

DI-WHY? learndirect reveals how improving your DIY skills could pave the way to a new career

Submitted by: Four Communications Ltd

Thursday, 26 May 2005

With the Bank Holiday weekend fast approaching, and DIY Week hot on its heels (30th May – 6th June), one in three* Brits will be rolling up their sleeves to get stuck into a DIY project. In the UK alone, almost one in 20** people have turned their DIY skills into a career, reaping the financial rewards of turning a hobby into a job.

There are over 700 different types of jobs available within the construction industry for both men and women and over 86,000* job opportunities expected this year alone. So whether you have a passion for plastering or a craving for carpentry, learndirect is urging keen DIY-ers to consider a career in construction.

Gareth Dent, head of the learndirect advice line, commented, "Due to current skills shortages within the construction industry, there are some fantastic opportunities for DIY-ers to make a living doing something they really enjoy. So, if the prospect of fixing the leaky tap or assembling the flat-packed furniture is something that you relish, why not think about turning your occasional hobby into a job? learndirect can provide guidance and advice to those who would like to embark on a career in construction, offering information on how to acquire the skills they will need to get ahead."

So, while you are wrestling with the wrench or getting to grips with the grout this Bank Holiday weekend, learndirect could help pave the way to your new job. Just some of the jobs available and skills that you will need are outlined below:

Carpenter and Joiner: (Salaries range from £17,000 - £26,000 +)

What is involved? Making and installing wooden structures, fixtures and fittings

Skills needed: Careful and methodical approach and ability to plan accurately; careful and methodical approach and ability to plan accurately; practical ability and manual skills; numeracy competency for measuring and making calculations; ability to work as part of a team and alone

Carpet fitter/floor layer: (Salaries range from £11,000 – £21,000 +)

What is involved? Lay floor coverings in homes and commercial premises

Skills needed: Good practical skills; good numeracy skills to work out measurements and costs; physically fit; polite and pleasant manner for dealing with customers; ability to work quickly and accurately

Electrician: (Salaries range from £12,700 - £25,000 +)

What is involved? Inspect, test and install wiring systems and equipment

Skills needed: Competency with a range of power tools; ability to follow technical drawings and instructions; methodical approach and attention to detail; safety-conscious; ability to work alone; take responsibility for own work and make decisions

Landscaper: (Salaries range from £10,000 - £25,000 +)

What is involved? Construct and maintain gardens, parks, sports grounds and other outdoor areas

Skills needed: Physically fit to cope with strenuous tasks; creativity and ability to interpret drawings; interest in the environment, plants and their effective use; ability to work quickly and meet deadlines; practical skills to work with a variety of tools

Painter and decorator: (Salaries range from £13,500 - £21,000 +)

What is involved? Work on all types of buildings. Jobs can range from the re-decoration of a domestic household

through to the application of heavy-duty finishing to bridges, ships or oil rigs

Skills needed: Practical and creative ability; good colour vision for mixing and matching paints; ability to work accurately and have an appreciation for detail; ability to work alone and as part of a team; comfortable working at heights

Plumber: (Salaries range from £16,000 - £26,000 +)

What is involved? Install, maintain and repair hot and cold water supplies, and sanitation and waste disposal systems

Skills needed: Ability to read technical drawings and plans; good practical and problem-solving skills; careful and methodical approach to work; ability to work at heights and in confined spaces; awareness of safety issues and legal regulations; ability to work as part of a team and alone

If you're thinking of turning your DIY hobby into a job then learndirect can offer advice on a range of construction courses from a City and Guilds Certificate in Plumbing to an NVQ in Floorlaying! Call learndirect on 0800 100 900 for impartial, free, careers advice or log on to www.learndirect-advice.co.uk

learndirect has access to thousands of construction courses in the UK, from painting and decorating, to carpentry and plumbing - the learndirect advice line can help you find the perfect course to turn your DIY interest into a full time job. All you need to do is call the learndirect advice line on 0800 100 900 and speak to an impartial advisor, who can give you details of relevant courses available in your local area. Or alternatively, visit www.learndirect-advice.co.uk and search for your ideal course online.

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For more information, contact Daniela Pinto/Jodie Long at Consolidated Communications on 0207 287 2087 or email danielap@consol.co.uk/jodiel@consol.co.uk

*Based on a study taken from Property News on www.easier.com

** Based on the figure that 2 million people are already employed in the construction industry. Source: CITB

***According to CITB-ConstructionSkills' Skills Foresight Report, published in January 2003:

The construction industry will need 433,490 new people to join between 2003 and 2007 – a total of 86,150 each year.

Breakdowns of occupational figures indicate that the most in-demand occupations will be carpenters and joiners (12,460 needed per year); managers (10,020 need per year); bricklayers 6,000 needed per year); technicians (2,240 needed per year) and plumbers (6,520 needed per year). In addition, 5,010 professionals are also needed per year.

Notes to editors

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The national learning advice service offers information on almost 1 million courses from hundreds of learning providers nation-wide

The advice line is open seven days a week from 8am to 10pm on freephone 0800 100 900.

This information is also available online through the learndirect website at www.learndirect-advice.co.uk

learndirect careers advisers can give free, impartial and confidential telephone advice on learning options and funding to callers who want to develop their careers, choose a new career or get back into the workplace

The advice line has taken over 6 million calls since 1999 from people wanting to know what they can learn and where

learndirect advisors can also offer advice in Sylheti (08000 93 1444), Punjabi (08000 93 1333), Somali (08000 93 1555), Gujarati (08000 93 1119) and Urdu (08000 93 1118)