

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

An upholsterer is someone who makes, replaces, and repairs coverings on furniture and in vehicles. Most work for household and institutional furniture manufacturers, upholstery shops, and automotive interior repair shops. Inspecting furniture to find needed repairs in the frame, upholstery, and springs, they remove and replace old and worn padding, filling, and springs, whereafter they measure, cut, and sew fabric, and attach it to the furniture frame with tacks, staples and glue. They draw cutting lines on fabric following patterns, templates, sketches, or blueprints. Upholsterers need to stay current with trends in furniture design and styles. They select fabrics that meet their customer's lifestyle and preferences.

Skills & Knowledge

High school courses in mathematics, arts and woodwork provide a strong foundation for a Upholsterer's career. You'll have to work well without direct supervision. Upholsterers are good problem solvers, diligent, attentive and safety conscious. This work requires physical dexterity and endurance; frequently standing or bending for many hours, and picking up and delivering furniture.



Training

Generally, employers do not have any formal educational requirements for upholsterers. Some upholsterers take classes to learn how to measure, cut and sew fabric and upholster furniture, but there are few formal programmes to teach someone how to become an upholsterer. Some teach themselves by taking furniture apart to learn how it is made and what appears to be needed to replace the fabric, padding, and broken springs. Other upholsterers are trained through apprenticeships, where they are hired by an experienced upholsterer and get training to develop their skills. However, formal apprenticeships are difficult to find. Apprentices advance to more complex work as they show competence. Upholsterers keep updating their knowledge of upholstery techniques by monitoring the upholstery industry to identify trends.



Working Conditions

This trade requires persistence, accuracy and grit to deliver highly accurate work. Upholsterers spend a lot of time standing, bending, and crouching, which can be tiring. They are sometimes expected to work long hours, including during the night and over public holidays. Work is not always workshop-based, as upholsterers often need to visit current and prospective clients or suppliers to discuss upholstery fabrics, colors, and styles, and provide cost estimates. Self-employed upholsterers may do management and administrative tasks, such as managing the finances and inventory, and taking orders.

Job Prospects

Most upholsterers work for household and institutional furniture manufacturers, upholstery shops, and automotive interior repair shops. Some self-employed upholsterers work out of their homes, whereas some may specialise in working on replacing upholstery for the interiors of boats, cars and recreational vehicles. Most upholsterers work full time, and some work nights and weekends to accommodate customer schedules.

You too can live your passion and qualify as an Upholsterer. If you are detail-oriented, physically fit and creative, and possess good communication skills, you are a good candidate.

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