

Ames Taper

Ames tapers stick tape to the surfaces of walls and ceilings. This seals the joints between sheets of plasterboard or wallboard, leaving a seamless finish ready for decoration. Ames tapers are sometimes called drywall or dryline finishers.

The Work

You could be:

- nailing down the surface of a wall or ceiling
- mixing sealing compound and spreading it by hand with a trowel over joints
- pressing paper tape over compound, covering joints and nails
- spreading the compound and taping the joint all in one, using a special machine
- sanding down the rough spots and filling cracks and holes
- fitting metal mouldings at corners
- spraying on a special compound which gives a texture to the wall and ceiling.

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.

As of June 2025 the Building and Allied Trades Joint Industrial Council (BATJIC) recommends the following rates for a 2-year apprenticeship in Scotland based on a 39-hour week are:

Year 1 – £303.28 (£7.78 an hour)

Year 2 – £401.70 (£10.30 an hour).

Please note these rates may vary if the Apprentice is 21 years old or over and has completed the first year of their apprenticeship. National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) will apply.

A fully qualified and experienced ames taper can earn between £11.00 and £23.00 an hour.

Conditions

- The job involves bending, kneeling and stretching.
- You balance on ladders, scaffolding or stilts.
- You work mostly indoors. Conditions are dusty and sometimes noisy so you will need to wear a face mask or ear protectors and overalls.
- You have to buy your own taping machines and tools if self-employed.
- You have to travel to and from the sites, transporting materials.

- You may have to work away from home.
- You will probably work shifts and overtime with possible night shifts.
- Some jobs are on a contract basis, for a few weeks or months at a time.

Getting In

- The normal entry route is by finding a Modern Apprenticeship with an employer.
- You do not always need formal qualifications, but some employers ask for subjects at National 4 or 5 including English, Maths and a science or technological subject.
- 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 will usually have to sit an aptitude test as part of the application process.
- You would require a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card or equivalent to work on a building site.
- A driving licence would be useful if you are travelling between sites.

You could apply for a job with construction companies, small building firms, local authorities or housing associations.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- good with your hands
- good at basic maths
- able to read diagrams and plans
- good at following instructions
- safety-conscious
- good at spotting imperfections
- able to work to deadlines
- able to work at heights.

Training

- Training during an apprenticeship is mainly on the job with off the job training at college. You would work towards SVQs in Interior Systems (Construction): Dry Lining - Finishing or Interior Systems (Construction): Dry Lining - Fixing at SCQF Level 5.
- You could go on to do an HNC in construction at college on a part time basis.

Getting On

- With further training or qualifications you could progress to a supervisory or management role.
- You could become self-employed, in which case you must have your own equipment and tools. Most of the work is in cities. In remote areas it is painters and joiners who carry out this work.

More Information

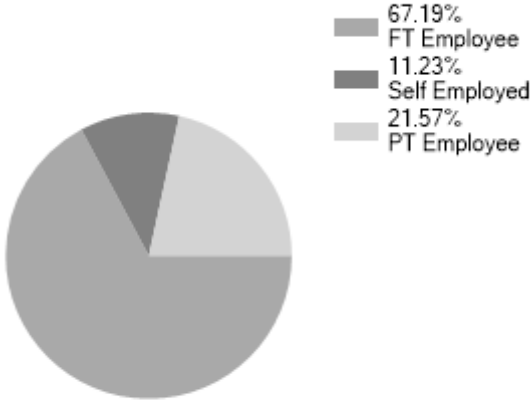
For more information please see the organisations below:

- [Construction Industry Training Board](#) (CITB)
- [Finishes and Interiors Sector](#) (FIS)
- [Scottish Building Apprenticeship and Training Council](#) (SBATC)

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

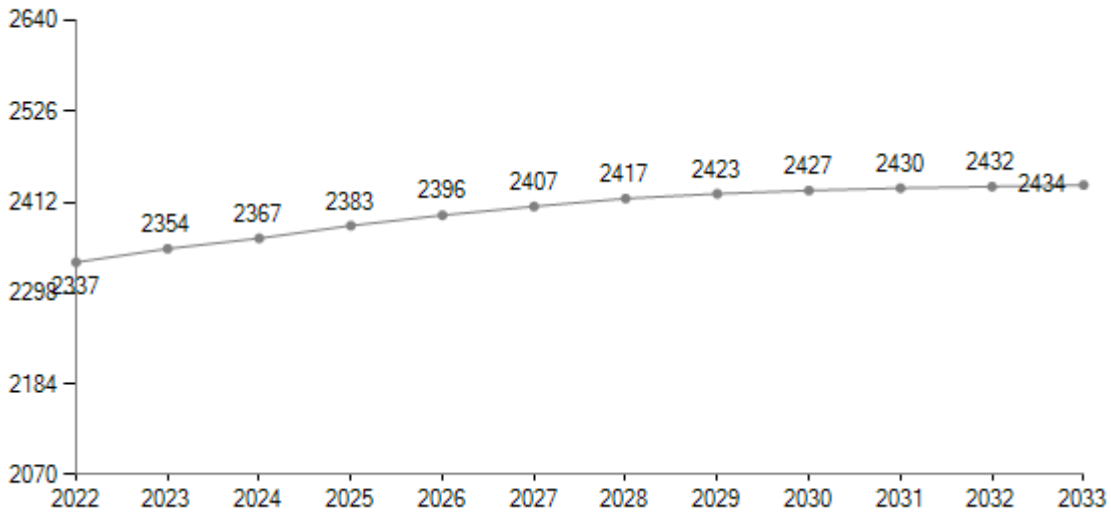


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)