

Concrete Finishers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



Contents

1. What Would I Do?	2
2. Am I Suited For This Job?.....	3
3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?	4
4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?	5
5. How Do I Become a Concrete Finisher.....	6
6. How Do I Find A Job?.....	7
7. Applying for a Job	10
8. Where Can This Job Lead?.....	10
9. Where Can I Find More Information?	10

Concrete Finishers [NOC 2021: 73100 / NOC 2016: 7282]

May also be called:

- concrete smoother
- cement mason
- cement/concrete finisher
- concrete mason
- precast concrete finisher

1. What Would I Do?

You smooth and finish freshly poured concrete and apply curing or surface treatments. You also install and restore various masonry structures such as foundations, floors, ceilings, sidewalks, roads, patios and high rise buildings.

Some main tasks include:

- check formwork, granular base and steel reinforcement materials and direct placement of concrete into forms or onto surfaces according to grade
- fill hollows and remove high spots to smooth freshly poured concrete
- operate power vibrator to compact concrete
- level top surface of concrete according according to grade and depth specifications using straightedge or float
- give desired finish to concrete surfaces using hand and power tools

- install anchor bolts, steel plates, door sills and other fixtures in freshly poured concrete

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Concrete Finishers**
<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/concrete-finishers>
- **SkilledTradesBC profile for Concrete Finisher**
<https://skilledtradesbc.ca/concrete-finisher>
- **Careers in Construction, Profile for Concrete Finisher**
<https://www.careersinconstruction.ca/en/career/concrete-finisher>

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

Concrete Finishers:

- *Are Physically Fit*
- *Able To Work Well As Part Of A Team*
- *Have Good Hand-Eye Coordination*
- *Have Good Communication Skills*

An ability to work with tools and equipment along with artistic skills, creative thinking, math and problem solving ability are all helpful.

You may work in an indoor environment or outdoors, so you may be exposed to various weather conditions, mud and dust. The work is often fast-paced and strenuous – you may have to lift heavy materials and spend long periods of time bending and kneeling.

Sources:

- Career Cruising
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising> (profile for Concrete Mason)
Available from the VPL Digital Library
- WorkBC Career Profile
- Careers in Construction

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the **median** annual salary for concrete finishers is \$62,568. Your wages are affected by location, employer, and the amount of work you can find each year. Wages also depend on job requirements and work conditions.

In BC's regions, you can expect to make:

Community/Area	Low (\$/hour)	Median (\$/hour)	High (\$/hour)
British Columbia	22.00	30.00	38.05
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	23.00	31.11	38.75
Thompson–Okanagan Region	21.00	27.00	35.78
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	23.00	31.00	39.00

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

If you are employed full-time, you usually receive benefits such as dental coverage, paid sick days, and vacation pay.

Sources:

