



## Deckhand

### Education and Training

Deckhands usually start as casual workers and receive on-the-job training, some employers require additional educational, job training or time at sea. Transport Canada issues an Able Seaman certification to persons who acquire 36 months of deck service on a ship and take courses in marine emergency duties.

### Nature of Work

Under the direction of the Deck Officer, Deckhands perform a variety of deck and bridge duties to maintain the ship. They work on a diverse range of boats and ships including tugboats and giant merchant ships.

Deck crew workers help operate and maintain large vessels like deep-sea merchant ships or small vessels such as tugboats or towboats. Deck crews sail the oceans, the Great Lakes, harbours, rivers, canals and other waterways.

A large merchant ship may have six or more deckhands, while a small boat may have only one. On a small vessel, the deckhand may also have to act as the cook.

### Earnings

Low:	\$35,000
Average:	\$45,000
High:	\$80,000

### Main Duties

- Assist in the operation and maintenance of ships and equipment
- Known as seamen on oceangoing ships, operate the ship and its deck equipment
- Work under the supervision of the ship's officers
- They handle the lines when docking or departing
- While underway, they stand watch. This means they look out for other ships or other objects in the ship's path
- Steer the ship and measure the water depth in shallow water
- Maintain and operate deck equipment such as lifeboats, anchors, and cargo-handling machinery
- Clean all areas, except engineering
- Maintenance chores include repairing lines, chipping rust, and painting and cleaning decks
- May load and unload cargo. With liquid cargo, they hook up hoses, operate pumps, and clean tanks

### Essential Characteristics

- Physically fit
- Manual Dexterity
- Effective communication skills



### Typical Employer

Marine transport companies, ferry companies, marine sightseeing companies, water taxi services, canal, port and harbour authorities and ferry terminals

### Additional Information

BCIT  
[www.bcit.ca/study/programs/2925acerts](http://www.bcit.ca/study/programs/2925acerts)  
 International Longshore & Warehouse Union - Canada -  
[www.ilwu.ca](http://www.ilwu.ca)  
 BC Ferries  
[www.bcferries.com/employment/aboutcareers.html](http://www.bcferries.com/employment/aboutcareers.html)  
 Georgian College  
[www.georgianc.on.ca/academics/programs/index.php?catid=2#2](http://www.georgianc.on.ca/academics/programs/index.php?catid=2#2)