



Job Description

Laborers perform a variety of tasks at all kinds of sites. Tasks that require little skill can be learned quickly; other tasks require considerable experience or training. General laborers are often required to work outside in all kinds of weather or in buildings without heating or air conditioning. Some tasks are dangerous, including removing lead, asbestos, or chemicals.

Job Duties

The job duties of a general laborer vary. They may include cleaning and preparing a job site, loading and delivering materials, and using a variety of tools and machines such as blowtorches, forklifts, levels, lifts, power drills, grinders, saws, pressure washers, and water spraying equipment. Laborers set up and take down ladders, scaffolding, and other temporary structures. They help carpenters, masons, and other specialized contractors.

At road construction sites, general laborers may control traffic. They set up markers, cones and barricades and may flag vehicles to control the flow of traffic.

More Requirements

General laborers must have physical strength, hand-eye coordination, and endurance. Laborers must also be able to concentrate on their tasks. The ability to understand and communicate information is also essential. Some tools and machines are computerized, requiring technical knowledge to use. Computer skills, estimating skills, and the ability to communicate in both English and Spanish can help general laborers advance in their profession.

There are no minimum educational requirements to be a general laborer, but laborers who have specialized skills have the best opportunities. Those who serve a formal apprenticeship must generally be at least 18 years old and have a high school diploma or its equivalent. An informal apprenticeship, consisting of on-the-job training and learning from more experienced contractors, is a common way for general laborers to learn their job.

High school classes in general shop, welding, mechanical drawing, blueprint reading, physics, and mathematics are helpful. Professional organizations such as the National Center for Construction Education and Research can help laborers find accredited training programs.

Laborers who help remove lead, asbestos and other hazardous materials need specialized safety training and certification.

Job Type: Full-time