

Material Handlers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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Material Handlers [NOC 2021: 75101]

Materials Handlers may also be called:

- *shipment assembler*
- *bin attendant/filler*
- *building materials yard attendant*
- *building supplies handler*
- *box bander/filler*
- *hand bundler*
- *conveyor tender*
- *hand bagger / bundler / packer / packager*
- *conveyor console operator*
- *forklift truck operator*
- *truck loader*
- *warehouse man/woman*

1. What Would I Do?

Materials Handlers move, load and unload materials by hand or using a variety of material handling equipment.

Materials Handlers – Manual

- load, unload and move products and materials by hand or using basic material handling equipment
- move household appliances and furniture on and off moving trucks or vans
- do other material handling activities, such as counting, weighing, sorting, packing and unpacking

Materials Handlers – Equipment Operators

- run winches and other loading devices to load and unload materials on and off trucks, railway cars and loading docks of warehouses and industrial establishments
- operate industrial trucks, tractors, loaders and other equipment to transport materials to and from transportation vehicles and loading docks
- connect hoses or pipes and operate equipment to load and unload liquid petroleum, chemicals or other products into or from storage tanks
- operate equipment to dump materials such as coal, ore and grain into or to remove materials from railway cars, trucks or other vehicles
- operate conveyors and equipment to transfer grain or other materials from transportation vehicles to elevators, bins or other storage areas
- may do other activities, such as opening containers and crates, filling warehouse orders, assisting in taking inventory and weighing and checking materials –

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Material Handlers**
<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/material-handlers>
- **Career Cruising** (Profiles for 'Shipping & Receiving Clerk', 'Stock Clerk').
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>
Available from the VPL Digital Library

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

Material Handlers should have:

- physical strength (required for manual material handlers who work with heavy materials)
- good communication skills
- good vision
- basic math skills

You should be:

- organized
- comfortable with repetitive tasks
- able to work independently

Material Handlers work takes place indoors and outdoors in various weather conditions. You may be on your feet much of the time and may have to carry heavy items and do bending and lifting. You may be exposed to noise, vibrations, or machinery or power/hand tools that could be a source of accident or injury.

Sources: WorkBC & Career Cruising

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the median annual salary for **Material Handler** is \$41,712.

In BC's regions, material handlers can expect to make:

Community/Area	Low (\$/hour)	Median (\$/hour)	High (\$/hour)
British Columbia	17.40	20.00	32.69
Cariboo Region	17.40	24.43	35.00
Kootenay Region	18.00	22.00	25.50
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	17.40	20.00	30.00
Nechako Region	17.40	29.33	45.00
North Coast Region	19.00	25.00	36.04
Thompson–Okanagan Region	17.40	21.00	34.88
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	17.40	21.00	35.00

Table from Job Bank Wage Report <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-wages>

In addition to a salary, material handler clerks who are employed by government, hospitals, and large organizations usually receive health and dental benefits, paid vacation and sick days.

Sources: WorkBC and Career Cruising

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

Approximately 27,800 people currently work as Material Handlers in British Columbia. *Job Bank Canada* estimates job prospects in BC will be limited for the 2023-2025 period.

