from this sentence: When you pass your in-school training and tests, you will return to work and get a \_\_\_\_\_ for having moved up a level in your apprenticeship!

7. What step can you take if you are interested in a non-compulsory trade and need help deciding whether to work towards an apprenticeship or consider training at a trade school or in an Ontario college program?

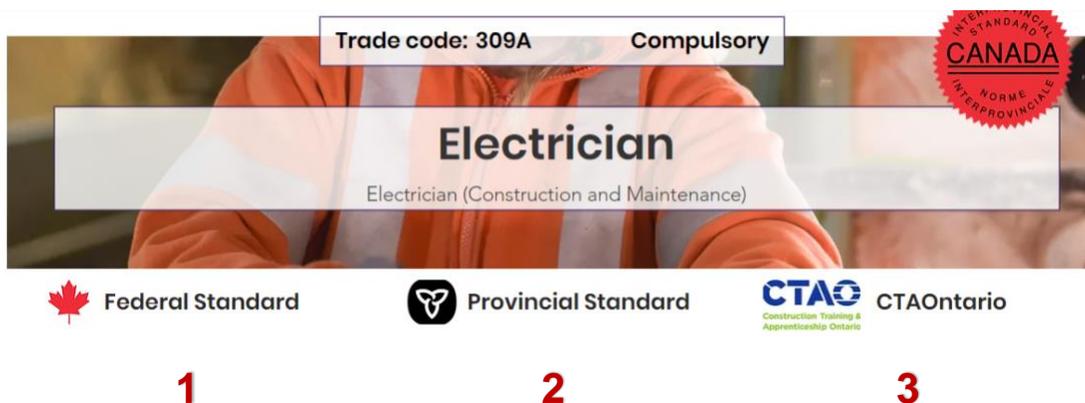
→ Review your answers with your teacher or tutor!



## Resources to Learn About the Electrical Trade

Now that you understand the difference between a compulsory and non-compulsory trade, let's continue looking at Construction and Maintenance Electrician on the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website.

Below the picture, you will find three links.



**1.** To learn more about the Red Seal and what earning one can do for your career, you can click **“Federal Standard.”** This will open the Red Seal website, where you can learn more about this certification. You can also read reports about the job market in your chosen trade and see practice test questions to help you prepare for the Red Seal exam.

**2.** To learn more about what you can expect as an apprentice in this skilled trade, you can click **“Provincial Standard.”** This will open the Skilled Trades Ontario website, where you can read an overview of this trade. You can also download documents called training standards, which will tell you every skill you will learn in both your on-the-job and in-school training.

**3.** To learn more about the responsibilities, skills, entrance requirements, and wage rates for this trade, you can click **“CATOntario.”** This will open the Construction Training & Apprenticeship Ontario website. Here you can read more about the trade and look at photos and videos from real work sites.

Below these links, you will find information about the trade. Read the information about Construction and Maintenance Electricians below or on your own device.

Trade code: 309A      Compulsory



**Electrician**  
Electrician (Construction and Maintenance)



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Federal Standard



Provincial Standard



CTAOntario  
Construction Training & Apprenticeship Ontario

An **Electrician – Construction and Maintenance** plans, assembles, connects, installs, repairs, inspects, tests, verifies, and maintains electrical systems in various settings (i.e. residential, commercial, institutional, industrial). Electrical systems include heating, lighting, power, communication, control, security systems and renewable energy and energy storage systems.

An Electrician – Construction and Maintenance also measures, cuts, threads, bends, assembles and installs conduits, electrical conductor enclosures and supports.

- lays out, assembles, installs, repairs, maintains, connects and/or tests electrical systems
- plans installations from blueprints, sketches and specifications, and installs all electrical and electronic devices
- systematically diagnoses faults in electrical and electronic components, as required
- measures, cuts, threads, bends, assembles and installs conduits and other electrical conductor raceways
- splices and terminates electrical conductors
- tests electrical and electronic equipment to ensure that they are functioning properly

**Question:** Electricians use their skills to measure, cut, thread, bend, assemble, and install things. Have you used any of those skills in the past?

- Yes       No

If you said yes, which skills have you used? \_\_\_\_\_

**Question:** Electricians read blueprints, sketches, and specifications so they know how to install electrical devices. Have you read and interpreted instructions before?

- Yes       No

## Skills for Success



Skills like reading, writing, math, problem solving, and using digital devices are very important in the skilled trades. They are all Skills for Success. These are the skills that everyone needs at work, for learning, and in life. There are nine Skills for Success, and you will use all of them in the construction trades. They are:

**Adaptability** – This means being able to change the way you think about the way you do things when you need to. It also means staying calm when things don’t go the way you expected them to.

In the construction trades, you will use adaptability skills when:

- you schedule changes unexpectedly
- the supplies you need for a job aren’t available
- you need to switch quickly from one task to another



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you were adaptable. Ask yourself whether it was easy to adapt, or difficult.

**Collaboration** – This means being able to work well with other people. It means sharing job duties, coming up with ideas together, and working together toward a common goal.

In the construction trades, you will use collaboration skills when:

- working with a team to complete a project
- deciding how to solve a problem as a group
- splitting tasks between yourselves and others



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you had to work in a team. Ask yourself whether you like working in a group or if you prefer to work alone.

**Communication** – This means speaking clearly, respectfully, and in a way other people can understand. It also means listening to other people and paying attention to both your and other people’s body language.



