



Locomotive Engineer

Education and Training

Locomotive Engineers complete a formal engineer training program, including classroom, simulator, and hands-on instruction in locomotive operation. At the end of the training period, they must then pass qualifying tests covering locomotive equipment, air brake systems, fuel economy, train handling techniques, and operating rules and regulations. The company issues the engineer a license after the applicant successfully passes the examinations. Other conditions and rules may apply to entry-level engineers, and these rules vary between railroads.

Nature of Work

Locomotive engineers are among the most experienced and skilled workers on the railroad. They operate large trains carrying cargo and passengers between stations. Most engineers run diesel locomotives, while a few operate electrically powered locomotives.

Main Duties

- Operate the throttle to start and accelerate the train and use airbrakes or dynamic brakes to slow and stop.
- Monitor gauges and meters that measure speed, fuel, temperature, battery charge, and air pressure in the brake lines.
- Watch for signals that indicate track obstructions, other train movements, and speed limits. They must have a thorough knowledge of the signal systems, yards, and terminals along their routes and be constantly aware of the condition and makeup of their train.
- Confer with conductors and traffic control center personnel via radiophone to issue or receive information concerning stops, delays, or oncoming trains.
- Interpret train orders, railroad rules and regulations, and train signals indicating track obstructions, other train movements, and speed limits.

Typical Employer

Railways and industrial or commercial users of rail transport

Additional Information

Railway Association of Canada
www.railcan.ca
 Career on Track
www.irtcanada.net
 Teamsters Canada Rail Conference
www.teamstersrail.ca
 BCIT
www.bcit.ca/study/courses/rail0105

Earnings

Low: \$54,000
 Average: \$78,000
 High: \$95,000

Essential Characteristics

- Effective communication skills
- Attention to detail
- Good organizational skills

