



Career of the week

Baker

Bakers make bread, cakes and pastries by hand and with catering equipment

Average salary (a year): £19,000 (starter) to £26,000 (experienced)

Typical hours (a week): 40 to 45 a week (early mornings/on shifts)

You can get into this job through:

College

You could take a college course, for example:

- hospitality and catering
- bakery
- professional bakery
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Entry requirements

You may need:

- 2 or fewer GCSEs at grades 3 to 1 (D to G), or equivalent, for a level 1 course
- 2 or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 3 (A* to D), or equivalent, for a level 2 course

Apprenticeship

You could begin your career by applying for a Baker Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship, or Lead Baker Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship.

These can take around 2 years to complete.

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- some GCSEs, usually including English and maths, or equivalent, for an intermediate apprenticeship
- 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths, for an advanced apprenticeship

Work

You may be able to start as a trainee or assistant in a bakery shop, supermarket or food production plant, and work your way up through training on the job.

Skills and knowledge

You'll need:

- Knowledge of food production methods
- the ability to work well with your hands
- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- the ability to work well with others
- maths knowledge
- excellent verbal communication skills
- the ability to use your initiative
- the ability to accept criticism and work well under pressure
- to be able to carry out basic tasks on a computer or hand-held device

You'll need to:

- get a food hygiene certificate

Day-to-day tasks

You could:

- weigh and mix ingredients by hand or using machinery
- bake bread, cakes and patisserie products in batches
- decorate and finish baked items ready for dispatch or shop display
- make quality and food safety checks
- stocktake and order supplies
- develop new recipes and products

Working environment

- You could work at a store or in a factory.
- Your working environment may be dusty, physically demanding and noisy.
- You may need to wear protective clothing.

Career progression

With experience, you could become a bakery supervisor or production manager in a factory or move into commercial sales.

You could also become a technical adviser or development baker for a baked goods or catering equipment company.

Another option is to specialise, for example in patisserie, or become an artisan craft baker and set up your own business.