

CURRICULUM RESOURCE

Build Your Skills: Welcome to the Explorer Hub!

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	1
Competency E - Manage Learning	N/A	1

Goal Paths (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship | <input type="checkbox"/> Independence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary School Credit | |

Embedded Skills for Success (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Numeracy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity and innovation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital | |

NOTES: This is the third in a series of resources focused on the Construction Training and Apprenticeship Ontario (CTAO) online hub. It will encourage prospective apprentices to use the Explorer section of the Build Your Skills learning hub to learn more about construction trades and the skills they need to work in those trades. **Note:** Learners should complete the resource “Introducing the Build Your Skills Platform” prior to beginning this resource so they have a username and password for the Build Your Skills site.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The opinions expressed in this report are the opinions of Community Literacy of Ontario and do not necessarily reflect those of our funders.



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Introduction

If you are thinking about a career in construction, you are in luck! There are lots of different construction trades and many jobs available.



Look at what CBC News had to say about jobs in the construction sector in July 2023:

“There are tens of thousands of unfilled construction jobs across the country — including up to 20,000 open positions in Ontario alone — that the Labourers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) says it could fill, if only it could find the workers.

The open positions in such sectors as residential and high-rise construction include labourers, bricklayers, cement finishers and people doing trim and tile work.”

Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/canada-construction-labour-challenges-housing-1.6906587>

This article mentions different construction jobs, including **general labourers**, **bricklayers**, **cement finishers**, and **tile setters**.

Are you familiar with any of those jobs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you said yes, which of these jobs have you heard of?

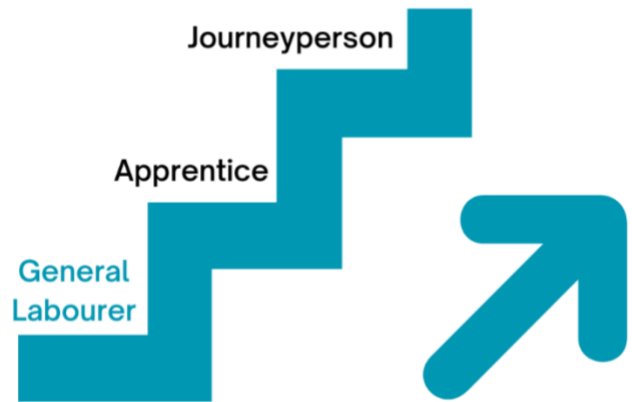
Have you heard of any other jobs in construction? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you said yes, what other kinds of construction jobs do you know about?

Stepping Up to a Career in the Construction Trades

One of the jobs the CBC article mentioned is a **general labourer**. Unlike the other jobs, labourers can be found in many different trades.

That is why being a **general labourer** (also called a trades helper) is a great place to start learning about different construction trades.



Labourers are important because they help tradespeople build, make, and fix things. **Labourers** work on construction sites, so they see what it's really like to do that kind of work. Depending on the company they work for or the job site they are on, they may help bricklayers, cement finishers, tile setters, or other skilled tradespeople. It's a great way to see different trades in action, prove to an employer that you are a good worker, and get work experience.

Once a **labourer** has figured out what trade they want to do, they can apply for an **apprentice** position with their employer if/when one becomes available.

An **apprentice** is someone who learns a specific trade under the guidance of a certified tradesperson (also called a **journeyperson**).



Apprentices spend about 85% of their time learning on the job and the rest of the time learning in school. While they are learning on the job, they get paid. This is one of the great things about learning a trade through apprenticeship!

On-the-job apprenticeship training is hands-on and happens at the workplace. **Apprentices** help a certified tradesperson with their work then gradually start doing the work themselves. Depending on the trade, this training can take between two and five years.

Most **in-school apprenticeship training** happens at a labour union or college.

Apprentices complete a mix of hands-on activities, reading, writing, and math-related assignments, projects, and tests. In-school training usually happens in eight-week to twelve-week blocks roughly once a year.

When an **apprentice** completes their on-the-job and in-school training, they receive their Certificate of Apprenticeship. They are now a **journeyperson**.

Depending on the trade, they may also write exams to earn qualifications like a Certificate of Qualification or Red Seal.



Both of these certifications show that the **journeyperson** is an expert in their field. In the case of a Red Seal, it also shows that they are qualified to work in that trade anywhere in Canada.



Once someone becomes a **journeyperson**, they can begin training an **apprentice**. They will often look for hard-working **general labourers** or trades helpers to find someone who could be successful in their trade. This is how the cycle continues!

