

Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters

Entry wages (2015): \$16.40 per hour or \$34,117.00 annually

Projected growth (2016-2025) 19.7% Regionally. Faster than national average growth of 17.1%

What will you do?

Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters install and repair pipes carrying liquids or gases within businesses, factories and homes. They each have distinctive roles, but their roles are similar in that they connect pipes, determine necessary materials for a job, and perform pressure tests on the pipe system to be airtight and watertight. Here is an example of what they each do:

Plumbers will install and repair water, drainage, and gas pipes in homes, businesses and factories. Large water lines requires installation and repair to continue the supply of water to buildings, and including smaller lines for water to refrigerators. They also install plumbing fixtures such as tubs, showers, sinks, toilets, and appliances such as dishwashers, garbage disposals and water heaters. In addition they fix plumbing problems related to clogged or leaked pipes, and will also maintain water septic systems and underground holding tanks. **Pipefitters** also known as fitters, install and maintain pipes that carry chemicals, acids, and gases. These pipes are found most commonly found in manufacturing, commercial and industrial settings. They are also known to install and repair pipe systems in power plants, and heating and cooling systems in large office buildings. They will specialize in these three areas:

- Gasfitters install pipes that provide natural gas to heating and cooling systems and to stoves. They also install pipes that provide clean oxygen to patients in hospitals.
- Sprinkler fitters install and repair fire sprinkler systems in businesses, factories, and residential buildings.
- Steamfitters install pipe systems that move steam under high pressure. Most steamfitters work at college campuses and natural-gas power plants where heat and electricity are generated, but others work in factories that use high-temperature steam pipes.

Where will you work?

Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters will work inside homes, buildings, and factories. They work indoors, and often times outdoors even during bad weather. Due to the nature of the work environment, they are often performing work in awkward or cramped spaces that can be uncomfortable. They typically work full time schedule with the possibility of overtime, evenings and weekends.

What Experience do you need?

Although most plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters learn on the job through an apprenticeship, some start out by attending a technical school. Others have started as a helper who doesn't perform any plumbing work.

What type of Training do I need?

The [Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners](#) (TSBPE) is the state regulatory and licensing agency for plumbers to work in the state. There are 4 levels of state licensure for someone required to work. Within each level there are specific types of licenses to apply and achieve.

- Apprentice Plumber:** Apprentice Plumber, Drain Cleaner, Drain Cleaner-Restricted, Residential Utilities Installer
- Journeyman Plumber:** Journeyman Plumber, Tradesman Plumber-Limited
- Inspector or Specialist:** Plumbing Inspector, Medical Gas Piping Installation, Water Supply Protection Specialist, Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialist
- Master Plumber**

Technical schools offer students courses on pipe design, safety, tool use, local plumbing codes and regulations, blueprint reading, and welding. They also study mathematics, applied physics, and chemistry. Most plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters learn through a 4-5 year apprenticeship program that consists between 1,700 to 2,000 hours of **paid-on-the-job-training** and a minimum of 246 hours of related technical education. Apprenticeship programs are often offered by unions and businesses. Most workers enter into an apprenticeship program, but can also have started out as helpers. Some programs have entry preference for veterans. After completing the apprenticeship program, you can apply for your Journeyman's license. A licensed Journeyman or a Master Plumber can be become an Inspector or Specialist after meeting the necessary requirements.



47-2152.00 – Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters (ONET Code)

What else should I know?

The TSBPE determines if a criminal conviction will deny a license/license renewal application. They advise for all applicants with a criminal background to read the [Guidelines to Determine the Fitness of a Person Who Has Been Convicted of a Crime](#) before applying for a license to know if their criminal background will be reason for denial. TSBPE will review the type of license you are seeking, the nature of the offense committed, how long ago it occurred, and employment history since the offense. They have provided a list of offenses that will prohibit someone from obtaining a license for new applicants and renewals.

Approved Tarrant County Training Programs

Provider	Program Name	Hours (Contact/Credit)	Cost	Pell Eligible
There are no training providers for this occupation on ETPS.				

*This information is subject to change. See a Workforce Center Career Counselor for more information.



Career Pathway Map – Plumbers, Pipefitters & Steamfitters

Occupation