Employment Outlook

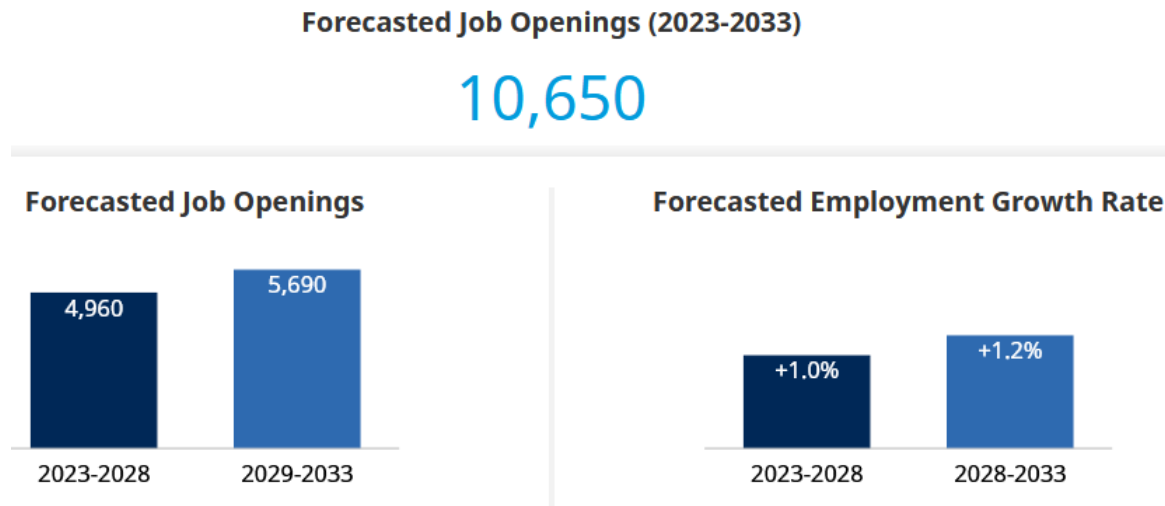


Chart from WorkBC

Sources:

- WorkBC
- JobBank Canada, Employment Outlook,
<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/outlook-occupation/16666/BC>

5. How do I become a Material Handler?

In BC, there is no certification required to work as a material handler. However, secondary school education is usually required and graduation is generally needed to advance to supervisory positions. College level courses or programs in warehouse operations, production and inventory management, or supply chain management will also improve your chances of advancing your career.

Voluntary Certification: Parts Technician

SkilledTradesBC (<https://skilledtradesbc.ca/>) offers courses and apprenticeships as a 'Parts Technician 1,' 'Parts Technician 2,' and 'Parts Technician (Red Seal).' These programs train you to order, warehouse and keep inventory control over parts and accessories for industries like the automotive, commercial transport, heavy duty, marine and warehousing sectors.

In BC, you can be certified as a Red Seal Parts Technician by successfully completing all three parts of the Parts Technician program **and** the Interprovincial 'Red Seal' exam. If you have extensive experience working in the occupation, you may choose to challenge the certification.

For more details, see:

- <https://skilledtradesbc.ca/parts-technician-1>
- <https://skilledtradesbc.ca/parts-technician-2>
- <https://skilledtradesbc.ca/parts-technician-red-seal>

6. How Do I Find A Job?

Where would I work?

- *transportation, storage and moving companies*
- *a variety of manufacturing and processing companies*
- *retail and wholesale warehouses*

Finding Advertised Jobs

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

Local Newspapers

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in *The Province* on Sundays.

Online Job Postings

- **Jobs in Logistics**

<https://www.jobsinlogistics.com/>

- **Hays.ca**

<https://www.hays.ca/jobs/logistics-supply-chain>

- **Indeed.ca**

https://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search

<https://ca.indeed.com/Material-Handling-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>

<https://ca.indeed.com/Parts-Person-jobs-in-British-Columbia>

- **Trades Training BC Jobs**

<https://jobs.tradetrainingbc.ca/>

Finding “Hidden Jobs”

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will help you *with finding jobs in this “hidden” job market.*

Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of companies that warehouse or handle materials/parts. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Logistics Search**

<https://logisticssearch.ca/>

- **Fleet Directory.com**

<https://www.fleetdirectory.com/ByLocation/Canada/BritishColumbia.htm>

Transportation & logistics companies

- **Reference Canada**

<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on “Start Search” beside Canadian Businesses, then select the “Advanced Search” button. Select both “Keyword/SIC/NAICS” under Business

Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "material handling" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library

NOTE: *You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

Networking and the Hidden Job Market:

When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain "Canadian experience." They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.

Volunteer opportunities

- **GoVolunteer.ca**
<https://govolunteer.ca/>
- **Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society**
<https://foodbank.bc.ca/volunteer/>
volunteer positions in warehouse and food distribution

For additional tips see:

- **Networking for Employment**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/networking-for-employment>
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/getting-canadian-work-experience>

7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience.

Use the library catalogue <https://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

For more information see:

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/writing-resumes-and-cover-letters>

8. Where Can This Job Lead?

With the right kind of experience, material handlers may move into other positions such as storekeeper, warehouse manager, senior parts person or parts manager.

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **Logistics BC**

<https://cmhds.com/>

- **Supply Chain Canada**

<https://www.supplychaincanada.com>

- **Inside Logistics Magazine**

<https://www.insidelogistics.ca/>

- **Trades Training BC**

<https://www.tradetrainingbc.ca/>

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**

<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/learn-more-about-working-in-bc-and-canada>

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic>.