

Steeplejack/Lightning Protection Fitter

A steeplejack builds and repairs the inside or outside of tall structures such as church spires, industrial chimneys, power station cooling towers, high rise buildings, monuments, castles or bridges. Some specialise in fitting lightning protection systems.

The Work

You could be:

- using tools to work with stone, brick, glass or metal at great heights
- erecting access ladders, scaffolding, work platforms and bosun's seats (harnesses) to create a safe working environment
- using this equipment to climb up the structure while carrying tools
- erecting, painting, inspecting, repairing or dismantling tall structures
- repairing damaged brickwork or stonework, welding metal, replacing glass
- inspecting damage to structures after storms
- installing lightning protection and earthing equipment on structures such as industrial chimneys, church spires and power stations
- dismantling access equipment when the job is complete
- reporting on problems and liaising with architects and engineers.

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.

Wages are set annually by the National Joint Council for the Steeplejack and Lightning Protection Agency. As of April 2024 the hourly rates for apprentice steeplejacks are:

- Age 16 - Year 1: £6.92 / Year 2: N/A
- Age 17 - Year 1: £7.55 / Year 2: £10.06
- Age 18 - Year 1: £10.06 / Year 2: £10.69
- Age 19 - Year 1: £10.69 / Year 2: £11.32
- Age 20 - Year 1: £11.32 / Year 2: £11.95
- Age 21 and over - Year 1: £12.26 / Year 2: £12.58.

As of April 2024 the hourly rates for apprentice lightning protection fitter are:

- Age 16 - Year 1: £6.46 / Year 2: N/A
- Age 17 - Year 1: £7.04 / Year 2: £9.39
- Age 18 - Year 1: £9.39 / Year 2: £9.98

- Age 19 - Year 1: £9.98 / Year 2: £10.57
- Age 20 - Year 1: £10.57 / Year 2: £11.15
- Age 21 and over - Year 1: £11.45 / Year 2: £11.74.

The full rate for a qualified steeplejack with NVQ Level 2 is £14.78, and with Level 3, £17.40 an hour. For a fully qualified lightning protection fitter, the rate for NVQ Level 2 is £12.72 and for Level 3 £13.35 - £14.12 an hour.

Conditions

- You work mostly outdoors, in all weathers.
- You climb and balance while carrying ladders and equipment at great heights.
- Rain and wind can make your job difficult as well as dangerous.
- When indoors, for example inside an industrial chimney, conditions may be cramped and dusty.
- There can be a lot of bending, lifting and stretching.
- You wear a hard hat, safety harness and other protective gear.
- The working day begins early and depends on hours of daylight.
- You will have to travel to different sites and perhaps spend time living away from home.
- Work can be seasonal, with shorter hours and sometimes lay-offs in winter.

Getting In

- The normal entry route is through a Modern Apprenticeship, run by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and the Steeplejack and Lightning Protection Training Group.
- You do not always need formal qualifications, but some subjects at National 4 or 5 including English, Maths and a science or technological subject are helpful.
- You could study the Foundation Apprenticeship in Construction (SCQF Level 4 or 5) in S3-S6, which can help to get into a relevant Modern Apprenticeship.
- You usually have to take an aptitude test, including literacy, numeracy and problem solving assessments.
- A driving licence can be useful and may be necessary.
- You must hold a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card or equivalent to work in the construction industry. You must pass a health and safety test to qualify for this scheme.

Look for jobs with specialist steeplejack companies or with building or civil engineering firms.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- an excellent head for heights and good sense of balance
- good co-ordination and hand skills
- excellent organisational skills
- in depth knowledge of correct working and safety practices – for yourself and for those on the ground
- attention to detail
- physical fitness for climbing
- the ability to work well as part of a team.

Training

- Trainees are sponsored by an employer for a 2-year apprenticeship, with attendance for up to 4 weeks at a time at the National Construction College - East in Bircham Newton, Norfolk.
- You would work towards NVQ Level 2 in Accessing Operations and Rigging: Steeplejacking at or NVQ Level 2 Accessing Operations and Rigging: Lightning protective operative.
- You might undergo training for other certification, such as PASMA (the Prefabricated Access Suppliers' and Manufacturers' Association) for working with scaffold towers.

Getting On

- With experience you can progress to a supervisory job.
- You might move into management.
- You could become self-employed.
- You might find work abroad.

More Information

For more information please see the organisations listed below:

- [Construction Industry Training Board](#) (CITB)
- [Steeplejack and Lightning Protection Training Group](#) (SLPTG)

Contacts

GoConstruct

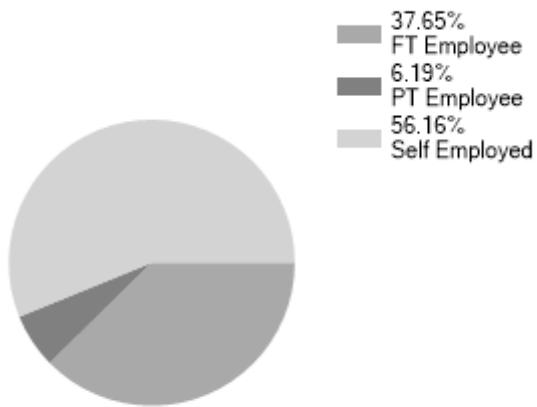
Website: www.goconstruct.org

X: [@GoConstructUK](#)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/goconstructuk

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

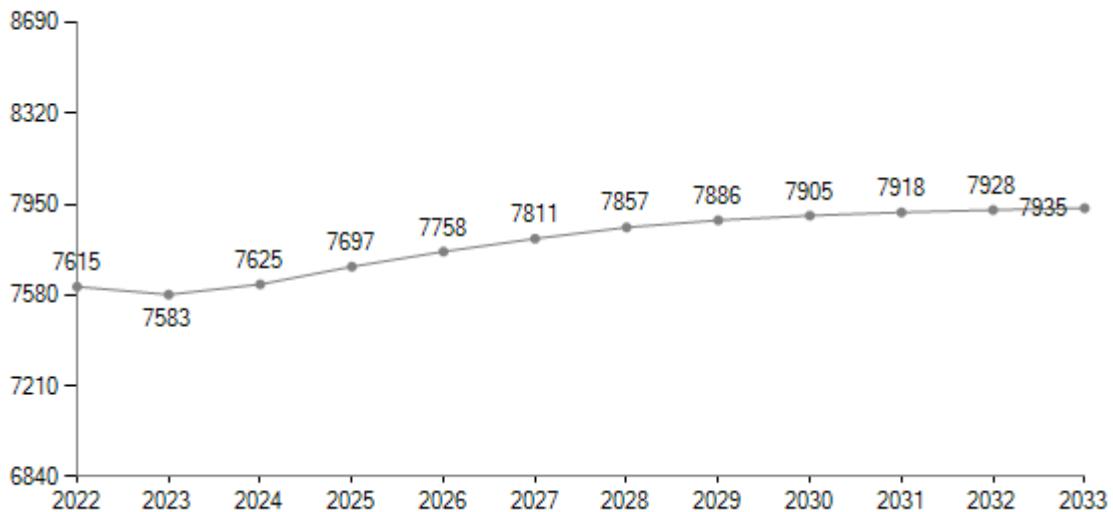


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)