Trades route chooser: seven ways to start

One page for the seven training routes on /trades/: direct entry, pre-apprenticeship, youth, union, private college, military or employer-paid, and trade qualifier. Note what fits you and the official page to read next.

NAME

DATE

TRADE I AM LOOKING AT

PROVINCE OR TERRITORY

COMPULSORY OR VOLUNTARY THERE?

APPRENTICESHIP AUTHORITY

Route	Fits me because	Official page to read	Next step
Direct-entry apprenticeship (employer first)			☐
Pre-apprenticeship or foundation program			☐
Youth apprenticeship in high school			☐
Union training			☐
Private career college			☐
Military or employer-paid training			☐
Trade qualifier (challenge with experience)			☐

MY FIRST-CHOICE ROUTE

BACK-UP ROUTE

NEXT STEP AND DATE

SOURCES (CHECKED 2026-11-27)

ESDC's How to become an apprentice page lists seven steps: find a trade, find apprentice opportunities, find an employer to provide on-the-job training, register your training agreement with your provincial or territorial apprenticeship authority, get financial aid if you need it, earn while you learn, and get certified. https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/support-skilled-trades-apprentices/become-apprentice.html (checked 2026-11-27)
The same page says that, depending on the trade, it can take between two and five years of training before you can apply to become a certified journeyperson, and that the certificate is also known as a certificate of qualification or your “ticket”.
https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/support-skilled-trades-apprentices/become-apprentice.html (checked 2026-11-27)
ESDC notes that in Quebec you attend classroom training at a CEGEP, college or training institution first, and then take on-the-job training with an employer.
https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/support-skilled-trades-apprentices/become-apprentice.html (checked 2026-11-27)