

# Trade up for a Trade

As an apprentice, you actually get paid while you do your training. No HECS debt. No juggling jobs to pay the bills. You end up with a career which you can travel with, expand into your own business, and you make great money. *Smart Start* reports.

## 12 REASONS WHY

1. Secure employment in many areas.
2. A platform for your own business.
3. Skills learnt as an apprentice can be transferred to other areas.
4. You can travel with a trade.
5. Work can be varied and creative.
6. You're not always stuck in an office.
7. Assisted learning and employment path – you're not alone.
8. Opportunity to earn top dollar, from your own business to the mining industry.
9. Chance to moonlight to pick up more money.
10. Flexibility to take short-term or long-term employment.
11. The buzz of creating, building and working with your hands.
12. Wages are rising as the demand for technical

## Oh, sounds good!

That's because it is good. To be a tradesperson you need to grab a traineeship or apprenticeship. About 90 per cent of apprentices and trainees are fully employed after completing their program. Programs come in many shapes and sizes from one industry to another, but they tend to include:

- a contract or training agreement
- a paid job under an industrial arrangement
- on-the-job training (instruction from your fellow workers and bosses while you're working) and off-the-job training (instruction from teachers at TAFE or similar)
- a nationally recognised qualification – usually a certificate III.

### JUST FOR YOU!

- School-based apprenticeships and traineeships allow students – usually Years 11 and 12 – to work with an employer as paid employees whilst studying. See page 30.
- Australian Technical Colleges are for high school students in Years 11 and 12 who want to study for their Year 12 as well as starting an apprenticeship while they are still at school. See page 30 for more info.
- See pages 36, 38, 40, 41 and 42 for just a few of our cool trade stories.

## But what are these apprenticeship thingies really?

Apprentices are not secret societies or weird slave contracts. They are structured 'earn while you learn' arrangements.

Apprenticeships and traineeships are work-based training programs. In fact, pretty much every job in the world is a work-based training program. But the great thing about apprenticeships is it's all formalised and straight-up. Instead of you having to manage your career, you get a lot of support.

Traditionally, apprenticeships took three to four years to complete and a traineeship lasted for one to two years. But apprenticeships are 'competency-based', meaning it may be possible for you to complete your training sooner if you have reached the skill level required.

### WHAT'S AN AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeships and traineeships are sometimes grouped under the term 'Australian Apprenticeships' but just two years ago, they were known as 'New Apprenticeships'. Why the change? No-one knows. Whatever the name, government incentives and personal benefits are still there. Australian Apprenticeships provide nationally recognised qualifications and competencies and are offered at all levels up to advanced diploma.

## Are apprentices poor and beaten?

Good question. But, no. Like every other job in the world, you need to learn and work your way up to more responsibility. But because it's a structured program, you'll be guided through levels and new skills so it's often more varied and challenging than standard jobs.

Also like any other job, the money gets better with your skills and experience.

There's even a probation period to help you make sure you have made the right decision.

## The rural life?

Apprenticeships embrace many industries people don't always associate with apprentices, like rural industries like farming. It can be a great way to pick up a range of skills for a life on the land – get great experience and some formal training. For info about youth-related rural stuff, see [www.yarn.gov.au](http://www.yarn.gov.au)

## What about all those tools?

If you're in the first year of your Australian Apprenticeship, you may be able to receive a tool kit.

Your employer will be given a Tools For Your Trade voucher card to purchase tools for you. When you've completed nine months of your Australian Apprenticeship, the tool kit is yours to keep. All yours, ha ha ha!

Remember, a tool kit is not just a heavy box with screwdrivers and stuff. If you're a chef, it means knives and pans and all that. If you're a hairdresser, it means scissors and maybe a hair-dryer – that sort of stuff.

