



# Firefighter

Firefighters deal with a wide range of emergency situations, from fires, floods and oil spills to terrorist attacks and road traffic accidents. They also give advice to people and organisations on how to prevent fires and accidents.

## What does the job involve?

- fighting and putting out fires and making sure buildings are safe
- rescuing people from burning buildings and other situations, and maybe giving first aid
- attending road traffic accidents and, if necessary, cutting people free from damaged cars
- cleaning up chemical spillages
- rescuing people who are trapped in lifts, buildings or floods
- maintaining, cleaning and checking equipment and vehicles
- writing reports and keeping logs.

In addition, and as a firefighter with the Community Response Unit, you could also be:

- dealing with heath and forest fires
- visiting schools, and other centres in the area
- giving individuals, groups and organisations advice on how to prevent fires
- checking that homes, places of work and public events meet fire safety law and regulations
- visiting homes, carrying out home safety checks and installing smoke alarm

## Routes and choices while at school:

You will need to try to get at least two or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A\* to C), or equivalent qualifications. These should include English, maths and. Other relevant subjects include PE, IT and science.



## Skills You'll need:

- knowledge of public safety and security
- customer service skills
- the ability to accept criticism and work well under pressure
- patience and the ability to remain calm in stressful situations
- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- sensitivity and understanding
- knowledge of training and how to present information
- the ability to work well with others
- to be able to carry out basic tasks on a computer or hand-held device



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## How to get into this role:

You can get into this job through:

- a college course
- an apprenticeship
- applying directly
- A fire service training course

## College

You could take a Level 2 or 3 Diploma in Public Services before applying to the fire service, although this is not essential.

## Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- 2 or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 3 (A\* to D), or equivalent, for a level 2 course
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A\* to C), or equivalent, for a level 3 course

## Apprenticeship

You may be able to start training on an operational firefighter advanced apprenticeship.

You'll need to be employed by a fire service to do this.

You could train to be a firefighter in the Royal Air Force (RAF). You can find more information at:

- [Royal Air Force](#)

## Further information

### Career tips

Most fire services take on new recruits once every 12 months, so you'll need to find out when they are recruiting next. You can ask your [local fire and rescue service](#) for a firefighter careers and recruitment pack.



## Career path and progression

All fire services have a programme that lets you plan and track your career development.

You could work your way up to crew manager, watch manager or station manager. If you're prepared to move between services, you could become an area manager, a brigade manager or a chief fire officer.

If you're involved in fire safety and prevention work, you can take professional qualifications leading to membership of the [Institution of Fire Engineers \(IFE\)](#).

## Rates of Pay

the salary for a wholtime firefighter starts at £23,833, rising to £24,826 a year after training. This increases to £31,767 a year with experience.