9514 Metalworking Machine Operators

Metalworking machine operators set up and operate one or more metalworking machines that shape and form light or heavy metal into parts or products that meet precise specifications.

Common Job Titles

Brake Press Operator
Disk Flange Operator
Metalworking machine operator
Power Press Operator
Punch Press Operator
Saw Operator - Metal Fabrication
Vertical Press Operator

Typical Employers

motor vehicle manufacturers
machinery and equipment manufacturers
motor vehicle parts manufacturers
primary steel producers
hardware, tool and cutlery manufacturers
metal fabricating companies
metal and metal products wholesalers
stamping press and coated metal products companies
ornamental metal products producers

Selected Main Duties

Metalworking machine operators perform some or all of the following duties:

- Read specifications or follow verbal instructions;
- Set up and operate one or more light or heavy metalworking machines such as shears, power presses, saws, platerolls, drills, brakes, slitters, punch press and CNC (computer numerically controlled) equipment to cut, bend, roll, ream, punch and drill, or otherwise shape and form metal stock into parts or products;
- Operate machines or equipment which weld, solder, bolt, screw or rivet metal parts together;
- Check products for correct shapes, dimensions and other specifications;
- Select and transport material to work area manually or using crane or hoist;
- May build staging or scaffolding as required for heavy metalworking jobs;
- Clean or lubricate equipment and replace parts as required.

Workers require stamina because they are on their feet much of the day while operating powerful, high-speed machinery. Many modern machines are totally enclosed, minimizing the exposure of workers to noise, dust, and other potential hazards. Shift work and a 40-hour workweek are common. Physical activity may be light, moderate or heavy.

Education/Training

Employment in this area may require a combination of education, experience or other attributes. Some secondary school education is required. On-the-job training is usually provided. Also, previous experience as a labourer or helper in the same company may be required. There is little mobility between operators of light and heavy metalworking machines. Progression to structural metal fabricator or supervisory positions is possible with experience. Trade certification as a precision metal fabricator is available in Ontario but certification is not a compulsory work requirement for the occupation in the province.

Entry to apprenticeship requires a job and usually the completion of Grade 12. The apprentice applies directly to the employer, union or joint industry committee for an apprenticeship opening. Students who have completed Grade 10 have an opportunity to become registered apprentices while finishing high school under the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. Alternatively, entry into apprenticeship can be pursued through pre-apprenticeship training.

Employment Prospect

Over the next five years: Limited

Opportunities for employment in this occupation are expected to be limited over the period from 2009 to 2013. Jobs will be created by an anticipated surge in retirements.

Increased use of computerized machinery in the production process, changing demand for metal goods and services and foreign competition will mediate employment prospects for these workers. Employment change in this occupation is highly impacted by new labour-saving technologies which are reducing the amount of manual work required to produce products. Knowledge of how to operate computer controlled equipment and robots will become increasingly important for operators. Demand for plastics over metal products have increased over the years and will affect growth in this occupation. In order to remain competitive, many firms have moved operations to other countries where labour costs are lower which will also limit future opportunities. Those with the best employment prospects and opportunities for advancement will need to have experience with a variety of machines.

Characteristics of Occupation

Estimated Employment in 2006	12,455

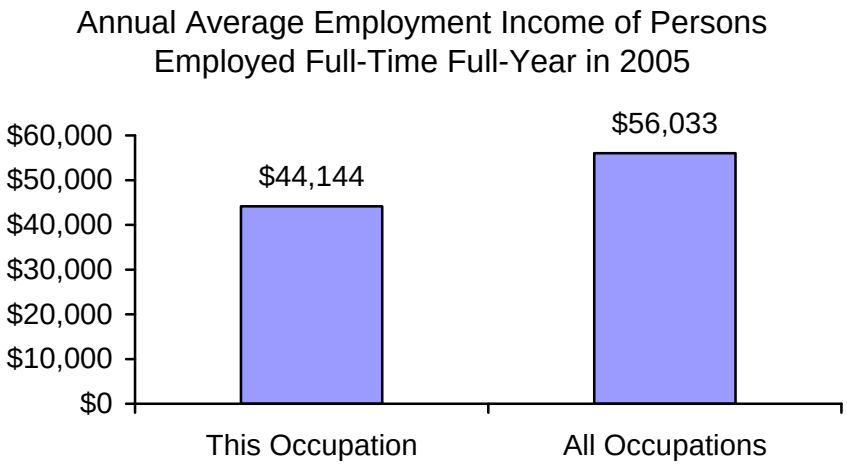
General Characteristics	(%)
Male	82
Female	18
Full-Time	95

Part-Time	3
Self Employed	1
Employees	98
Unemployment Rate	6

Main Industries of Employment	(%)
Metal Fabrication and Machinery (excluding electrical)	37
Motor Vehicle, Body, Trailer & Parts Manufacturing	29
Manufactured Mineral Products	11
Wholesale Trade	8
Other Manufacturing	4
All Other Industries	12

Employment by Economic Region	(%) This Occupation	(%) All Occupations
Ottawa	2	10
Kingston - Pembroke	1	3
Muskoka - Kawarthas	1	3
Toronto	39	45
Kitchener - Waterloo - Barrie	17	10
Hamilton - Niagara Peninsula	18	11
London	8	5
Windsor - Sarnia	9	5
Stratford - Bruce Peninsula	4	2
Northeast	2	4
Northwest	0	2

Income



Additional Information Sources

Additional information about this occupation can be obtained from the following web sites:

- Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/training/apprenticeship/appren.html)
- Metal World (www.metalworld.com)