- [www.toolsforyourtrade.com.au](http://www.toolsforyourtrade.com.au); 1800 557 875

- Visit [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au); or call 13 38 73
- Contact your local Job Network provider – [www.workplace.gov.au](http://www.workplace.gov.au); 13 62 68
- Contact a group training organisation.
- Talk with your career advisor.
- [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au); 13 38 73
- [www.connecttoyourfuture.dest.gov.au](http://www.connecttoyourfuture.dest.gov.au)
- [www.australiantechnicalcolleges.gov.au](http://www.australiantechnicalcolleges.gov.au); 13 38 73

### TRADE TRAINING IN THESE AND MORE

- Aerospace
- Agriculture and forestry
- Art, design and printing
- Automotive
- Beauty
- Building and construction
- Business and administration
- Cookery
- Community services and health
- Construction – domestic and industrial
- Cultural and recreational services
- Electrical
- Electrotechnology
- Emerging technologies
- Engineering
- Finance services
- Fishing and seafood
- Food
- Forestry
- Furnishing
- Government and defence
- Hairdressing
- Hospitality
- Information technology
- Jewellery
- Local government
- Manufacturing – materials, process, light metals
- Marine
- Metals
- Mining
- Personal services
- Plumbing, gas-fitting and water
- Printing
- Property services
- Public services
- Retail
- Retail and wholesale trade
- Sport and recreation
- Telecommunications
- Tourism
- Transport, distribution and storage

## Getting the job

You will need to be committed and energetic and creative and careful and safe. You'll also need to do the leg-work to get yourself an apprenticeship. See the info starting on page 90 for all you need to know about looking for and applying for jobs generally. Here's another six tips for getting an apprenticeship.

1. **Think.** What industries do you like?
2. **Spread the word.** Tell everyone – friends, your parents' friends, teachers, everyone – that you are looking for an apprenticeship.
3. **Speak.** Chat to teachers, careers advisors, Australian Apprenticeships people or group training orgs.
4. **Get your CV ready.** See page 90 for more info.
5. **Look for openings or make openings.** Check all the usual sources – websites, newspapers etc – but more importantly, ring people up, knock on the doors of likely-looking companies. People are ALWAYS interested in employing people who are enthusiastic. You get no prizes for being aloof and cool. Employers may not have even realised they could take on an apprentice and they may not know of the advantages to them. Read the 'Make a job happen' info at right, then tell them about it!
6. **Apply for everything.** Go for it! See the contacts in this section, and look at <https://jobsearch.gov.au>.

### LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

- Look into school-based apprenticeships on page 30.
- If you or one of your mates are you're having trouble staying on track at school or you have already left school and are not quite sure what do with yourself, Youth Pathways might be very useful. See page 16 for more information.

## Make a job happen

An employer might not even know they can have an apprentice, so you should let them know they can and that it's a great idea. Let them know the benefits of taking on a great apprentice. Namely, you!

- Employers may be eligible for financial incentives to help pay you.
- Employers need superbly qualified employees whose trained is focused perfectly.
- Employers will have assistance in training you.

## What, more assistance!

Well, yes, you never know!

- ABSTUDY (Apprentices who have reached minimum school leaving age and are Indigenous Australians)
- Commonwealth Trade Learning Scholarships (two \$500 payments for undertaking a trade Australian Apprenticeship in an area of particular skills need)
- Living Away From Home Allowance
- Disabled Australian Apprentices Wage Support and tutorial support for the off-the-job training
- Youth Allowance (for Australian Apprentices aged 16-24)

The lack of skilled workers in Australia means that there is good demand for younger workers. When there is a shortage, wages and conditions rise to attract more people. That is good news for you. There have been shortages in these areas ...

- Automotive: mechanics, auto electrics, panel beaters, vehicle painters etc.
- Construction: carpenters, joiners, plasterers, plumbers, bricklayers, cabinetmakers etc.
- Electrical: electricians, refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics etc.
- Engineering metal: fitters, turners, welders and toolmakers etc.
- Food: chefs and cooks.
- Others: hairdressers, furniture upholsterers.