



DESK FREE
NATION

REFERENCE GUIDE

FOR THE SKILLED TRADES

WHY THE TRADES:

Earning a college degree isn't a bad idea, but it's not for every student. A career in the trades provides young adults practical and useful skills, a clear path to a financially rewarding career with less student loan debt than traditional college, and a skill-set that is always in demand.

HVAC CAREERS

- State Educational Requirements
- Schools

PLUMBING CAREERS

- State Educational Requirements
- Schools

ELECTRICIAN CAREERS

- State Educational Requirements
- Schools

1. **Classrooms Are Not One Size Fits All** - A traditional four year degree is not a prerequisite for a personal or financially rewarding career. A trade school education is hands on from day 1 and provides a student the opportunity to immediately apply their skills.
2. **Price Tag** - According to the Dept. of Ed the average tuition for a private college is roughly \$45,000 vs. \$17,000 for a public college or \$80,000 to \$160,000 in total. In contrast, the total cost for a trades program is \$33,000.
3. **Huge Demand** - Baby boomers are retiring and there simply are not enough young people entering the Trades. For every person that enters the Trades five are retiring. The demand is real and the opportunity is now for young people.
4. **Earning Power** - Indeed states that the average hourly rate for HVAC, plumbing and electrical professionals is \$25/hr or \$52,000 based on a 40 hour week. Including overtime, which is generally available in today's market, can increase earnings beyond \$65,000.
5. **Be Your Own Boss** - There are over 350,000 HVAC, plumbing and electrical companies in the country, a significant portion of which are "one woman/man and a van" businesses. Entrepreneurship is a viable option for those who choose to work for themselves.

WOMEN IN
THE TRADES

PREPARE FOR
INTERVIEW &
LIST FAQs

APPRENTICE & JOB
OPPORTUNITIES -
PAGE FOR EACH

IS YOUR STUDENT THE RIGHT FIT?

A good candidate for a career in the Trades will likely have some of the following characteristics:

1. **Mechanically Inclined** – Does she/he enjoy working with their hands? Do they have a natural curiosity about how things work? If not, it's a non-starter in the industry.
2. **Attention to Detail** – There are many hazards in the field and little things can have a big effects when it comes to getting the job done efficiently and safely.
3. **Communication Skills** – Interaction with customers and co-workers is an every day occurrence. It is critical that a technician is able to clearly explain the scope of a job and provide an estimate regarding the work that is required.
4. **Time Management** – A typical day entails effectively managing one's schedule while staying organized as you move from job to job. Dependability and organization breeds success in the Trades.
5. **Tenacity** – The trades require that “never give up” kind of attitude. But the cool thing is that you are rewarded for that hard work and feel an amazing sense of accomplishment from going that extra mile. And let's not forget you will become a HERO to your family when they need something fixed.
6. **Problem Solving** – The trades requires curiosity to dig deeper into a problem and find the solution. The issue at hand may be a quick fix but sometimes, the issue requires hours to figure out what the issue is.
7. **Thick Skin** – The trades provide humility. Some days you are going to mess up and that will require you to be honest and let the customer know you did – and you know what? That's ok. That is how we grow and learn.