

Roadie

A roadie helps musicians while they are on tour by setting up and dismantling equipment, loading the van and perhaps driving it from gig to gig. Other names for a roadie include back stage crew or road crew.

The Work

You could be:

- loading and unloading vans, trailers and buses with instruments and equipment
- travelling with, and perhaps driving, the van with the musicians and equipment
- helping check and tune instruments and maintain the equipment
- rigging up wires, lighting and sound equipment, perhaps by operating cherry-pickers (hydraulic lifting machines)
- controlling sound and lighting and setting up special effects such as pyrotechnics (fireworks)
- ensuring the safety and security of all equipment and the performers
- protecting the musicians from unwanted attention from fans and the press
- making travel arrangements, organising catering and ensuring performers have everything they need
- taking down the set after a show and transporting it to the next place or storing it securely.

Pay

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

- whether you are working for a band, an agency or a venue
- how successful your band is
- what specialist skills you have.

An unskilled roadie might start off on or around £8.00 an hour, rising with experience to around £15 an hour. A roadie with specialist technical skills in lighting and audio might earn up to around £30 an hour. However some jobs are on a 'low pay/no pay' basis, with all expenses and any profits shared.

Conditions

- You work long, irregular hours, including evenings and weekends.
- You travel, perhaps abroad.
- You spend periods away from home, possibly sleeping and eating on the tour bus, or in basic accommodation.
- There is a lot of heavy lifting.
- You might work at heights.
- You would work indoors and outdoors, often in hot and noisy conditions or bad weather.
- You work freelance, with little job security, often on short term contracts.

Getting In

- There are no formal entry qualifications.
- A qualification in music technology, audio visual technology, music and audio technology or sound production or engineering could be useful. Courses are available in colleges throughout Scotland from NC and NQ level (SCQF Levels 4-6) to HNC (SCQF Level 7) and HND (SCQF Level 8).
- Entry to the industry depends on making contacts and demonstrating a genuine interest in live music.
- You might have to start off helping as an unpaid volunteer.
- You usually need a driving licence and perhaps a Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) or Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) licence.
- Health and safety and first aid certificates are useful.
- You need to be over 18 if touring.

Jobs are with individual bands, or with agencies or venues. Look for vacancies in music magazines, music shops or on the internet.

What Does It Take

You should have:

- an interest in music and technology
- good practical skills
- technical knowledge
- an awareness of health and safety issues
- business skills, if dealing with tour or venue organisation
- a sense of humour.

You need:

- stamina
- an ability to work at heights
- good physical fitness
- the ability to work under pressure
- organisation skills
- teamworking skills
- the ability to read stage and technical plans
- a can do attitude.

Training

It is useful and sometimes necessary to get training in specialist skills such as sound production, audio console work, rigging or pyrotechnics (fireworks). You can get details of courses from the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) website.

Getting On

- If you do a course such as an HNC or HND in music business you could move into band management, promotions management or production management.

- If you do a relevant college course you could become a sound or lighting technician (see [Lighting Technician](#) and [Sound Technician](#)).

More Information

The Creative and Cultural Skills website has a careers section called [Creative Choices](#) which covers careers information, jobs and opportunities in music, including touring stage crew.

Contacts

Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT)

Tel: 07760 549476

Email: admin@abtt.org.uk

Website: www.abtt.org.uk

X: @theabtt

BPI - The British Phonographic Industry

Tel: 020 7803 1300

Email: general@bpi.co.uk

Website: www.bpi.co.uk

X: @bpi_music

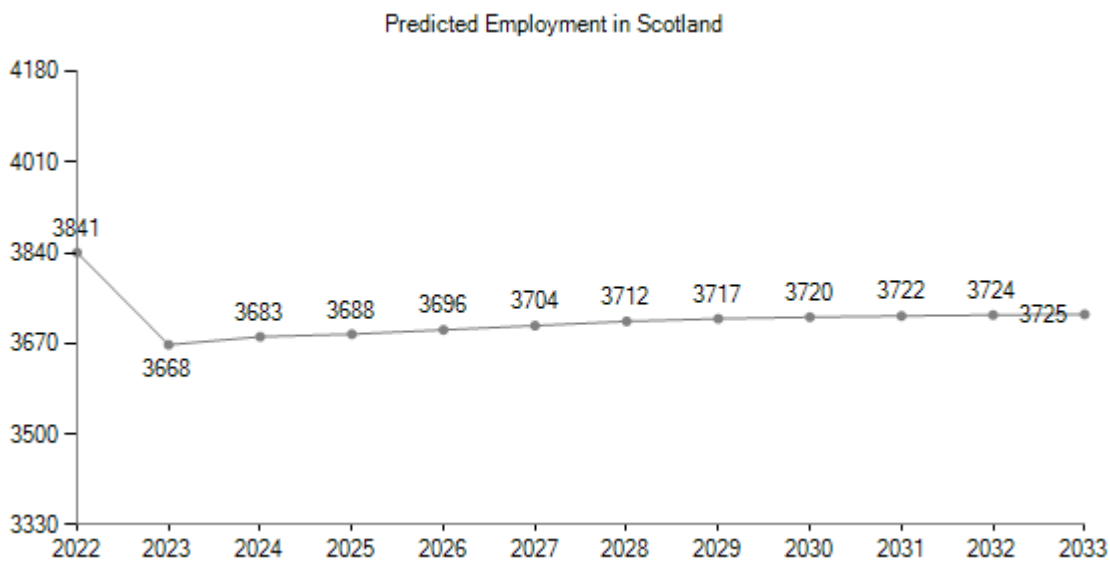
Facebook: www.facebook.com/thebpi

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)