



A career in farriery

Working life

Farriers working hours vary from week to week and season to season, depending on the needs of their clients. They may include weekends and emergency call-outs.

Most work is carried out in yards and stables though some farriers do have their own forge. A driving licence and a vehicle in which to carry around tools and equipment are therefore essential.

Farriery is hard, physical work which involves bending, lifting and using tools to shape the shoe to fit it to the horse's hoof. Working conditions can be hot and noisy and could be outdoors in all types of weather.

Key tasks

- Handling and restraining horses
- Checking a horse's leg, foot and hoof
- Removing worn or damaged shoes
- Cleaning and trimming the hoof
- Making or selecting a pre-made new shoe
- Heating the shoe and shaping it to fit
- Fitting the new shoe to the hoof
- Organising appointments
- Providing advice to owners
- Keeping accounts
- Maintaining the forge and equipment
- Managing a small business.

Key facts

- A Registered Farrier is a very skilled person who is capable of making and fitting shoes to suit all types of feet and for all different purposes, including correcting defects
- Farriery is a regulated profession under the Farriers' (Registration) Act 1975 and all farriers have to be registered with the Farriers Registration Council and meet the requirements for training and professional practice
- There are currently around 2,800 Registered Farriers in the UK,
- Most farriers are self employed so are responsible for building up their own clients and running their own business
- Experienced farriers may have the opportunity to become Approved Training Farriers and pass on their expertise to others through the farriery Apprenticeship
- Starting salaries for farriers are usually from around £16,000 to £25,000 a year
- Experienced farriers earn £30,000 or more.



Getting in

This is a relatively small profession and finding a position as an apprentice farrier is highly competitive.

To qualify as a Registered Farrier you will have to complete a four year and two month Apprenticeship with an Approved Training Farrier (ATF). Entry requirements include:

- Four GCSE passes at Grade C or above, which must include English Language and Mathematics, and Science from 2014
- The Forging Certificate
- Completion of a two month probationary period with an ATF
- An Access to Farriery Course is available for anyone not in possession of the academic and/or practical entry requirements.

Training places are limited and demand is high. You may need to be prepared to move to another area to find employment with an ATF and courses are only offered by a handful of approved colleges, all in England:

- Herefordshire College of Technology
- Myerscough College, Preston, Lancashire
- Warwickshire College.

Experience of working with horses at riding schools, stables or on a farm, is valuable, as is horse ownership and riding skills.

There may also be the opportunity to train as a farrier in the army through the army's own specific training route.

Continued Professional Development (CPD) is important and there a number of options for registered farriers to further their studies and careers, these include:

- The Worshipful Company of Farriers Associate Diploma
- The Worshipful Company of Farriers Fellowship
- Study at degree level.

Did you know?

- The Diploma of the Worshipful Company of Farriers is a highly respected qualification and Farriers from overseas apply to take the examination and, if successful, to put the letters DipWCF after their names
- Horseshoeing competitions are fiercely competitive on a national and international basis, registered and apprentice farriers compete to win classes such as the Best Dressed Foot and Best Shod Foot, or even to become the National Champion
- England won the BFBA 33rd International Team Horseshoeing Championships in 2012
- The type of shoe fitted is tailored to the horse and its working role, so a racehorse will wear lightweight racing plates at a meet whereas a police horse will be shod with a heavier shoe to cope with the demands of many hours on the beat in towns and cities.

Skills and personal qualities

It is important to have a genuine interest in horses, their care, behaviour and welfare and a strong commitment to providing the best possible service to clients:

- Able to talk to owners
- Confident to handle horses
- Handling and caring for horses
- Working and communicating with people
- Strength and stamina
- Organised and practical
- Observant
- Reliable and responsible
- Able to work alone
- Good business skills.

Further information

Find out more about different industries you could work in: lantra.co.uk/careers

For more information about the Farriery Registration Council, visit: www.farrier-reg.gov.uk

