

Retail Buyer

A retail buyer selects and buys in stock for shops and stores to sell. They usually specialise in one product type, such as clothes, electrical items or food and drink.

The Work

You could be:

- discussing with managers what goods to buy and how many
- looking in catalogues or on the internet for new lines to sell
- finding new suppliers and maintaining contact with existing suppliers
- agreeing prices and delivery dates with suppliers over the telephone or by email
- attending trade fairs in the UK and abroad
- working with merchandisers, designers or marketing staff to launch new product lines
- evaluating product quality
- gathering customer feedback on products and monitoring sales, prices and competitors' products
- analysing trends and sales and presenting the data in reports.

Pay

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

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

Salaries for assistant buyers can range from £21,000 to £30,000 a year. With experience this can rise to £40,000 to £50,000 a year or more.

Conditions

- You will work in an office, but attend trade fairs and meetings all over the country, and possibly abroad.
- Hours are regular but you may have to work overtime to meet some deadlines.
- You might sometimes spend overnights away from home.
- You might get a discount on goods you buy from the shop.
- Part time work may be available.

Getting In

- Entry is competitive.
- Apply directly to companies for a job as a trainee buyer or buyer's assistant.
- Most employers want a degree (SCQF Levels 9-10) or at least an HND (SCQF Level 8). Retail courses which include units in buying or purchasing are most appropriate. To get on to a degree course, you need 4-5 Highers.

- You should have previous retail experience.
- Some fashion retail companies have a direct entry scheme for graduates.
- You usually need a full clean driving licence.

What Does It Take

You should be able to:

- spot new trends
- plan work and manage your time
- build up a detailed knowledge of products
- make decisions quickly
- work under pressure to meet deadlines
- take the initiative.

You should have:

- creative ideas
- strong communication skills
- good negotiating skills
- business skills
- an interest in consumer behaviour
- number and IT skills.

Training

- Some companies will let you study part time while at work.
- Company training involves on the job training, with part time study towards the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) qualifications. These range from the entry level Certificate in Procurement and Supply Operations, through to the Professional Diploma in Procurement and Supply.

Getting On

- From trainee retail buyer you go on to be an assistant retail buyer, then retail buyer. From there you can go on into general management.
- CIPS offer a number of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training courses, which may help to progress your career.

Contacts

British Retail Consortium (BRC)

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Email: info@brc.org.uk

Website: www.brc.org.uk

Website (2): www.rethinkretail.org.uk

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

Facebook: www.facebook.com/thebrc

Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply

Tel: 01780 756777

Website: www.cips.org

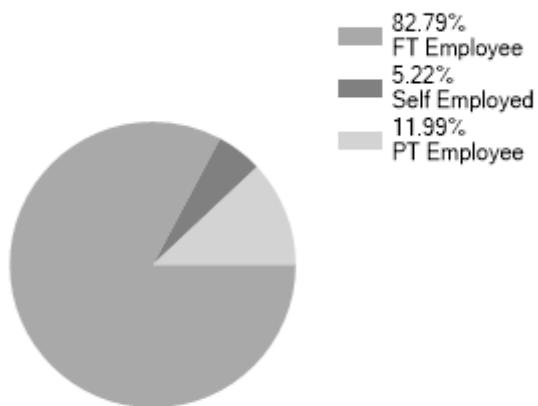
Website (2): www.cipsibuy.com

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

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OfficialCIPS?ref=tn_tnmn

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

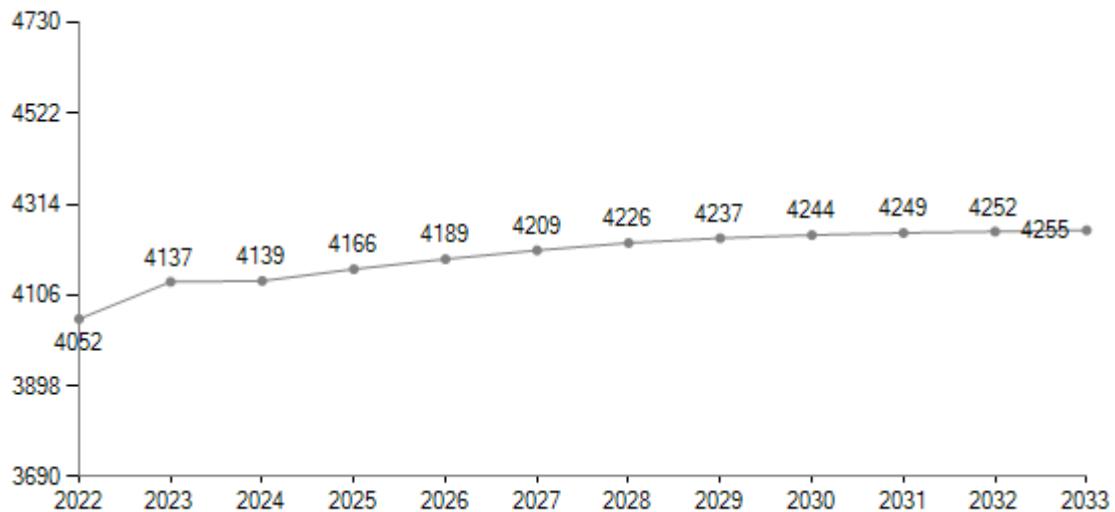


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)