

Barber

Barbers cut and style men's hair. They may also provide other grooming services, such as shaving, beard trimming or hair treatments.

The Work

You could be:

- helping your clients to decide how they want their hair
- cutting hair with scissors and comb, razors and clippers
- trimming beards and moustaches, or eyebrows and the hair in ears and nostrils
- shaving clients, perhaps giving an open razor shave (using hot or cold towels, lather and razor)
- applying styling products
- offering other services, such as facial massages, hair and scalp treatments or hair colouring
- ordering supplies and materials, selling hairstyling products to customers
- keeping up to date with new styles and techniques and hair products
- making appointments, answering the phone, taking payments and helping to keep the salon clean and tidy.

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 to around £14.00 an hour or more. Tips from customers, and possibly commission from products you may sell in the shop, can increase your income.

Conditions

- You normally work indoors in a barber's shop.
- You would work around 40 hours a week.
- You spend most of your time standing and you may have to bend and stretch a lot.
- You usually work one or two late evenings each week as well as a Saturday.

Getting In

- You might be able to train through a Modern Apprenticeship. For entry, a good general education is useful.
- You might enter by way of a full time course. Several colleges offer the SVQ in Hairdressing and Barbering or Barbering at SCQF Level 4-6. Some courses do not have any formal entry requirements; others may ask for subjects at National 4.
- Some colleges offer other qualifications in barbering including Vocational Training Charitable Trust (VTCT) and City and Guilds qualifications.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a friendly and chatty manner with customers
- a natural creativity
- a steady hand when using scissors, clippers and razors
- good time management skills, for planning daily appointments.

You need to be:

- smart and well presented
- able to work quickly and accurately
- a good listener – to follow instructions from customers
- aware of new trends in styles and products
- able to work under pressure
- aware of health and safety issues.

Training

- If you train on the job with a barber, you may be able to attend college part time and work towards SVQ Barbering at SCQF Levels 5 and 6.
- If you take a full time course as the first step and then enter employment, you may be able to study part time for more advanced qualifications.
- If you have a relevant SVQ at SCQF Level 5 you can apply to the Hair Council to become a State Registered Graduate Barber.

Getting On

- Most barbers work in fairly small barbers' shops which serve customers in their local areas.
- After gaining enough experience, you may be able to open your own shop, become self-employed and perhaps employ other barbers.
- With 3 years' experience, you can apply to the Hair Council to become a State Registered Senior Barber.
- By taking qualifications in hairdressing, you may be able to progress to become a hair stylist, dealing with both female and male customers.

Contacts

Habia (Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority)

Tel: 01302 774926

Email: info@habia.org

Website: www.habia.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/HabiaUK

Hair Council

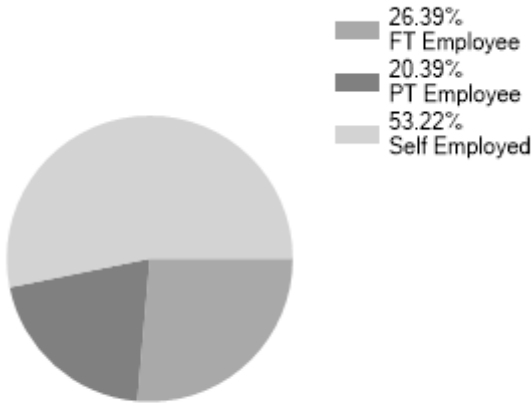
Tel: 020 8760 7010

Website: www.haircouncil.org.uk

X: [@hairbarbcouncil](https://twitter.com/hairbarbcouncil)

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

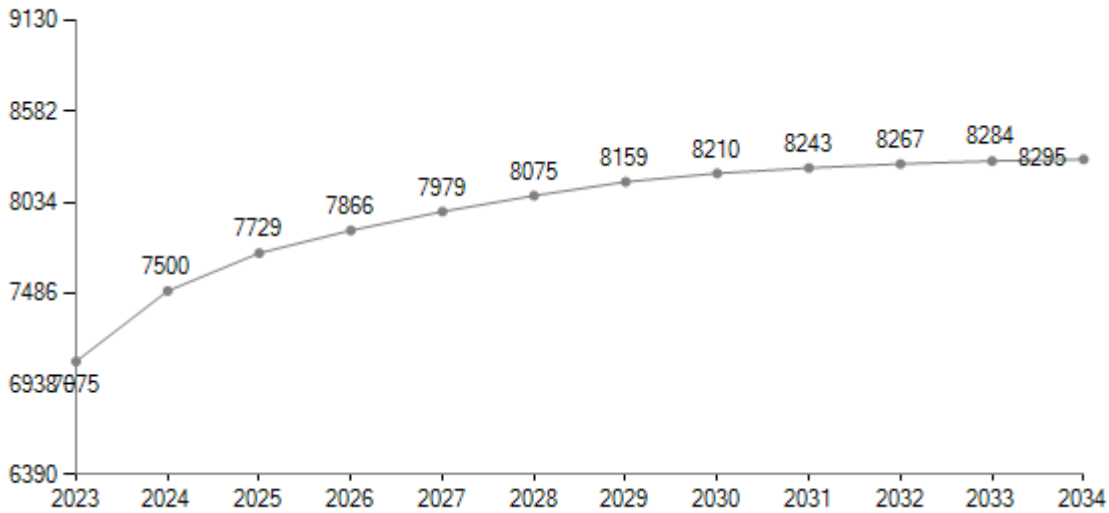


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)