



## **How to Find a Trucking Job**

While most industries are laying people off and dramatically downsizing, there's one industry that's always looking for people: the trucking industry. If you're looking for a career that's almost guaranteed to give you consistent, ongoing employment, you can't go wrong with trucking. Finding a trucking job isn't difficult, but you have to be adequately prepared. You can't just walk in off the street and get hired. With that being said, you can realistically become an actual trucker in as little as six months. The trick is knowing how to go about it, and specific steps for doing so are outlined below.

### **Figure Out if You're Qualified**

The last thing you want to do is get your hopes up about finding a trucking job and discover that you're not actually qualified for one. In general, it's fairly easy to meet the basic requirements for being a trucker. However, you should keep the following points in mind:

**Physical Health** - All truckers must pass DOT, or Department of Transportation, physicals. Certain conditions may disqualify you from being a truck driver, such as a recent heart attack or heart surgery, diabetes that requires insulin injections, high blood pressure and a history of seizures. If you regularly take medication, be careful. The use of certain medications may also disqualify you.

**Driving Record** - As a truck driver, you're going to be driving nearly all of the time. It makes sense that you need to have a decent driving record to get hired. Ideally, your record should have few or no tickets or accidents in the last six years.

**Alcohol Violations** - You're a lot less likely to get a trucking job if you have had an alcohol-related violation in the last five to 10 years. That includes things like DUIs and DWIs.

**Criminal Record** - It's not easy to find a trucking job if you have a criminal history. If you've had a felony conviction in the last five years, you can pretty much forget about finding a job. Your best bet is to wait until at least five years have passed. Some employers will still hire you, but it may also depend on the nature of the crime. Drug- and theft-related offenses tend to be the most problematic.

### **Find a School**

In order to find a trucking job, you're going to need a CDL, or commercial driver's license. You can technically study for this and go take the test at the DMV on your own. However, simply having a CDL isn't going to be enough to get a decent trucking job. You'll need to complete training at a truck driving school. These schools teach you the basics of driving truck, and they also train you so that you can get your CDL.

There are three basic options for truck driving school: private schools, company-sponsored schools and community college courses. The quickest and most reliable way to find employment quickly is by opting for a company-sponsored school. However, you will have to commit to working for that company for at least one or two years. In many cases, your schooling will be largely subsidized, so you will owe little or no money. The same can't be said for private truck driving schools, but you can shop around for a job more easily with that kind of training. Community colleges only make sense if one is located near you and has a record of connecting people with decent jobs.

### **Complete Schooling and Get Your CDL**

Truck driving schools typically run from three to six weeks. Most require 120 to 160 hours of instruction. They include classes, instruction about safe driving techniques and training for state CDL exams. You'll do a lot of driving, and you'll have to complete many written exams as well. Three to six weeks may sound like a decent length of time, but everything is crammed in, so the experience can be quite intense.

### **Choose a Company**

If you opt for company-sponsored truck driving school, you will have to make this decision ahead of time. You should actually apply for a job before your schooling begins. If you opt for private truck driving school, you should start looking for a company as soon as you know the date when you'll complete your schooling. When you find one

that works, you should receive a pre-hire letter. Although it's not a guarantee that you'll be hired, it's pretty close.

### **Complete Additional Training**

When your schooling is finished, your training isn't. You will still have to undergo additional training, which is usually done in the form of going on the road with a company trainer. This is when you will really get a feel for what trucking is all about. If you've gone the company-sponsored schooling route, you will be paired with a trainer from that company. This training can last anywhere from a few weeks to a few months. Every company is different.

If you receive your schooling from a private trucking driving school, you will still have to undergo this additional training. However, you won't get started until you are hired. In fact, your hiring will most likely be conditional. As long as you successfully complete your training, you should have a job.

### **What Jobs can You Get Right Out of School?**

Local trucking jobs are highly coveted. With that in mind, most truckers start out with over-the-road, or OTR, jobs. You do have options in terms of the kind of freight that you will haul though. Whether you choose to drive refrigerated trucks, dry van trucks, flatbed trucks or another kind of truck, do plenty of research to figure out which option is right for you.

There's a dizzying array of trucking jobs out there, and OTR trucking jobs are especially plentiful. If one company isn't a good fit, you should be able to find work at another one without a lot of effort. Just remember that you may have to commit to staying with one company for a few years if you opt for company-sponsored training. From that point forward though, finding a job should never be an issue.

[Visit our trucking Jobs Page for more resources.](#)