

Taxi or Car Driver

Taxi or car drivers take people and their luggage to their destination. They may be hired for individual journeys or provide regular services to the same client or customer. They may also be called chauffeurs or minicab drivers.

The Work

The taxi trade is split into two types of vehicle: licensed hackney carriages (black cabs) which are able to pick people up in the street or from taxi ranks; and licensed private hire vehicles, or PHVs (known as minicabs), which are not allowed to pick people up in the street, but have to be booked through the firm's office.

Other car drivers or chauffeurs are engaged to transport clients to and from particular functions, or work for large organisations or private individuals.

You could be:

- driving a normal car, a black cab, a people carrier, a minibus or a stretch limo
- picking up passengers from a taxi rank or the street, or clients who book a taxi through the firm's office
- transporting passengers to particular functions, such as weddings, funerals or major social events by the most direct route – perhaps using satellite navigation
- using a radio, sometimes while driving, to communicate with head office, taking instructions and details of pick ups
- making sure passengers get in and out of the car safely, helping them load and unload luggage and helping wheelchair users
- in a taxi or private hire car, collecting fares and giving change
- giving passengers local information if needed
- keeping the vehicle clean and checking lights, brakes, fuel and tyres, reporting faults, or doing minor repairs.

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
- whether you are self-employed
- the demand for the job.

You can start off earning around £20,000 a year. More experienced drivers earn an average of around £35,000 a year, with some earning considerably more.

Conditions

- You might work evenings, nights, weekends and public holidays.
- You would have to sit for long periods in a confined space.

- You might have to wear a uniform.
- You might have to lift heavy luggage.
- You would drive in all weather conditions.
- If you are a chauffeur for a private household, you may have live-in accommodation.
- Part time and shift work is common.
- Full time work could be around 40 hours a week, sometimes more.

Getting In

A good general education is useful. You need a special licence to be a taxi or private hire driver. Each local authority has its own criteria you must meet to be approved, so you would have to check specific requirements. The most common criteria are listed below.

- You must normally be at least 21 years old. For some employers you may need to be 25.
- You need a clean driving licence and some companies require that you've held this for 2 - 5 years.
- You may need to pass a test of knowledge of the local area.
- You may have to pass a medical examination.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.
- If you are using your own vehicle, that also needs a special licence.
- Licences have to be renewed periodically, the frequency of which depends on the local authority.

You might work for a taxi firm, a car hire firm or agency, a large private or public organisation, a funeral director or a private household. You may work for a company but on a self-employed basis, where they may provide the vehicle and cover costs.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- reliable and punctual
- honest
- aware of safety issues
- polite and helpful
- patient and tolerant of other road users
- able to work to a time schedule.

You need to have:

- excellent driving skills in all conditions
- a good sense of direction
- excellent knowledge of local geography and above average knowledge of towns beyond the locality
- a good memory
- the ability to stay calm under pressure.

Training

- Taxi drivers have to spend time learning all the streets and roads in their local area. You need this detailed knowledge to pass local authority tests (for those that have them).
- Car drivers and chauffeurs may have on the job training to meet the requirements of their particular employers.

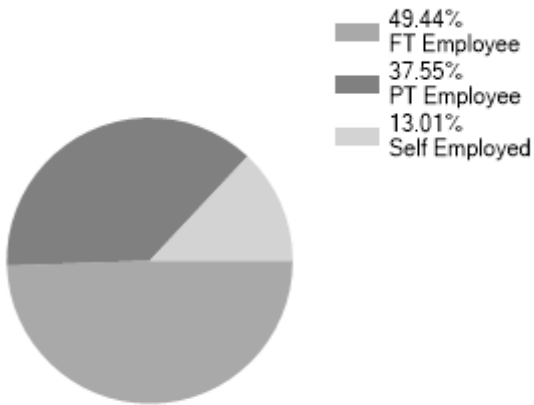
Getting On

- Career and promotion prospects depend on the nature and size of the firm you are working for.
- In some cases there may be opportunities to move into supervisory or management positions.
- You may also be able to buy your own car or cab, and progress from there to running your own firm and employing other drivers.

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.