Check Your Understanding

1. What is the title of someone working in a helper role to see different trades in action, prove they are a good worker, and get work experience? Circle your choice below.

Journeyperson

Apprentice

General Labourer

2. What is the title of someone learning a specific trade through a combination of on-the-job training with a certified tradesperson and in-school training? Circle your choice below.

Journeyperson

Apprentice

General Labourer

3. What is the title of someone who is fully certified in their trade and can now take on their own apprentices? Circle your choice below.

Journeyperson

Apprentice

General Labourer


4. An apprentice spends about 85% of their time learning on the job. Do they get paid while they are learning on the job?

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Fill in the blanks: Depending on the trade, on-the-job apprenticeship training can take between _____ and _____ years.

6. Fill in the blanks: In-school training usually happens in _____ week to _____ week blocks roughly once a year.

 Be sure to review your answers with your teacher or tutor!

Are you Ready to Build Your Skills?

In a moment, we will be looking at where you can go to find out what skills you need to be successful in different construction trades including general labourer. We will do that in the Build Your Skills Section of the Construction Training & Apprenticeship Ontario (CTAO) website.



Before you continue, answer these two questions.

1. Have you already visited the Construction Training & Apprenticeship Ontario (CTAO) website?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you said **no**, the resource "**Exploring the Construction Training and Apprenticeship Ontario hub**" will show you how to use this helpful website.

2. Have you already created a Build Your Skills account and received your password?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you said **no**, the resource "**Introducing the Build Your Skills Platform**" will show you how to create an account. It will also give you a tour of this skill-building website.



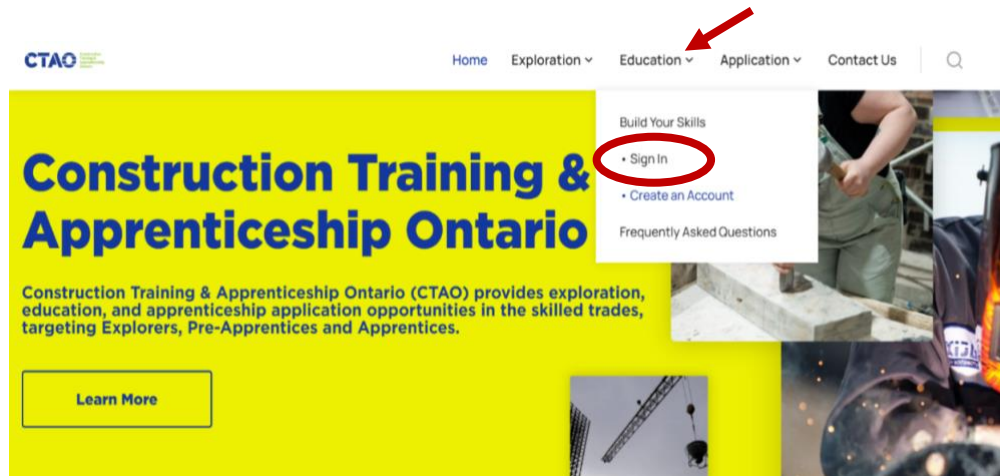
If you said **yes** to these two questions, you are ready to use the Explorer Hub! Be sure to have your email address and password for your account on the CTAO website before you continue.

Tip: There is also a resource to help you learn about the **accessibility features** built into each of the Build Your Skills Learning Hubs. Ask your teacher or tutor for details!

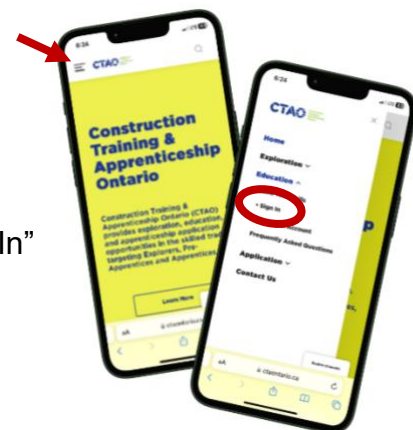
Let's Explore

Before we can explore, we need to log into the Build Your Skills section of the Construction Training & Apprenticeship Ontario (CTAO) website. You can do this in two different ways.

1. If you are using a laptop or desktop computer you can open a web browser and go to www.ctaontario.ca. You will see five links at the top of the website. If you hold your cursor over the word Education, a drop-down menu will appear. To begin, click the words "Sign In" from the drop-down menu. That will open the Build Your Skills login page.



