

My Career in Cabinet & Furniture Making



With a *Certificate in Cabinet and Furniture Making 1 & 2*, graduates may have the possible *career options* of the following:

- Installer for high-end kitchen for custom installations
- Builder of custom furniture for churches
- Restoration carpenter
- Woodworking teacher
- Boat builder and yacht interior joiner
- Prototype maker for commercial/residential clients
- Lead carpenter on construction projects

Cabinet Maker/Furniture Maker

The job descriptions and job specifications for these career options are as follows:

Career Overview

Creates built-in cabinets as well as fine wood furniture to customer's specifications using a variety of woods, styles and finishes; as well as, providing them with original drawings of the finish product. As a wood working teacher, the focus will be on teaching others to perfect the craft by way of demonstration.

Typical Duties:

Any person working in cabinet making or furniture making will typically do the following:

- Create design drawings for furniture.
- Decide on the quantity and type of wood needed and the construction methods.
- Purchase the wood from suppliers. Cut, shape and plane the wood, using hand, power and computer-controlled tools.
- Fix parts together and add other fixed or movable parts such as brackets, hinges, handles and locks.

- Finish the assembled pieces of furniture (veneers, lacquers or French polish).

Typical Duties Cont'd

- Set up and operate a variety of woodworking machines and use various hand-tools to fabricate and repair wooden cabinets and high-grade furniture: Study blueprints or drawings of articles to be constructed or repaired, and plan sequence of cutting or shaping operations to be performed.
- Mark outline or dimensions of parts on paper or lumber stock, according to blueprint or drawing specifications.
- Match materials for color, grain, or texture.
- Set up and operate woodworking machines, such as power saws, jointer, mortiser, tenoner, molder, and shaper, to cut and shape parts from woodstock.
- Trim component parts of joints to ensure snug fit, using hand-tools, such as planes, chisels, or wood files.
- Bore holes for insertion of screws or dowels by hand or using boring machine.
- Glue, fit, and clamp parts and subassemblies together to form complete unit, using clamps or clamping machine.
- Drive nails or other fasteners into joints at designated places to reinforce joints.
- Sand and scrape surfaces and joints of articles to prepare articles for finishing.
- May repair high-grade articles of furniture.
- May dip, brush, or spray assembled articles with protective or decorative materials, such as stain, varnish, or paint.
- May install hardware, such as hinges, catches, and drawer pulls.
- May repair furniture, equipment, and fixtures
- May be designated according to products made as Piano-Case Maker.
- May cut, shape, and assemble wooden parts to construct frames for refrigeration equipment and be designated Refrigerator Cabinetmaker.

Work Environment

Cabinet and furniture makers can work in either a commercial or residential setting. They can be self-employed or employed by furniture manufacturing and repair companies, construction firms or contractors. Work may be from other venues such as crafting wood interiors for boats, planes or hotels. Most of the work is done indoors in large, well-lit and well-ventilated areas. Working in these different environments is associated with dust and chemicals, protective gear may be required. Work hours may vary depending on whether you are working with a firm or is self-employed. As an employee you may work on a shift system or a regular 40-hour work week. If you are working for yourself, you would arrange your own hours which may sometimes be longer and include weekends to meet deadlines. In many instances, cabinet and furniture makers specialize in particular areas of production and or restoration.

Qualifications and Licenses

No academic qualifications required. Most employers will look for candidates with at least postsecondary and or technical training in the area. Such training may be obtained through the SJPP, City and Guilds or C/NVQs.

Essential Qualities and Skills

- ❖ Detail oriented with the ability to problem solve
- ❖ Ability to follow written instructions and work with a high level of accuracy
- ❖ Creative thinker with vision
- ❖ Persistent and honest
- ❖ Ability to make accurate mathematical calculations
- ❖ Good communication skills
- ❖ Good hand-eye coordination

References

Barbados Standard Occupational Classification, Minor Group 712 section 7122, page 157 –
Government of Barbados, Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Community
Development (1990)

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<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/cabinetmaker.aspx>
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