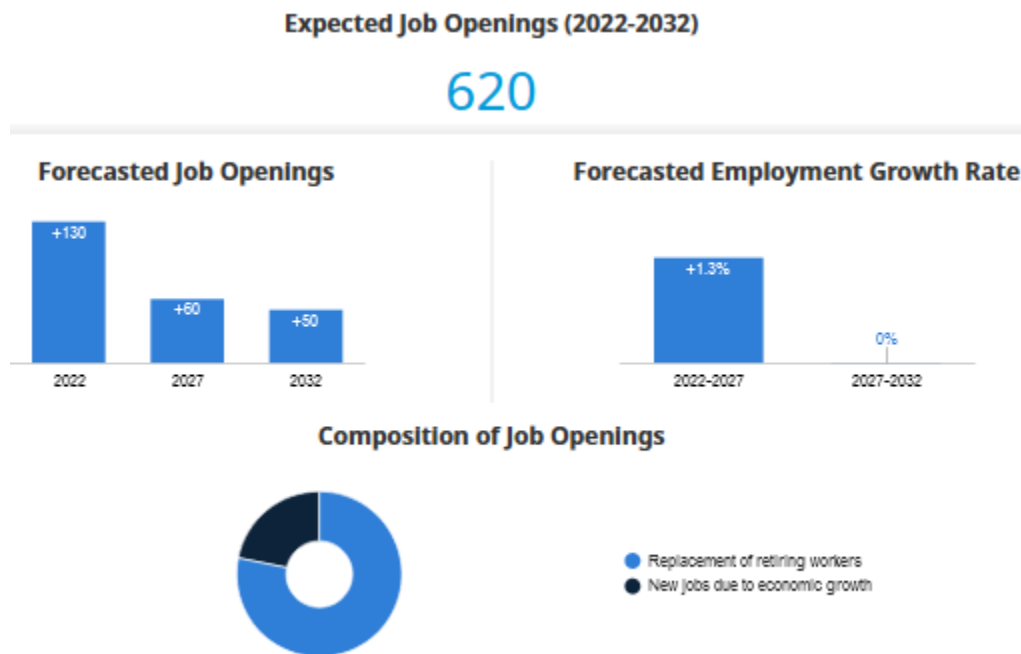
- Career Cruising
- WorkBC

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

According to JobBank Canada, the employment outlook will be very limited for concrete finishers in British Columbia for the 2022-2024 period.

1,700 people are currently employed in this occupation in BC. Most jobs are in the Mainland/Southwest (1,270 employed), Vancouver Island/Coast (350) and Thompson Okanagan (270) regions of the province.

BC Employment Outlook, 2022-2032



Sources:

- WorkBC Career Profile
- Job Bank Canada Job Outlooks <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-job-outlooks>

5. How Do I Become a Concrete Finisher

In British Columbia, trade certification for concrete finishers is available, but not mandatory

You can find employment as a concrete finisher without formal training. However, most employers prefer to hire people who have completed a two- to four-year apprenticeship program and gained certification through SkilledTradesBC.

Apprenticeship involves both classroom studies and on-the-job training under the supervision of a certified tradesperson, called a journeyperson.

To obtain a Certificate of Qualification as a concrete finisher, you write the Red Seal Exam to qualify for Red Seal endorsement. With a Red Seal, you can work in this trade anywhere in Canada.

If you have significant work experience in the trade but have never been certified in Canada, you may apply to *challenge* the certification. Being approved to challenge means that if you meet the criteria for your trade, you will not be required to go through the full program. Instead, you are allowed to become certified by writing and passing the final exam(s).

For more information about apprenticeship programs and certification see:

More information:

- **SkilledTradesBC - Concrete Finisher**
<https://skilledtradesbc.ca/concrete-finisher>
- **Red Seal Program**
<https://www.red-seal.ca>

6. How Do I Find A Job?

Where would I work?

Concrete finishers work in a variety of settings including:

- construction companies
- cement and concrete contractors
- manufacturers of precast concrete products
- you may be self-employed

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

- **Vancouver Regional Construction Association VRCA – Job Centre**
<https://vrca.ca/jobs-careers/>
- **BC Jobs.ca**
<https://www.bcjobs.ca/construction-mining-trades-jobs>
- **Indeed.com**
https://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
- **WorkBC Job Postings**
<https://www.workbc.ca/search-and-prepare-job/find-jobs#/job-search>
- **BC JobConnect**
<https://bcjobconnect.ca/> **must have permanent resident number**
newcomers can post their skills, education and work experience to BC employers looking for workers

Finding "Hidden Jobs"

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below help you with finding jobs in this "hidden" job market.

Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers

You can use company directories to produce lists of employers who hire concrete finishers in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **BC Regional Construction Associations Membership Directories**
<https://bccassn.com/about-bcca/regional-associations/>
- **BC Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association Members List**
<https://www.roadbuilders.bc.ca/members/>
- **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 "[concrete]" 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.

For example, look for temporary employment agencies such as Pristine Labour Inc. (<https://pristinelabour.com/find-a-job/>) or consider the following volunteer organizations:

Volunteer opportunities

▪ **GoVolunteer**

<https://govolunteer.ca/>

▪ **Volunteer BC**

<https://volunteerbc.bc.ca/>

▪ **Habitat for Humanity**

<https://www.habitatgv.ca/applytovolunteer> (can volunteer at construction sites or at ReStores)

For additional tips see the guides published on the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre Website: <https://www.vpl.ca/siic/>

▪ **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 experience you can progress to supervisory positions, including supervising and coordinating all the people on a site from the different construction trades.

You can also become self-employed and start your own concrete finishing business.

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **STEP (Skilled Trades Employment Program)**

<https://www.stepbc.ca/job-seeker/>

STEP is a free employment program that helps you get jobs in the construction industry

- **SkilledTradesBC**

<https://skilledtradesbc.ca/>

- **Careers in Construction**

<https://www.careersinconstruction.ca/en/careers/career-finder>

- **BC Construction Association**

<https://bccassn.com/>

Concrete Finishers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia

- **BC Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association**
<https://www.roadbuilders.bc.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>.