



# Hairstylists and Barbers

## Introduction What are the Occupational Guides for Immigrants to B.C.?

**British Columbia welcomes you!** Like you, over 35,000 immigrants from around the world settle in B.C. each year and find work in a variety of professions. The process of finding work can take time, so it is important to understand each of the steps needed to gain employment.

If you are preparing to come to B.C., or have just arrived, this guide provides the following information:

- Section 1** - how this occupation is practiced in B.C.
- Section 2** - steps to help prepare you before you arrive
- Section 3** - qualifications needed in B.C.
- Section 4** - tips to help you find employment

## Section 1 Occupational Overview

### What is a hairstylist or barber?

**Hairstylists** cut and style hair. Their work includes:

- Bleaching
- Cleaning
- Curling
- Cutting
- Dressing
- Waving or Permanently Waving

**Barbers** cut and style hair. Their work includes:

- Shaving the face
- Cutting, trimming or singeing of hair or beard
- Shampooing
- Massaging the head or face

### Learn More

Some excellent sources of occupational information include:

**National Occupational Classification (NOC)** is Canada's reference on occupations. The NOC provides job descriptions, occupational statistics and labour market information. [www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc](http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc)

### Workforce Highlights

14,200 Hairstylists and Barbers in B.C.

\$10.25 - \$24.04 Hourly Wage Range

For more information on wages and workforce see Section 2

[Learn More](#)

## What qualifications are required to be a hairstylist and barber in B.C.?

Trade certification is not required to work as a hairstylist or barber in B.C. However, many employers require a Certification of Qualification (C of Q). Having this certificate will increase your understanding of how this occupation is practiced in B.C. and will increase your chances of getting a job.

Most hairstylists write a certification exam with the Cosmetology Industry Association of B.C. (CIABC). If you want to open a hair salon or barbershop, many municipalities will require that you have proper training and certification to get a business license.

## What skills and attributes do employers expect from hairstylists and barbers?

- Ability to provide advice on beauty care treatments for the scalp and hair
- Ability to analyze hair and scalp conditions and provide basic treatments
- Good physical mobility to shampoo customers' hair and to stand for long periods of time
- Excellent English language and communication skills to book appointments by phone or in person
- Good math and computer skills to handle cash and other forms of payment
- Ability to work well alone and as part of a team
- Strong problem solving / decision making skills

## Where are hairstylists and barbers employed?

- Hairstyling or hairdressing salons
- Barber shops
- Health care facilities
- Entertainment industry in theatre, film and television

### Regulatory Contact Information

**Industry Training Authority (ITA)**

The ITA manages B.C.'s trades training.

[www.itabc.ca/site3.aspx](http://www.itabc.ca/site3.aspx)

Telephone: 778.328.8700 or 1.866.660.6011

**BeautyCouncil - Cosmetology Industry Association of British Columbia (CIABC)**

The CIABC is the professional trade association that oversees the development of the training curricula and voluntary certification of B.C.'s beauty professionals through the CIABC "Certificate of Qualification" (C of Q).

[www.ciabc.net](http://www.ciabc.net)

Telephone: 604.871.0222 or 1.800.663.9283



Currently the Industry Training Authority is not involved in the certification of barbers. The certification process is currently being adjusted and may change at any time. Check the ITA website regularly to see the most current certification information. For certification information for hairstylists, go to: [www.itabc.ca/Page633.aspx](http://www.itabc.ca/Page633.aspx)

## Section 2

## Prepare Before You Come to B.C.

## Explore Regions in B.C. to Live and Work

The demand for each occupation varies throughout the regions of the province. B.C. is a big province, about the same size as Tanzania or Venezuela, and bigger than Pakistan or Turkey. Each region has different employment needs and industries. Use the labour market information and resources in this guide to explore regional employment options.

## B.C. Labour Market Information

To learn more about your chosen profession visit the following websites where you will find information including salaries, regional employment opportunities, job descriptions, and more.

**B.C. Job Trend Tracker**

[www.bcjobtrendtracker.ca](http://www.bcjobtrendtracker.ca)

**Education Planner**

[www.educationplanner.ca](http://www.educationplanner.ca)