If you are using a tablet or smartphone you will see three small lines on the top left side of your screen. If you tap them, a menu will appear. To begin, tap the words "Sign In" in that menu.



2. If you prefer, you can open a web browser and go directly to the login page at <https://skillplan.brightspace.com/d2l/login>

Once you are on the login page, type your username and password for the Build Your Skills portal.

Then click the blue **Log In** button.



Build Your Skills | Développe tes compétences

Username *

Password *

Log In

[Forgot your password?](#)

Build Your Skills offers three different learning hubs. In this resource, we will look at the Explorer Hub.



Learning Hub My Courses

YOU Your Name

Hey Your Name,

Welcome to Build Your Skills! Choose your path to get started.

EN FR



I'm exploring
Learn about the
different trades



I'm a pre-apprentice
Gear up for my
apprenticeship



I'm an apprentice
Access resources
for my trade

The Explorer Hub offers an opportunity to learn more about different construction trades. Here you can:

- choose from almost 20 different trades you want to know more about
- watch videos about some of the trades
- find out whether the responsibilities of these trades interest you or not
- see if you have the skills needed for your list of trades
- hear real tradespeople talk about what they like about working in the trades on your list
- learn more about the math, reading, writing, and other skills for success you need in these trades

Click the image of the skilled tradesperson or the words “**I’m exploring**” to begin.

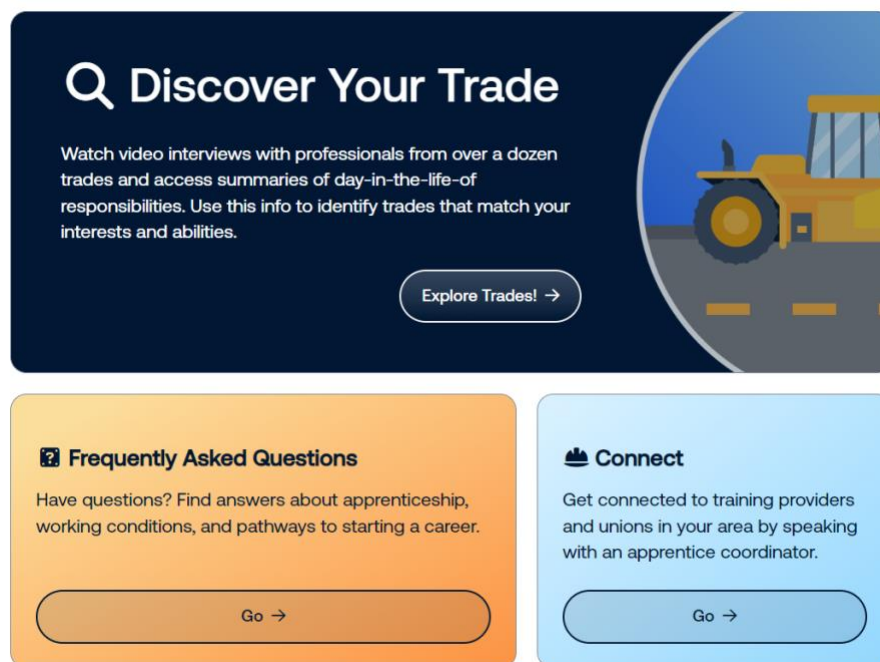


The Build Your Skills Explorer Hub

Welcome to the Build Your Skills **Explorer Hub**! When you enter the hub, you will see three sections:



