

MACHINE OPERATOR GREEN JOB FACT SHEET



Machine operators work with mechanical or computer-operated equipment. They calibrate machines to launch production, determine optimal settings, and oversee material operations. They are responsible for ensuring that equipment is working properly.

THE BIG PICTURE

In the forestry sector, machine operators drive harvesting and roadbuilding machinery or operate equipment in lumbermills or papermills. Their work helps to process wood, paper, and forest products by:

- Helping to assess forest sites and terrain.
- Running machines like skidders, feller bunchers, loaders, and sawmill or paper machines.
- Safely handling logs, paper pulp, and other forest materials.

IS THIS CAREER RIGHT FOR YOU?

This is often a fast-paced, physically demanding job. Machine operators are good at using tools and following safety rules. Because they work with heavy machinery, they wear safety equipment like hard hats, safety boots, and ear protection. To succeed in this job, you need to be detail-oriented and have good hand–eye coordination and problem-solving skills.

MOVING FORWARD



Here's a path of study that could lead to a career as a machine operator. It is a great choice if you are looking for a job right out of high school or a more limited college experience.

HIGH SCHOOL: Take advantage of any career and technical education program (CTE) your school may have. Gain entry-level work experience as a warehouse worker or production worker. Look for machine operator apprenticeships.

COLLEGE: To get a job in the forestry sector, it is helpful to take college courses in wood science or wood technology, but it is not required.

For more about green jobs, visit www.plt.org/workingforforests

Do you enjoy working with your **HANDS**? Do you love making things with specialized **TOOLS**?

If so, this might be the perfect career for you!

SALARY

U.S. salaries range from about \$19,000 to \$74,000 per year and average about \$36,700.

WHERE CAN YOU GROW?

A career as a machine operator can include work as a machinist, millwright, assembler, or construction worker. Some possible employers:

- Federal or state government agencies
- Forest products companies