**WorkBC**

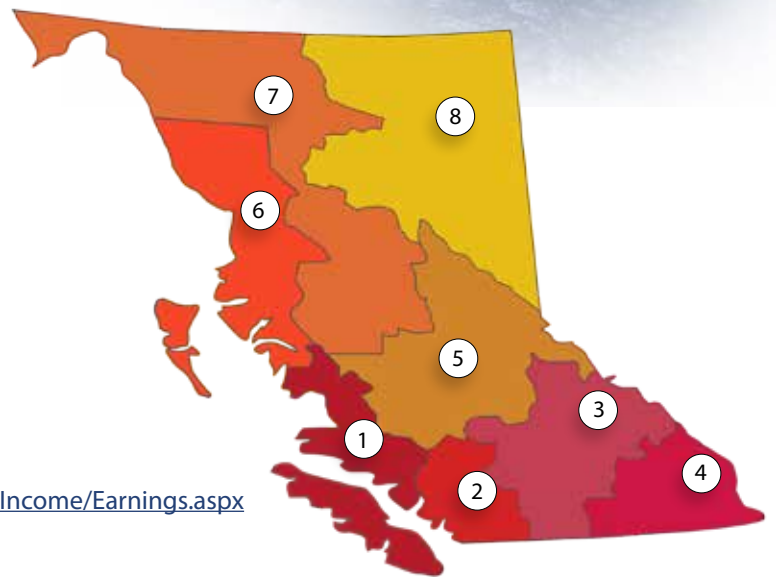
[www.workbc.ca](http://www.workbc.ca)

**Working in Canada Tool**

[www.workingincanada.gc.ca](http://www.workingincanada.gc.ca)

**BC Wage and Salary Survey 2009**

[www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/LabourIncome/Earnings.aspx](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/LabourIncome/Earnings.aspx)



## B.C. DEVELOPMENT REGIONS

- |                           |                |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Vancouver Island/Coast | 5. Cariboo     |
| 2. Mainland/Southwest     | 6. North Coast |
| 3. Thompson-Okanagan      | 7. Nechako     |
| 4. Kootenay               | 8. Northeast   |

## Prepare Yourself

Plan and prepare for your career as much as possible before arriving in B.C. Be sure you understand the provincial job market and professional requirements of your occupation. You may be able to start or complete many of these tasks before you arrive in Canada.

**Get Started!**

- Learn about the occupation.** Know the name of the job in Canada, and make lists of potential employers.
- Collect documents.** Collect copies of relevant documents, and if necessary, have them translated into English.
  - Degrees, diplomas or certificates from universities, colleges or schools
  - Program descriptions related to your studies, and transcripts of grades
  - Reference letters and performance reviews from employers
  - Work descriptions and letters from professional agencies
- Improve your workplace skills.** You may need to improve your skills or knowledge before you start working in B.C. Explore all of the resources provided in this guide.

**Section 3****Becoming Qualified to work in B.C.**

The following information will help you understand how to become certified to work as a hairstylist or barber in B.C. This is only a guide; you will have to do more research to make a career plan that will work for you. It is important to complete all of the activities listed below. It is not necessary to complete the activities in the order they are listed. To save time, it is advisable to work on many of these activities at the same time.



### Learn more about what is required to become qualified to work as a hairstylist or barber in B.C.

Hairstylists and barbers do not have to be certified to work in B.C. However a B.C. Certificate of Qualification (C of Q) can be obtained and will increase your chances of finding a job.

The Cosmetology Industry Association of B.C. (CIABC) manages the C of Q process for hairstylists and barbers. There are two ways for new immigrants to B.C. to achieve a C of Q through the CIABC.

**1. Complete a training program** at an accredited school and get:

- 1,500 hours of training for hairstylists
- 400 hours of training for barbers

After completing this training, you will be eligible to write an exam to obtain a C of Q.

- 2. Apprentice** through a salon or barbershop.  
Hairstylists must get 3000 hours of practical experience.  
Barbers must get 800 hours. After completing these hours, you will be eligible to write the exam to obtain a C of Q. For more information, go to:  
[www.ciabc.net/apprentice.html](http://www.ciabc.net/apprentice.html)

To obtain the C of Q you will complete both a theory and a practical exam. For information on the hairstylist exam, go to:  
[www.ciabc.net/pdf/Hair-ExamInstructions.pdf](http://www.ciabc.net/pdf/Hair-ExamInstructions.pdf)

For information on the barber exam, go to:  
[www.ciabc.net/pdf/BarberingProgramExaminationInstructions.pdf](http://www.ciabc.net/pdf/BarberingProgramExaminationInstructions.pdf)



### Consider challenging the examination

If you have a license for hairdressing or if you have been in the industry for a long while, you may be able to challenge the exam. Download the Hairdressing Examination Instructions from the CIABC website: [www.ciabc.net/exams.html](http://www.ciabc.net/exams.html)



Begin the qualification and career planning process and obtain all required documents before leaving our country. If you have already arrived in B.C., develop a career plan immediately to avoid creating a gap in your professional experience.