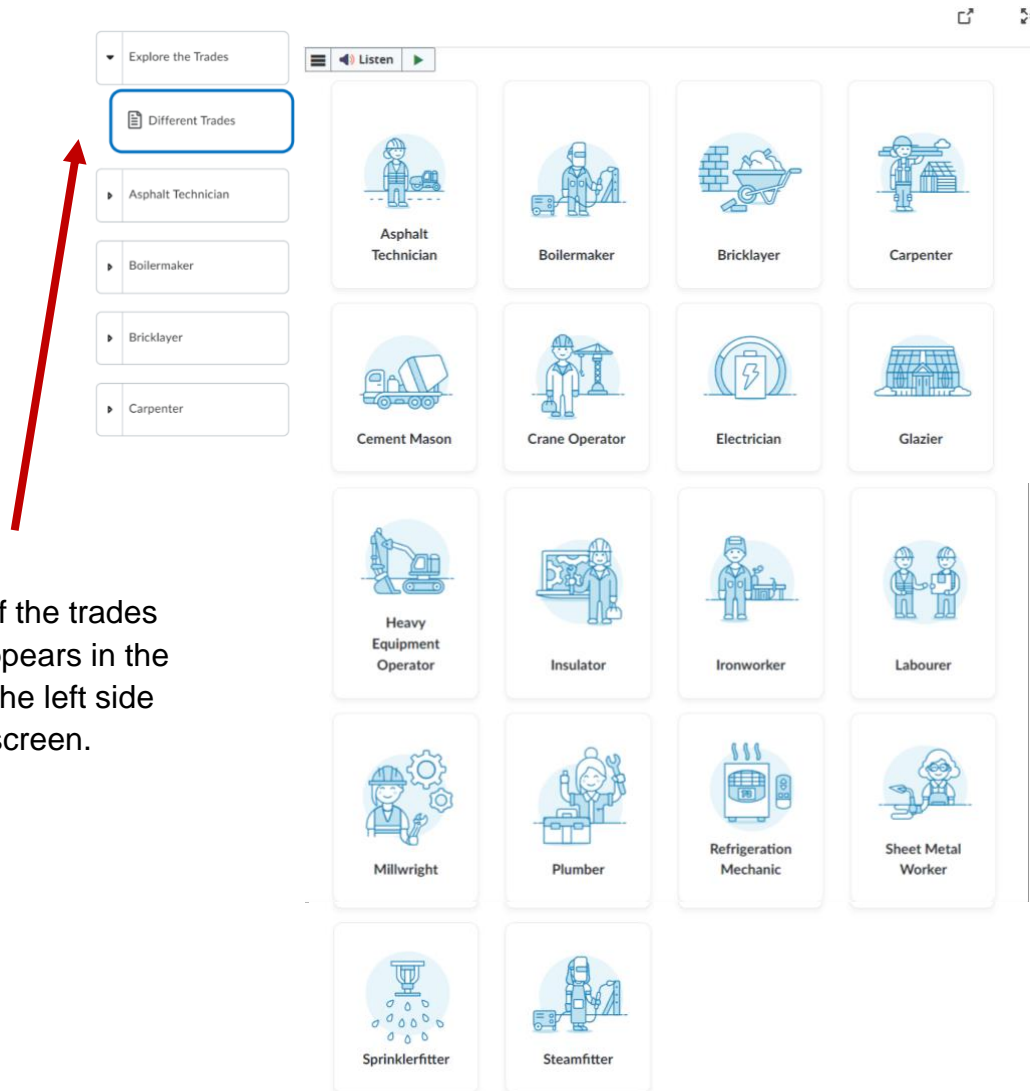
1. **Discover Your Trade** – If you click the Explore Trades button in this section, a new page will open where you can select a trade you want to learn more about.
2. **Frequently Asked Questions** – If you click the Go button in this section, a window with common questions about apprenticeship in the skilled trades will open. You can click each question to read the answer. You can also use the chat feature on this page to ask a question of your own.
3. **Connect** – If you click the Go button in this section, a contact form will open. If you would like information about apprenticeship training providers and unions in this area, fill out this form. An apprenticeship coordinator will respond to you.



Start by clicking the dark blue **Explore Trades** button in the middle of the screen.

Exploring Construction Trades

You will see many skilled trades in small boxes on the screen.



Each of the trades also appears in the list on the left side of the screen.

To read more about any of these jobs, just click the box! We will look at **Crane Operator** first. Later, you will have the chance to look at a trade you are interested in.



Crane Operator

Click this button to begin. The **What We Do** page will open. Watch the video on this page. Listen to the professional crane operators talk about their work and write down one thing you learned.

By watching this video, I learned:

What We Do

Watch this video to hear from crane operator trade professionals.



Trade Overview

As a crane operator, you will control cranes or draglines to lift, move, position or place machinery, equipment and other large objects at construction or industrial sites, ports, railway yards, surface mines and other similar locations.

[Learn More](#)

When you are done, read the Trade Overview and then click the blue Learn More button.

On the **Is This You?** page you can find out if this career is a good fit for you.

Check the ones that interest you:

- ☐ Operate cranes to lift, move or place equipment and materials
- ☐ Inspect cranes and calculate capacities
- ☐ Assemble tower cranes on-site
- ☐ Perform routine crane maintenance

Match Score

Do any of the typical responsibilities of a crane operator interest you?

