



**What does it  
take to become a  
Tour Guide?**





Tour guides work in the travel industry, giving guided tours to groups of visitors. They are experts on the history of the location and offer their tour groups interesting or enlightening information about points of interest at nature attractions, historic sites, museums, scenic locations, and other travel destinations. Guides may give walking tours, bus tours, or even lead river tours on a boat. Often hired by visitors' bureaus or travel companies, tour guides are typically residents of the region in which they give tours.

### Skills and Knowledge

To be successful as a tour guide, you must be an extrovert and able to create a fun, friendly and enthusiastic atmosphere for tourists from all walks of life. Speaking loudly and clearly and demonstrating patience with people who are in unfamiliar surroundings are other key traits. Effective communication skills are absolutely essential and being able to speak and/or understand multiple languages is considered an asset. In addition, tour guides must be highly organised, punctual, and ethical. They need to have exceptional time-management skills and be able to thoroughly research pertinent information.

### Training

Training programmes at registered training institutions typically cover both theoretical and practical components. Useful school subjects to secure enrollment include English and other languages and Science. Typically, training courses enables participants to gain skills in all aspects of tour guiding, including specific knowledge of the area or establishment being toured, local cultural information and safety

training. You will be assessed to show that you have achieved the skills and knowledge required by the course. Assessment may include written, oral or practical assessment methods.

### Working Conditions

Tour guides work in a variety of environments and conditions. Nature tour guides work outside and are subject to the effects of climate and weather conditions, while museum tour guides work indoors year-round. Typically, a tour guide's workweek is very structured, though they may work more or less than 40 hours. Often tour guides lead tours on weekends. Some guides are employed for seasonal and temporary positions, working only during the months when tourism is at its peak.

### Job Prospects

The local tourism sector is growing and opportunities for employment at tour companies are readily available, who may employ guides on a seasonal, full-time, part-time or volunteer basis. Other potential employers include wildlife parks, museums and cruise ships. Many tour guides are self-employed and usually give tours of publicly accessible travel destinations like national parks or nature attractions. Nature tours are very popular in Namibia with its scenic landscapes. Most local guides lead groups to natural attractions, national parks, and other outdoor locations, where wildlife and scenic locations are the focus of the tour. These guides are experts in the natural sciences and have the ability to engage visitors with their knowledge of the location.

- LEADING GUIDED TOURS
- WELL-INFORMED
- SHARE DESTINATION INFORMATION
- NATURE ATTRACTIONS + HISTORIC SITES

- EXTROVERT
- GOOD COMMUNICATOR
- TIME MANAGEMENT
- MULTI-LINGUAL

- THEORY + PRACTICE
- COMMUNICATION
- CULTURAL AWARENESS
- LIFELONG LEARNING

I really started from scratch. I had no qualifications when I joined. But, I was willing to work hard and invest in my own future. My hard work and sacrifices have paid off.”

- STRUCTURED WORKWEEK
- OUTDOORS
- WEEKEND WORK
- SEASONAL WORK

- INCREASING DEMAND
- GROWING SECTOR
- SELF-EMPLOYMENT
- NATURE + ECO-TOURISM