

Butcher

Butchers prepare meat and sell it in shops, supermarkets, or through wholesalers. Specialist butchers prepare organic, kosher, or halal meats, depending on local demand.

The Work

You could be:

- removing bones and sawing, cutting, dicing and mincing meat
- creating recipes for making new products such as burgers or readymade meals
- making raw and cooked meat into sausages and pies
- serving customers; weighing and packaging meat and giving advice on preparation and cooking
- making sure work areas are kept clean at all times
- sharpening and cleaning knives and operating cutting machinery
- displaying produce in windows or cabinets
- monitoring stock levels, placing orders and storing meat correctly
- driving to markets, wholesalers and customers' premises to collect and deliver products.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting pay is often based on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) or the National Living Wage (NLW).

As of 1 April 2026 the National Minimum Wage is £8.00 an hour for workers under 18, £10.85 an hour for workers aged 18 to 20. The National Living Wage for those aged 21 and over is £12.71 an hour.

The apprentice rate, for those aged under 19 or aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship, is £8.00 an hour (1 April 2026).

With experience this can rise up to £15.00 an hour or more.

Conditions

- Your workplace will be clean and indoors, but might be cold.
- You would work around 40 hours a week, including early mornings, evenings and weekends.
- There will be heavy lifting.
- Your employer will give you protective overalls, disposable gloves and something to cover your hair.
- You would stand for long periods.

Getting In

- You do not need formal qualifications but a good general education is useful.
- You need basic reading and numeracy skills.
- You can get in through a Modern Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Operations (Meat and Poultry Skills) at SCQF Level 5.
- A driving licence may be useful.
- For some aspects of butchery work, you must be over 18 years old.

What Does It Take

You must be:

- practical, with accurate attention to detail
- physically fit
- able to follow health and safety rules
- able to work in a team
- polite and friendly.

You should also have:

- good communication skills
- good customer service skills
- number skills, for dealing with money
- good hygiene awareness.

Training

- Training is mainly on the job. You can work towards SVQ Food and Drinks Operations (Meat and Poultry Skills) at SCQF Levels 5 and 6.
- You would be expected to complete a relevant food safety course.
- You would complete continuous professional and personal development throughout your career.

Getting On

- You can work up to supervisor or manager.
- In a supermarket, you could become a departmental manager and then possibly a general manager.
- You could move into another profession such as meat hygiene and quality.

Contacts

Scottish Craft Butchers

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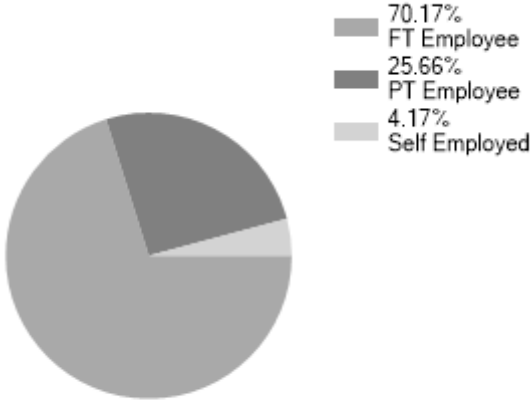
Website: www.craftbutchers.co.uk

X: @ScoCraftButcher

Facebook: www.facebook.com/scottishcraftbutchers

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

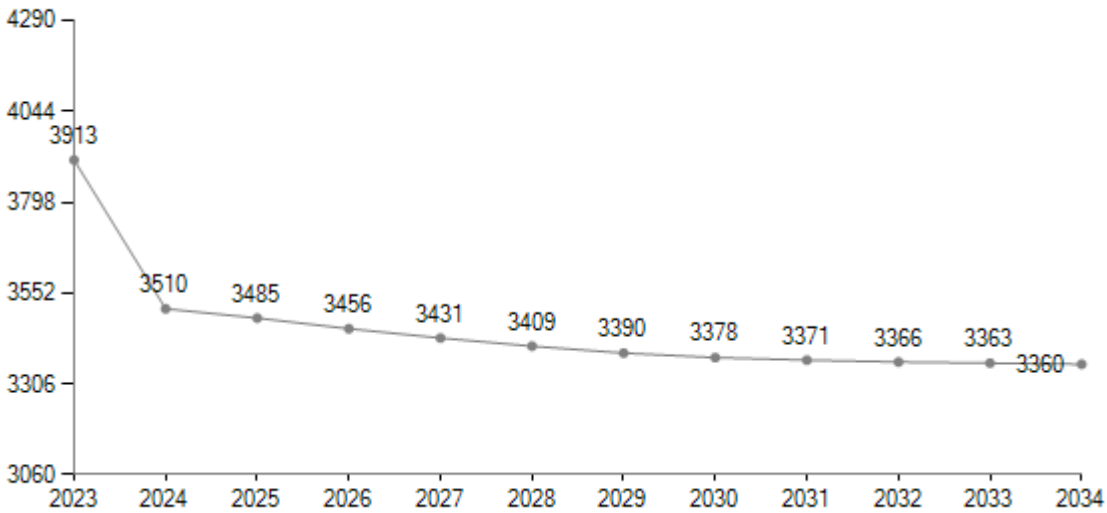


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)