Put a checkmark in any that do and click the yellow **Match Score** button to find out if this career is a good match!

Did you put a checkmark in more than one of the boxes above? ☐ Yes ☐ No

To be a successful crane operator, you need certain skills and attributes.

Put a checkmark next to any skills that you have and click the yellow **Match Score** button to find out if your skills are a good match.

Check the ones that apply to you:

- ☐ Strong communication skills
- ☐ Critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- ☐ Mechanical aptitude and manual dexterity
- ☐ Ability to work independently and with teams
- ☐ Comfort working in confined spaces and at heights
- ☐ Comfort working outdoors in often noisy conditions
- ☐ Willingness to work out of town

Match Score

Did you put a checkmark in more than one of the boxes above? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Below the matching quizzes are two more videos. Watch these videos to hear Dylan and Jeremy share their experiences as crane operators. Did what Dylan and Jeremy say make you interested in a career as a crane operator?

☐ Yes ☐ No

What's Next?

When you are done watching the videos, click the blue **What's Next** button at the bottom of the page.

On the **Have The Skills?** page, you can learn more about the skills you need to be a good crane operator.

Have The Skills?

Math Skills

Whether you're evaluating distances, taking measurements, or simply troubleshooting, you need a basic working knowledge of math as a crane operator.

[Click on the panel to learn more.](#)



› Math Topics for your Trade

Click on the bar that says **Math Topics for your Trade**. Read the list of math topics that crane operators need to know and fill in the blanks below.

- Decimals
- _____
- Linear conversion
- Measurement
- _____, proportion, and percentage
- Decimal feet conversion
- Area
- _____
- Pythagorean Theorem
- Trigonometry

Are you comfortable with all of these math topics? If not, there are math skill-building activities available in the Pre-Apprentice Hub. Ask your teacher or tutor for a copy of the resource “**Build Your Skills: Welcome to the Pre-Apprentice Hub!**” if you’d like to learn more about this section of the website.

Crane operators need reading and writing skills too. Read the **Reading and Document Use Skills** section.

Reading & Document Use Skills

As a crane operator you won't be reading essays, but you will be required to demonstrate reading and document use skills. These skills will enable you to understand test questions during technical training, interpret equipment manuals, read WHMIS safety data sheets, and more.



What is one thing that crane operators use their reading and document use skills for?

Skills for Success

Whether it's **reading**, **math** or **science** we've got you covered! Access video tutorials, interactive practice quizzes, step-by-step instructions and so much more!

You can move into the Pre-Apprentice Hub directly from here. We will look at the Pre-Apprentice Hub in our next resource.

Build Your Skills

Learn more about Build Your Skills pre-apprenticeship training.

[Get Started!](#)

[Explore More Trades](#)

For now, return to the list of different trades by clicking the blue **Explore More Trades** button.

Explore a Trade


Now it's your turn! Pick one of the trades that you would like to learn more about. As you explore that trade, answer the questions below and on the following page.

▼

Cement Mason

 What We Do

 Is This You?

 Have the Skills?

Tip: Instead of using the blue buttons at the bottom of each page, you can navigate using the menu on the left side of the screen. Choose the way that works best for you!

1. What trade did you choose to explore? _____

2. Did that trade have a video? ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. If you said yes, what is one thing you learned from watching the video?

4. What is one of the typical responsibilities of this job?

5. Were you able to choose at least one of the typical responsibilities that interested you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. How many of the skills and attributes needed for this job do you have? _____

7. What is one of the skills or attributes you would like to get better at?

8. What are three math topics you would need to know for this job?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

9. Are there any other trades you would like to explore? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you said yes, write them below so you can explore them later!



Conclusion

Earlier in this resource, you learned:

- that there are many jobs available in construction
- steps to a career in the construction trades, which can include being a:
 - general labourer or trades helper
 - apprentice
 - journeyperson

Then you learned how to use the Explorer Hub. Check off the things you remember seeing on the Explorer Hub below.

- ☐ almost 20 different construction trades you could review
- ☐ information about what people do in each of the trades
- ☐ typical responsibilities, skills, and attributes required in specific trades
- ☐ the kinds of math, reading, and document use required in construction trades

Tell your teacher or tutor if you don't remember one of these things. They can help you find what you missed.

Next steps

What would you like to learn next? _____

If you're ready to start building your skills for the construction trades, ask your teacher or tutor for a copy of the resource **"Build Your Skills: Welcome to the Pre-Apprentice Hub!"**