



Are Civil Drafting Jobs the Right Choice for Me

Drafting plans used to mean sitting down at a large desk and drawing with pencils, t-squares, triangles, and other drafting tools. With computer systems changing the way we live life, this has also changed the way drafters create some of the everyday items we see today. While drafters still use the basic drafting methods such as using pencils, the aid of CAD (computer-aided design) has greatly increased the efficiency and productivity for every civil drafting occupation. The idea of a product has to start someplace and by someone, and drafters give birth, so to speak, to virtually everything we see in society.

To give a person an idea how much drafting affects us today, here are some of the types of drafters in the working industry today. There are electronics drafters, who plan out wiring programs and schematics for circuit boards; architectural drafters, who draft plans for buildings and structures and may also specialize in one type of building or structure; mechanical drafters, who draft detailed parts and dimensions of machinery; aeronautical drafters, who draft detailed plans of aircrafts; pipeline drafters, who plan the construction of pipes located in areas such as plants, gas fields, and refineries; and civil drafters, who plan and prepare topographical and relief maps, bridges, highways, and many transportation structures.

Civil drafting engineers are expected to increase in number over the next decade due to numerous factors. Many highways and bridges are becoming old and will need remodeling or complete replacement. With the growing population new roads and bridges will need to be built. With a struggling economy the work of a civil drafter may slow down because the funds to employ them may not be available.

Obviously, attending a technical school is a required step in becoming a civil drafter, or any other kind of drafter, really. Many employers prefer those who have a high level of education and training to those with limited education and training. Attending a four-year university will greatly improve the chances of employment. Many of these four-year

universities do not offer training in drafting specifically, but in architecture and engineering. Those with at least two years of training will see the best opportunities for employment.

Certification is also available for civil drafters looking to take their education to the next level. Becoming certified is a great way to show how competent one is in his or her field, plus certification can lead to promotions and bonuses. The American Design Drafting Association, or ADDA, is one of the leading organizations in helping drafters of all types reach their career aspirations.

Most civil drafters work a standard forty-hour week with the occasional overtime if necessary. Problems are a common occurrence, so being able to solve problems quickly is a necessary attribute all civil drafters must have. Civil drafters typically work under the supervision of more-experienced drafters and are limited in their responsibilities. After gaining experience and proving they are worthy of more responsibilities and duties, civil drafters may work on projects with limited supervision.

Earnings for civil drafters will depend on experience, type of work being done, and location. The average yearly salary is from \$35,000 to \$60,000. With continued education and training, a civil drafter could become a city planner, if he or she chose to, and could earn a great deal more.

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