

## Machine Printer

A machine printer sets up and operates different types of printing machines or 'presses'. They watch over the presses while they are running and sort out any problems that come up, for example a paper jam or colour imperfections in the printed item.

### The Work

There are different types of printing techniques, including offset litho, flexography, gravure and digital, but you would usually work on one particular type of machine. You could be:

- getting the presses ready for printing — fitting and adjusting the printing plates and cylinders
- checking that paper and ink meet the requirements of the job
- matching colours to the customer's requirements
- loading the paper and ink and checking levels throughout the print run
- setting the machine controls, for example, paper size, paper margins, ink flow and tension — most presses are now computer controlled
- checking proof copies and making necessary adjustments to the machine before printing the full run
- maintaining stock levels of supplies
- doing basic machine maintenance and repair — oiling and cleaning the presses.

### Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual salaries may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for and whether you are self-employed
- the demand for the job.

A qualified machine printer can earn around £18,000 a year. An experienced machine printer can earn around up to £35,000 a year or more, depending on size of the employer and level of experience.

### Conditions

- You will probably work in a printing warehouse or workshop.
- Your workplace may be noisy and hot.
- You may need to use protective clothing or equipment to work with some types of machines.
- You would probably handle chemicals, for example special cleaning fluids.
- You might work shifts, including nights.

### Getting In

- A good general education is useful. Many employers look for a group of 4 or 5 subjects at National 4 or 5. English, Maths, science subjects and Computing Science are very useful.
- You may be able to get in by doing a Modern Apprenticeship in Print Industry Occupations, leading to

SVQs.

Companies you might work for include a printing warehouse, newspaper print room, in-house printing shop or workshop.

## What Does It Take

You should be:

- good with your hands
- self-motivated
- able to match colours and have an eye for detail
- responsible and aware of safety issues
- able to work to strict deadlines
- able to concentrate for long periods of time
- able to solve problems
- able to work alone and in a team.

## Training

- You train mainly on the job, with part time off the job training at college. This usually takes three to four years.
- You might work towards SVQ Press (SCQF Levels 5 and 6).

## Getting On

- If you work for a small company you may have to move to get promotion.
- With some relevant experience you might be able to move into a supervisory or management position, printing administration or production management.
- You could also move into related areas, such as, print finishing, sales or technical machine maintenance.

## Contacts

### British Printing Industries Federation (BPIF)

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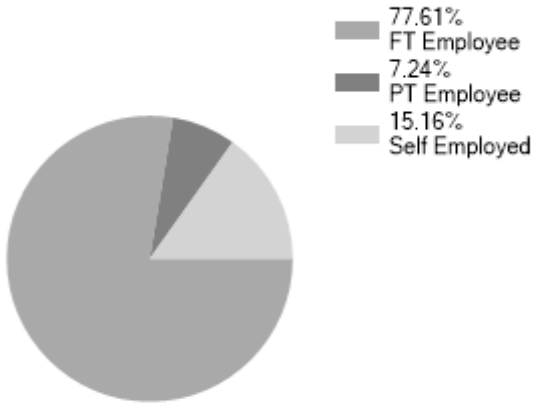
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Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.