

Just the Job

Information Sheet

Floor & Wall Tiling

Job title/s:

Floor & Wall Tiler
Tiler

Job description:

Floor and wall tilers do exactly that – lay floor and wall tiles in residential and commercial buildings. Floor and wall tiling can be really creative and artistic when you get the opportunity to work with the designer and client to create unique and special designs.

The job of a floor and wall tiler involves preparation of surfaces, setting out tiles, determining quantities, mixing and applying primers, adhesives, grouting and sealants and cutting and fixing tiles.

A floor and wall tiler may perform any of the following tasks:

- look at plans, measure and mark surfaces to be covered and lay out work
- prepare wall and floor surfaces by removing old tiles, grout, cement and adhesive
- fill all holes and cracks, and then clean surfaces
- attach tiles to surfaces, using correct adhesive, making sure that patterned tiles match
- use tile-cutting tools to cut and shape tiles needed for edges, corners, or around obstacles such as fittings and pipes
- space and even the tiles by using tools such as spirit levels, squares and plumb-lines
- prepare and apply grout, remove excess grout, clean and polish tiles
- lay floors of cement, granolithic, terrazzo or similar composition
- apply waterproofing systems.

Qualifications required:

Most employers prefer you to do an apprenticeship and gain a National Certificate in Floor & Wall Tiling. This qualification usually takes one to two years to complete (for further information contact the BCITO).

At least three years of secondary education is recommended. School Certificate or NCEA equivalent maths, English and technical drawing may be useful. Tiling is also one of the more creative trades, which allows your artistic flair to show through in your work!

If you don't have passes in the school subjects mentioned, talk to a BCITO Training Advisor - in some instances, they can organise for you to up-skill in those areas to enable you to get an apprenticeship.

Good practical skills are a real plus when it comes to looking for an apprenticeship, and taking technology classes while at school demonstrates an interest in the trades which may help when you look for employment.

The minimum age to be employed on a building site is 16. There is no upper age limit, except for people entering the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme - which is for people between the ages of 16 and 21.

Training costs:

The total cost of training varies between qualifications but is usually \$2000 - \$3000. A BCITO Training Advisor can give you a breakdown of costs.

There are no hard and fast rules on who pays for what. Some employers pay for all or part of the Apprenticeship costs. Some don't. Others will pay the costs on behalf of the Apprentice and then get reimbursement through the Apprentice's wages at so much per week.

Location of job:

One day you may be laying floor tiles in a new home and the next you could be working poolside putting down outdoor tiles. Tilers may work on private homes or commercial sites, giving you the opportunity to use a variety of skills on any given day. Conditions can be dusty, and heavy lifting is often involved.

Floor & wall tilers sometimes work in confined areas where bending and kneeling are required. They sometimes work at heights using ladders or scaffolding. Most tilers work in small teams and move frequently from one job location to another.

Career path:

With a Floor & Wall Tiling qualification under your belt you could:

- Work on a variety of residential and commercial jobs – working as part of a team with designers and architects to create custom finishes
- Go on to become a technical support person or supervisor
- Be your own boss and run a business
- Gain transferable skills that could see you move into solid plastering or proprietary plaster cladding systems
- Own and run a specialist tiling shop, using your knowledge to advise clients on the best tiles for the job.

Salary range:

Wages are negotiated between the apprentice and their employer. The BCITO does not set the wages you are paid as an apprentice or the increases you may get as you progress through your apprenticeship. There is however a minimum wage that an

apprentice must be paid and this information can be found by going to the following website: www.ers.dol.govt.nz/pay.

Tips on how to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry:

It's all about attitude - employers are looking to take on people with a genuine interest and commitment to working in the industry and learning a trade. You need to have a positive attitude and good work ethic to be successful in an apprenticeship.

To begin an apprenticeship you need to be employed in the building industry and your employer has to be prepared to offer you an apprenticeship. You will need to prepare a simple CV and approach prospective employers about starting an apprenticeship. Work experience can help you establish relationships with people in the industry that can lead to an apprenticeship - school programmes (such as Gateway) can also be a good way to get experience.

Places/websites to source information about this job:

www.kiwicareers.co.nz

www.constructionzone.co.nz

www.bcito.org.nz

Your careers advisor

Any other relevant points:

BCITO apprentices know all about work life balance - after a day on site you will find BCITO apprentices representing their country or region in many sports for example:

- ✚ Kayaking
- ✚ Rollerblading
- ✚ Rugby - both Super 14, NPC and internationals!
- ✚ Triathlons
- ✚ Martial arts
- ✚ And many more

BCITO apprentices come from many different backgrounds. We have currently or recently qualified people who started out doing very different things including;

- ✚ Accountants
- ✚ Chefs
- ✚ Police officers
- ✚ Fishermen
- ✚ Mothers
- ✚ Farmers
- ✚ University lecturers

There are BCITO apprentices working on almost every major construction project in New Zealand including;

- ✚ Wellington Hospital
- ✚ Auckland War Memorial Museum
- ✚ Inner city bypass - Wellington

The construction of Corrections Facilities