

## **Barbers**

Barbers provide hair styling and beauty services. They are expected to have knowledge of skin and skin protective services, and of chemicals to treat skin irritations relating to the head and face. They are also responsible for sterilizing equipment and tools and ensuring a clean environment.

### **Work Environment**

Barbers, hairdressers, and cosmetologists mostly work in a barbershop or salon. Physical stamina is important, because workers are on their feet for most of their shift. Many work part time, and nearly half were self-employed in 2010.

### **How to get Qualified**

Full-time programs in barbering and cosmetology usually last at least 9 months and may lead to an associate's degree. Most of these workers take advanced courses in hairstyling or in other personal appearance services to keep up with the latest trends. Those who want to open their own business also may take courses in sales and marketing.

In the developing world persons require licenses in order to be able to practice their craft. Formal certification is becoming more and more important in order to gain employment.

Skills training institutions offer skills certificates and short courses in barbering that persons can enroll in.

Other qualifications/skills required:

***Creativity.*** Barbers, hairdressers, and cosmetologists must keep up with the latest trends and be able to try new hairstyles for their clients.

***Customer-service skills.*** To help retain clients, barbers, hairdressers, and cosmetologists must be pleasant, friendly, and able to interact with customers.

***Listening skills.*** Barbers, hairdressers, and cosmetologists should be good listeners. They must listen carefully to what the client wants, to make sure the client is happy with the result.

***Stamina.*** Barbers, hairdressers, and cosmetologists must be able to stand on their feet for long periods of time.

***Time-management skills.*** Time management skills are important when scheduling appointments and providing services. For example, routine haircuts and trims do not require the precise timing of some other services, such as applying neutralizer after a permanent wave. Clients who receive timely hair care service are more likely to return.

In addition, barbers, hairdressers, and cosmetologists must keep a neat personal appearance and must keep their work area clean and sanitary. This is necessary for the health and safety of their clients, as well as to make clients comfortable enough to want to return.

### **Job Outlook**

Employment of barbers is projected to grow 7 percent, slower than the average for all occupations. The need for barbers will stem primarily from an increasing population, which will lead to greater demand for basic hair-care services.

Workers should expect strong competition for jobs and clients at higher paying salons, of which there are relatively few and for which applicants must compete with a large pool of experienced barbers.