

Hairdressing, Beauty and Wellbeing

Would you enjoy helping people to look and feel good? Are you interested in developing your practical and creative skills? If so, this career area may be what you're looking for.

Fashion trends and the development of new cosmetic, beauty and hair care products are important factors for change in the industry. The use of barber shops has been growing due to the trend for male grooming with beard grooming being very popular.

In 2020, there were around 288,000 people working in hairdressing, barbering and beauty in the UK (excluding salon owners/managers).

What areas can I work in?

This career area includes: hairdressing, barbering, salon management, beauty therapy, nail therapy, spa therapy, aromatherapy, reflexology, make-up artistry and body art (tattooing and piercing).

Related work is also available in other areas such as: reception (although online booking is growing in popularity in larger salons and salon chains), sales, marketing, and hospitality and tourism (in health spas and holiday resorts).

To see the routes to getting into each of these sectors, take a look at our [Career Pathway](#).

What kind of companies can I work for?

Possible employers include:

- hairdressing salons (some also offer beauty treatments)
- barber shops
- beauty therapy salons
- nail bars
- health and beauty spas and centres
- tanning salons
- beauty therapy salons or related services in other businesses (such as large department stores, hotels, cruise ships, airlines, leisure centres, wedding consultants, film/TV studios and theatre companies)
- colleges and training centres (for well qualified tutors and lecturers)
- tattoo and piercing studios.

What's the job market like?

The hair and beauty industry was one of the worst affected sectors by the pandemic in 2020, and it was reported that in 2021, the hairdressing and beauty workforce declined by around 7,000. However, despite the pandemic, some hairdressing, barbering and beauty businesses continued to grow, but at a slower rate.

There are positive forecasts for some sectors, with the spa, salon and in-store treatments market predicted to grow by 48% to £8.2 billion over the period 2021-2026. Although demand will return to pre-pandemic levels, it will

still take some time for the sector to fully recover. The non-surgical treatment sector is also forecast to rise at a compound annual rate of 3.6% over the years through to 2025-26, reaching £11.7 billion.

Due to the nature of this work, average salaries are low and levels of self employment are high. Over two thirds of hair and beauty enterprises are self employed or sole traders, with more than half having no employees.

Facts and figures

- Almost half of the hairdressing, barbering and beauty workforce are aged 16-34.
- The largest distribution of hairdressing and barbering establishments in Scotland is Glasgow, accounting for 14.2% of the total.
- 86% of the hairdressing and beauty workforce is female.
- There are over 46,000 hair and beauty businesses in the UK.

Want to find out more?

You will find useful information on careers and qualifications in the industry on the [Hair and Beauty Industry Authority \(Habia\)](#) website. Habia is now part of the SkillsActive Group.

[SkillsActive](#) is the Sector Skills Council for Active Leisure, Learning and Well-being.

Sources

- NHBF industry research and statistics 2020, [National Hairdressing and Beauty Federation](#) (NHBF) (June 2022)
- NHBF Industry Statistics 2021, [National Hairdressing and Beauty Federation](#) (NHBF) (June 2022)
- Market Report: Beauty Therapy (May 2022), [Business Gateway](#)
- Market Report: Hairdressing salons and Barber Shops (October 2021), [Business Gateway](#)