

## Clothing Alteration Hand

Clothing alteration hands use sewing machines or hand sewing skills to alter or repair clothes to suit customers. You may work in a specialist shop such as bridal wear. Other job titles include seamstress, dressmaker or tailor (see job profile [Tailor or Dressmaker](#)).

### The Work

Clothing alteration hands work on jackets, suits, trousers, coats, skirts, dresses, shirts and other items of clothing such as wedding dresses.

You could be:

- discussing with a customer what type of alterations they want, or recommending how much needs altering
- altering or repairing garments which the customer brings in, or making final minor adjustments to new made-to-measure or ready-to-wear garments to fit customers
- measuring the customer and marking the garment with chalk or pins to show where to make the alterations
- using a sewing machine, iron press and other equipment
- where necessary, stitching or tacking by hand, removing stitching and re-stitching
- taking in or letting out waistbands; taking up or letting down hems; putting in and pressing pleats; altering sleeves
- repairing garments: patching or darning holes; replacing zips and buttons; carrying out invisible mending
- using chemicals or heat to fuse linings and inner canvases to outer fabrics
- ironing or pressing garments.

### 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.

The starting salary is often based on the National Minimum Wage (NMW).

As of 1 April 2020 the National Minimum Wage is £4.55 an hour for workers aged 16 to 17, £6.45 an hour for workers aged 18 to 20 and £8.20 an hour for workers aged 21 to 24. The National Living Wage is £8.72 for workers aged 25 and over. With experience this can rise to between £10.00 and £13.50 an hour.

Self-employed alteration hands charge their own rates.

### Conditions

- You would usually work 35-40 hours a week, often including evenings and weekends.
- Hours are often flexible, and part time work is common.
- You could work in a sales area which is open to the public, or in the workshop.
- If you are self-employed you might work from your own home.

## Getting In

- You do not need formal qualifications, but a good general education is useful.
- Sewing experience (both machine and hand sewing) is helpful and sometimes necessary.
- You would usually enter direct to a job with on the job training.
- You might enter after taking an NQ or NC in a subject such as fashion design and manufacture.
- You might find work with a tailor, a dry-cleaning company, or a department store. Vacancies are advertised in jobcentres and online.

## What Does It Take

You need to have:

- an interest in sewing, fashion and textiles
- some knowledge or experience of sewing — by hand or machine
- a good eye for style and detail
- patience and tact
- skill in working with your hands
- business skills if you are self-employed.

You need to be able to:

- take accurate measurements
- prioritise your work load
- work to deadlines
- work on your own and as part of a team.

## Training

- Training is usually on the job.
- You may work alongside an experienced member of staff as their assistant.

## Getting On

- Alteration hands often work in small companies with no formal promotion structure. Even in department stores the alteration section is likely to be small, so there are limited opportunities for promotion.
- Some alteration hands start their own business.

## Contacts

UK Fashion and Textile Association (UKFT)

Tel: 020 7843 9460

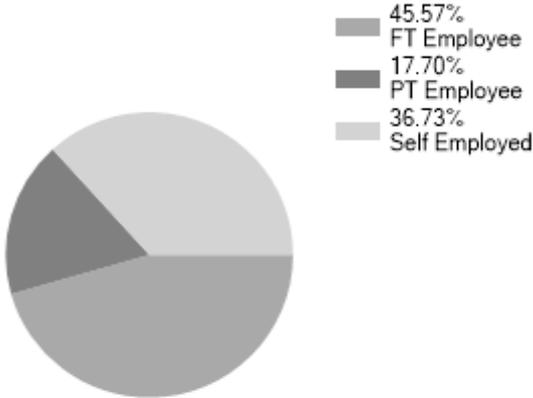
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Statistics

Employment Status UK %

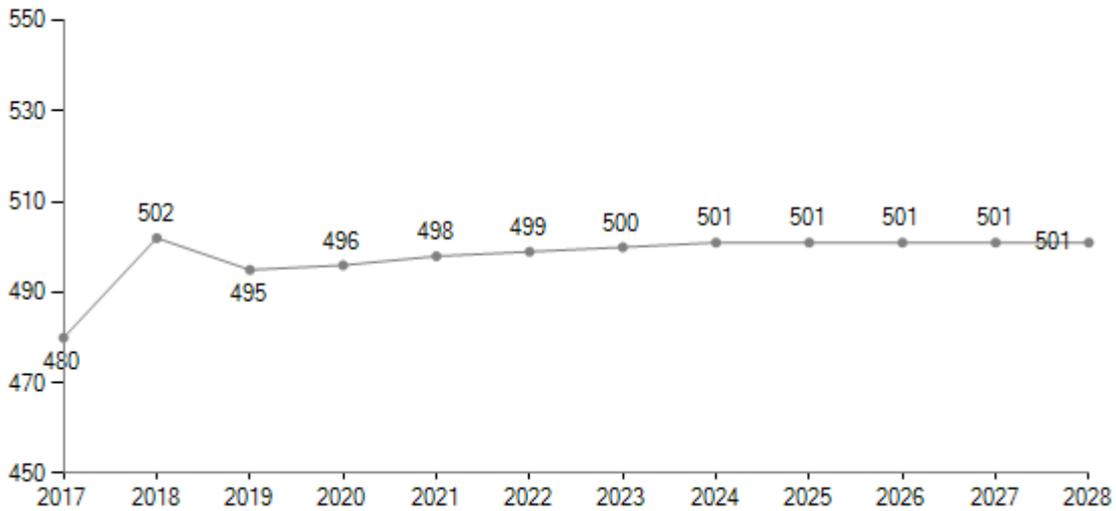


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)