

Job of The Week

Blacksmith

Key Skills

- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- design skills and knowledge
- the ability to work well with your hands
- thinking and reasoning skills
- physical skills like movement, coordination, dexterity and grace
- the ability to use your initiative
- the ability to accept criticism and work well under pressure
- to be flexible and open to change
- to be able to carry out basic tasks on a computer or hand-held device

Average salary
Variable

Typical hours (a week)
47 to 49

You could work
freelance / self-
employed managing
your own hours

Aspire | Challenge | Achieve

Blacksmith

College

You could do an **introductory college course in working with metal before looking for a trainee position with a blacksmith.**

You could do a:

- Level 3 Diploma in Blacksmithing and Metalworking
- Level 3 Diploma in Fabrication and Welding Techniques and Skills to get into industrial blacksmithing
- [T Level](#) in Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control to get some general blacksmithing skills
- Course in general metalwork or art and design as it might give you an advantage when looking for a job

Entry requirements

You may need:

- 2 or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 3 (A* to D), or equivalent, for a level 2 course
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, for a level 3 course
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths for a T Level



Work

You could work as an assistant to an experienced blacksmith and learn the craft on the job. You might find it useful if you have experience in metalwork and technical drawing.

University

You can do a degree course in artist blacksmithing at university.

You'll need a portfolio of your work and creative ideas to show at university interviews.

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- a foundation diploma in art and design
- 2 to 3 A levels, or equivalent, for a degree

Apprenticeship

- General welder intermediate apprenticeship
- Blacksmith advanced apprenticeship
- Plate or pipe welder advanced apprenticeship

You may be able to use industrial welding experience to find a trainee blacksmith job with a specialist metalwork company.

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

some GCSEs, usually including English and maths, or equivalent, for an intermediate apprenticeship
5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths, for an advanced apprenticeship



Career path and progression

As an experienced artist blacksmith you could set up your own gallery or teach craft skills.

As an industrial blacksmith, you could manage a workshop or train to become a design engineer.

Day to Day tasks

- Sketch out new designs or follow customer instructions
- Heat metals to the right temperature in a forge or furnace
- Shape metals with hand tools like hammers, punches and anvils
- Create moulds for casting and apply finishes
- Use power tools, like drills, lathes and hydraulic presses
- Join metal parts together using riveting and welding methods

Working conditions

You could work in a factory, in a workshop or in a foundry workshop. Your working environment may be physically demanding, hot and noisy. You may need to wear protective clothing.



Labour Market Information

In the Careers section of the school website you can find the useful comparison tool the 'Labour Market Information widget'.

Use the widget to compare different job roles in any employment sector or relating specifically to the 'Job of the Week'.

Metal plate workers, smiths, moulders and related occupations	Metal working machine operatives	Metal making and treating process operatives
Weekly Pay £500	Weekly Pay £540	Weekly Pay £560
Annual Pay £26,000	Annual Pay £28,080	Annual Pay £29,120
Hours/Week 50h	Hours/Week 51h	Hours/Week 45h
Hourly Pay £10	Hourly Pay £11	Hourly Pay £12
Workforce Change (projected) Contraction -5.6%	Workforce Change (projected) Contraction -1.6%	Workforce Change (projected) Contraction -1.6%
The workforce is projected to contract by -5.6% over the period to 2035, losing 600 jobs.	The workforce is projected to contract by -1.6% over the period to 2035, losing 700 jobs.	The workforce is projected to contract by -1.6% over the period to 2035, losing 400 jobs.
You might find this job in Basic metals Metal products Sport & recreation	You might find this job in Wholesale trade Metal products Basic metals Construction Machinery, etc	You might find this job in Specialised construction Basic metals Metal products Construction Wood, etc
More info	More info	More info
Clear card	Clear card	Clear card

Labour Market Information

Metal plate workers, smiths, moulders and related occupations

Metal plate workers, smiths, moulders and related occupations mark off, drill, shape, position, rivet and seal metal plates and girders to form structures and frameworks operate power hammers and presses to shape heated metal to requirements and to make and repair a variety of metal articles and make moulds and cores for casting metal and pour or inject molten metal into dies.

Common tasks in this job:

- examines drawings and specifications to determine operational requirements
- marks out metal plate with guidelines and reference points and cuts metal plate using hand or machine tools
- uses machine tools to bend, curve, punch, drill and straighten metal plate as required
- uses hydraulic jacks to position and align metal platework or frame for welding and bolting and rivets together metal plate and girders

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Metal working machine operatives

Metal working machine operatives operate machines to cut, shape, abrade and otherwise machine metal, use hand and power tools to remove surplus metal and rough surfaces from castings, forgings or other metal parts, and clean, smooth and polish metal workpieces.

Common tasks in this job:

- secures workpiece in drilling, boring, milling, planing, grinding, lapping, honing, electrochemical, or other shaping machines, or loads metal stock on to press
- sets controls, starts machine and operates controls to feed tool to workpiece or vice versa and repositions workpiece during machining as required
- withdraws workpiece and examines accuracy using measuring instruments
- operates burning, chipping and grinding equipment to remove defects from metal parts, and files, chisels, burns and saws off surplus metal

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Metal making and treating process operatives

Metal making and treating process operatives operate furnaces, ovens and other heating vessels, drawing, rolling, extruding, galvanising, forging and other metal processing equipment to smelt, shape, coat and treat metal and metal products.

Common tasks in this job:

- charges furnace, operates controls to regulate furnace temperature, and adds oxidising, alloying and fluxing agents as required
- withdraws samples of molten metal for analysis, taps slag from surface of molten metal and directs flow of molten metal into casts
- sets rolling speed, tension and space between rolls, guides the metal to and from rollers, and monitors the rolling process to detect irregularities, and ensure that the gauge and finish match required specifications
- operates equipment to remove dirt, scale and other surface impurities by immersion in chemical solution

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Keep looking...

Use these links to learn more about our Job of The Week, consider the various pathways leading to the career, what you can be doing now to help yourself and other roles in the industry...

Take a look at these short videos for inspiration...

JOW Blacksmith



[JOB OF THE WEEK - EPISODE #215 - BLACKSMITH](#)

BBC Blacksmithing Career



[Blacksmith: The most future-proof profession? BBC News](#)

Useful Websites

[BABA Directory – British Artist Blacksmiths Association](#)

[The Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths](#)

[Find your perfect role in the creative industries - Creative Careers](#)