



**What does it
take to become
a Firefighter?**



Firefighters control and put out fires, and respond to emergency situations where life, property, or the environment is at risk. Firefighters typically put out fires using water hoses, fire extinguishers, and water pumps. They find and rescue victims in burning buildings or in other emergency situations, treat sick or injured people, prepare written reports on emergency incidents, clean and maintain equipment, conduct drills and physical fitness training, and provide public education on fire safety.

Skills and Knowledge

Requirements vary, but typically prospective firefighters must have a valid driver's license, pass a medical exam and pass drug screening to be hired. After being hired, firefighters may be subject to random drug tests and will also need to complete routine physical fitness assessments. When responding to fire emergencies, firefighters are responsible for connecting hoses to hydrants, operating the pumps that power the hoses, climbing ladders, and using other tools to break through debris. They should be able to interpret building plans. Firefighters' duties may change several times while they are at the scene of an emergency. In some cases they remain at disaster scenes for days, for example, rescuing trapped survivors and

assisting with medical treatment.

Training

Entry-level firefighters typically receive training at fire academies run by fire departments, whose accredited apprenticeship programmes combine technical instruction with on-the-job training under the supervision of experienced firefighters. Recruits study firefighting and fire-prevention techniques, local building codes, and emergency medical procedures. They also learn how to fight fires with standard equipment, including axes, fire extinguishers, and ladders. They must pass written and physical tests, complete a series of interviews, and hold an emergency medical technician certification. After completion of the course, firefighters must usually complete a probationary period. Advanced training areas include anti-arson techniques, disaster preparedness, hazardous materials control, and public fire safety and education.

Working Conditions

Firefighters have one of the highest rates of injuries and illnesses of all occupations. They often encounter dangerous situations, including collapsing floors and walls, traffic accidents, and overexposure to flames and smoke. When on the scenes of fires and other emergencies, the work can be very dangerous. When firefighters aren't putting out fires or responding to other emergencies they spend their time cleaning and

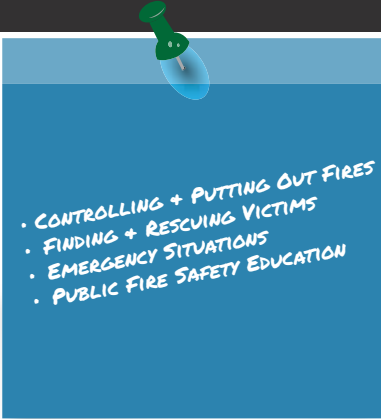
maintaining equipment, learning and developing additional skills related to fire fighting and emergency response, conducting real-life simulations and practice drills, and participating in physical fitness activities.

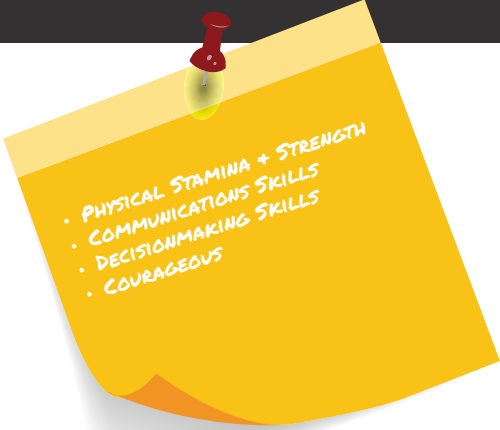
Being a firefighter is not an easy job. Firefighters routinely face risks, work irregular hours and must respond to calls regardless of the weather. The exact working conditions faced by a firefighter vary; with many working more than 40 hours per week.

Job Prospects

Improved building materials and building codes have resulted in a long-term decrease in fires and fire fatalities, but firefighters will still be needed to respond to fires. Fires can spread rapidly so controlling them quickly is very important. Wildland firefighters will still be needed to combat active fires and manage the environment to reduce the impact of fires. Firefighters will also continue to respond to medical emergencies.

You too can live your passion and become a Firefighter. If you are fit and strong, have strong communication and decisionmaking and can demonstrate courage, you are a good candidate.

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- CONTROLLING + PUTTING OUT FIRES
 - FINDING + RESCUING VICTIMS
 - EMERGENCY SITUATIONS
 - PUBLIC FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION

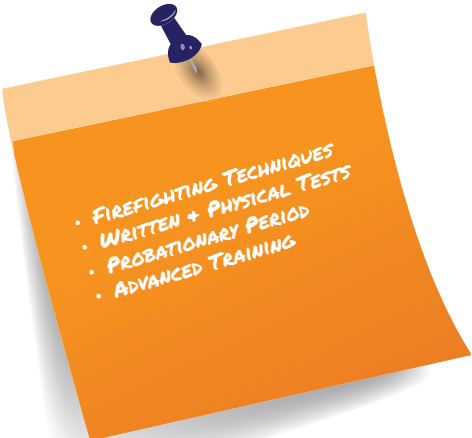
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- PHYSICAL STAMINA + STRENGTH
 - COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS
 - DECISIONMAKING SKILLS
 - COURAGEOUS

Firefighting is all about
preparedness to go out on
a call, whatever time of day.

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- LONG, VARIED HOURS
 - OUTDOORS (ALL-WEATHER)
 - FIRE STATION-BASED
 - HIGH RISK ENVIRONMENT

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- PHYSICAL FITNESS
 - INTERPRET BUILDING PLANS
 - FIRST AID
 - PUBLIC SAFETY + EDUCATION

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- FIREFIGHTING TECHNIQUES
 - WRITTEN + PHYSICAL TESTS
 - PROBATIONARY PERIOD
 - ADVANCED TRAINING