In the construction trades, you will use communication skills when:

- providing information to teammates
- listening to instructions from your employer
- getting feedback on your work performance



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you had to be a good communicator. Ask yourself whether you found it easy or difficult to talk to others and listen to what they had to say.

**Creativity and innovation** – This means being able to think of new things or do things in new ways. It also means being able to picture ways to improve your work or imagining things that don’t exist.

In the construction trades, you will use creativity and innovation skills when:

- learning how to use new tools and supplies
- thinking of new ways to complete work
- designing projects and work plans



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you had to think in a new or different way. Ask yourself what that felt like and whether you liked it or preferred thinking the old way.

**Digital** – This means being able to use computers, tablets, smartphones, and other digital devices comfortably. It also means being safe in an online environment and being able to tell what is real and what is fake on the internet.

In the construction trades, you will use your digital skills when:

- recording information in spreadsheets and electronic documents
- using electronic scanning, ordering, measuring, or recording devices
- communicating by email and placing online orders for supplies



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you needed to use your digital skills. Ask yourself whether you were comfortable using digital technology or if you found it challenging.

**Numeracy** – This means understanding and using numbers, and doing math activities like adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing. It also means being comfortable with fractions and decimals, calculating percentages, converting one kind of measurement to another, and using formulas to solve equations.

In the construction trades, you will use numeracy skills when:

- measuring angles in a building project
- calculating the cost or amount of supplies you need for a job
- converting measurements in blueprints or drawings to real-life scale



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you needed to use numeracy skills. Ask yourself whether numbers and math are challenging for you or easy.

**Problem solving** – This means being able to understand what is causing a problem and brainstorming possible solutions. It also means testing those solutions and recognizing whether they worked or not.



In the construction trades, you will use problem-solving skills when:

- dealing with conflicts between staff members
- fixing errors that happen at work
- completing a job when the work site or weather isn't what you expected



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you had to solve a problem. Ask yourself whether you struggled to come up with more than one possible solution or if you could think of many.

**Reading** – This means recognizing and understanding letters and how they come together to form words. It also means recognizing and being able to follow written instructions, symbols, and graphics.

In the construction trades, you will use reading skills when:

- looking at project plans
- reviewing contracts
- interpreting instructions on how to complete specific jobs



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you needed to read. Ask yourself whether you found what you read easy to understand or if you needed help to understand what you were reading.

**Writing** – This means being able to put words together on paper or in a digital format so others understand what you are saying. It also means knowing how to spell, how to put a sentence together, and how to write in different ways as needed.

In the construction trades, you will use writing skills when:

- filling out safety forms
- communicating with clients or coworkers
- writing reports about completed work



**Take a moment to reflect:** Think about a time when you needed to write information or instructions. Ask yourself whether you were comfortable finding the right words to use and whether you used full sentences, proper grammar, and good spelling.

Now that you have reflected on your Skills for Success, are there any you would like to improve? If so, write them below. Feel free to share these with your teacher or tutor so they can support you in growing your skills!

**Ontario** 

Did you know that there are free programs across Ontario that can help you build your Skills for Success? If you aren't already involved in an adult upgrading program, you can find one near you by visiting:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/adult-learning-literacy-and-basic-skills#section-4>

## Watch a Video About the Electrical Trade

Now you know what a Construction and Maintenance Electrician does, and you understand the Skills for Success they use on the job. Next, we will watch a 5-minute video introducing you to Jessie Sousa, an Ontario tradeswoman working as an Electrician. You'll see what her work looks like, learn about different wages, the benefits of joining a trade union, and why she finds this work rewarding.

You can begin the video by clicking the image on the Construction and Maintenance Electrician page of the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website (shown below). You can also watch this video on YouTube using this link: [https://youtu.be/rPs1KHVFRkk?si=mZ7ws\\_7-k7frBSqb](https://youtu.be/rPs1KHVFRkk?si=mZ7ws_7-k7frBSqb)



**Question:** What is one thing you learned by watching this video?

**Question:** Did watching this video make you interested in being an Electrician?

Yes       No      Why or why not?

**Activity: Learn about a Construction Trade of Your Choice**

Now it is time for you to pick a construction trade on the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website to learn about.

Click Explore in the menu at the top of the page. Then, choose from one of the over 40 different trades on the page. If the construction trade(s) you are interested in is on the OBCT site, choose it! Read about the trade and watch the video. Record what you learned below.

1. What trade did you choose? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the trade code for this type of job? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Is it a Red Seal trade?     Yes             No

4. Is it a compulsory or non-compulsory trade?     Compulsory         Non-compulsory

5. Write down three things that someone in this trade does.

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is the name of the tradeswoman featured in the video? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is one thing you learned by watching this video?

## Conclusion

As a woman considering a career in the construction trades, the Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen (OBCT) website is a great resource! Now you know:

- some of the benefits of working in the skilled trades
- that you can attend an information session to learn more about women in the skilled trades
- what programs may be available to help women get experience in the trades
- how to explore different construction trades
- what a trade code is
- what a Red Seal means
- the difference between compulsory and non-compulsory trades
- where to find the training standards for different construction trades
- where to watch videos featuring tradeswomen at work

**Question:** Now that you have this information, what will you do next?

Be sure to share your answers with your teacher or tutor so they can help you with your next steps toward your career as a construction tradeswoman!