

**What does a lather do?**  
 Lathers are responsible for bringing designs, concepts and blueprints to life by cutting, joining, and fastening metal construction materials using welding equipment, oxygen-acetylene torches and plasma cutters. Framework built by lathers is covered by plaster, drywall materials or other finished surfaces. They also know that working safely is the top priority all day, every day.



**How do I get started?**

Your first step is entering an apprenticeship program. The UBC is among the best in North America in apprenticeship training. Your hometown will have a local UBC-affiliated training center close by, with people who can answer any question you have.



**What about job security?**

Professional lathers are members of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America—a proud organization that has given men and women an excellent quality of life since 1881. From the first day of your apprenticeship, you will work for a union contractor under the protection of a union contract, which outlines wages, benefits and working conditions. The UBC Local in your area has experienced staffers whose primary job is to keep you working.



**What are the hours?**

Lathers are definitely "morning people." An 8-hour work day usually starts around 7 a.m., but sometimes if a project is fast-tracked, alternative shifts are needed to get the job done.

Although lathers mostly work indoors at times, they mostly work outside. They can work at ground level or on scaffolding several feet high. It's a physical job. Lifting, pushing, pulling, and bending are common. But you are trained in how to do these tasks safely before ever attempting anything like that on a job site. Hardhats, safety glasses, durable clothing and safety shoes are the typical items worn on a job site.

**What are the working conditions?**

**What is the pay?**

Lathers are usually paid by the hour, and as union members, they get "time-and-a-half" or "double-time" for all work done beyond eight hours. From the first day of your apprenticeship you earn a good wage and start earning benefits. You also get regular raises, usually every six months, until you reach the full journeyman scale at the end of the apprenticeship program.

- **Earn while you learn**—Apprentices start earning a good wage immediately.
- **No school loans or tuition to pay back.**
- **Pay raises**—Keep progressing through the program and earn more and more money.
- **Bennies**—Health and retirement benefits start now, for you and your family.

**Does my high school coursework matter?**

You can get a head start on becoming a lather by taking classes in mathematics, drafting, mechanical drawing, industrial arts, and CAD, and by enrolling in industrial shop. Really, any class that helps familiarize you with geometrical layout and woodworking is a plus, because the coursework will help you develop the dexterity and practical thinking skills you will need for this career.

**What is an apprentice?**

An apprentice is a person in the process of becoming a skilled lather through training and experience. Apprentices study both in the classroom and on-the-job, under the guidance of skilled workers of that trade, called journeymen. In most cases, the length of your apprenticeship is four years, and training is free. Apprentices earn a good income and learn a trade—all at once. No school loans to repay!