## Contact the CIABC to inquire about Prior Learning Assessments (PLA)

To decide what you will need to obtain your C of Q, contact the CIABC about assessing your prior learning. The CIABC will help you have your education and experience assessed and will give you information about what you need to be fully qualified. The CIABC has some reciprocity agreements (agreements with certification associations in other provinces and countries) which prove prior learning. If you come from a country that the CIABC has a reciprocity agreement with, you will not need to complete an assessment.

There are three assessment agencies the CIABC recognizes:

1. **ITEC – International Therapy Examination Council**  
[www.itecworld.co.uk](http://www.itecworld.co.uk)
2. **CIDESCO – Comité International D’Esthétique et de Cosmétologie / Society of Professional Skin Care Specialists**  
[www.cidesco-canada.com](http://www.cidesco-canada.com)
3. **IPSN – International Professional Standards Network**  
[www.servicesskills.com.au/international-professional-standards-network](http://www.servicesskills.com.au/international-professional-standards-network)

The ITA in B.C. provides an alternative to the BeautyCouncil’s certification process. To see more information about how to challenge the Certificate of Qualification exam through the ITA, go to:

[www.itabc.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=365](http://www.itabc.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=365)

### Learn More

#### Professional Upgrading Programs

##### The ITA Immigrants in Trades Training Initiative:

[www.itabc.ca/Page956.aspx](http://www.itabc.ca/Page956.aspx)

##### Private Career Training Institution Agency’s (PCTIA) accredited institutions - hairstylist or barber education:

[www.pctia.bc.ca/listings](http://www.pctia.bc.ca/listings)

## Improve your language skills

There is no formal English language assessment required to be certified as a hairstylist or barber. However, to get a job in most salons or barbershops, you will need excellent English language and communication skills. Efforts to improve your communication and presentation skills should be ongoing.

Consider taking further English language and Canadian cultural training if necessary.

### English Language and Communication Services

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DIVERSEcity<br><a href="http://www.dcrs.ca">www.dcrs.ca</a>   | <input type="checkbox"/> S.U.C.C.E.S.S.<br><a href="http://www.successbc.ca">www.successbc.ca</a>                                | <input type="checkbox"/> TOEFL<br><a href="http://www.toefl.org">www.toefl.org</a>                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English Language Services for Adults<br><a href="http://www.elsanet.org">www.elsanet.org</a>  | <input type="checkbox"/> MOSAIC<br><a href="http://www.mosaicbc.com">www.mosaicbc.com</a>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome BC<br><a href="http://www.welcomebc.ca">www.welcomebc.ca</a>                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning to Work in British Columbia, Canada Workbook<br><a href="http://www.welcomebc.ca/local/wbc/docs/BC_Workbook_EN_June4_Fillable.pdf">www.welcomebc.ca/local/wbc/docs/BC_Workbook_EN_June4_Fillable.pdf</a> | <input type="checkbox"/> IELTS International English Language Testing System<br><a href="http://www.ielts.org">www.ielts.org</a> | <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrant Services Society of BC<br><a href="http://www.issbc.org">www.issbc.org</a> |



The BeautyCouncil will work with you to make arrangements for a translator to be present if you want to complete the assessment process in a language other than English.



## ➔ If required, register for professional upgrading programs

Many of these programs have waitlists—it is important to make contact and register as soon as possible.

### Section 4 Tips to Finding Employment in B.C.

## ➔ Get Help with Your Job Search

Finding a job in B.C. may be very different than in your home country. You may need help finding job vacancies, updating your resume, writing cover letters, preparing for interviews, and understanding what B.C. employers are looking for.

**Skills Connect for Immigrants program** provide employment-related support services that move internationally educated professionals into the B.C. labour market: [www.welcomebc.ca/skillsconnect](http://www.welcomebc.ca/skillsconnect)

**B.C. Employment and Labour Market Services** employment programs: [www.labourmarketservices.gov.bc.ca](http://www.labourmarketservices.gov.bc.ca)

## ➔ Build connections to your profession – begin networking

Many job vacancies are not advertised. To find out about jobs that are not advertised, you must make connections with working hairstylists and barbers. Working as a volunteer is a good way to meet people, understand Canadian workplace culture and improve your English language and communication skills.

The CIABC provides additional information and offers a variety of professional training, education and networking opportunities.

**BeautyCouncil (CIABC)**  
[www.ciabc.net](http://www.ciabc.net)



The Canadian government provides employment and settlement services in China, India, the Philippines and the United Kingdom. The program is called the Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP). To get more information about these pre-arrival services, go to: [www.newcomersuccess.ca](http://www.newcomersuccess.ca)

### Learn More

Hairstylists and barbers may have various job titles or do different jobs such as:

- Barber apprentice
- Hair colour technician
- Hairdresser
- Hairdresser apprentice
- Hairstylist apprentice
- Wig stylist

