

When you buy a pair of jeans, you probably find it pretty easy to figure out whether the price is fair and reasonable. There will not be any hidden surprises; you can tell the seams are strong or the pockets have holes in them. But what about buying a house or a commercial building? How would you know that the wiring is safe or that the roof is not going to leak in two months?

House and property inspectors are trained to make visual inspections of structures and their related systems. They look at mechanical, electrical, plumbing and heating systems. They examine the structure, roof and interior for defects.

As a house or property inspector, you use moisture meters, pressure meters, electrical meters and other investigative tools and techniques to determine soundness and viability of a structure and its systems.

Where Will You Work?

As an inspector, you do much of your work on-site, making visual assessments of buildings. The hours are flexible, although they depend on hours suitable to your clients. You may need to work evenings and weekends. Generally, it takes three to four hours to complete a residential inspection and one to three days for a commercial property.

You may work independently, for an inspection company or perhaps for municipal government.

How Much Will You Earn? ¹

Inspectors are generally self-employed, so how much money you may earn is somewhat dependent on how much you work and how much you charge.

Generally, it takes two to three years in business before you earn \$30,000 – 40,000/yr or more.

How Does the Future Look?

With many national initiatives in the works, the employment outlook is exceptionally good.

How Can You Get Started?

In high school be sure to take English, drafting and business courses. Industry recommends inspection courses offered at BCIT. Additional code and communications courses would also be beneficial.

For More Information

British Columbia Institute of Property Inspectors, ph: 585-2770

What Will You Need?

Currently, there are no mandatory regulations in this area. You do not require experience in the trades or specific education to become a house or property inspector. However, in BC, certification is available through the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC).

ASTTBC will certify you as a House or Property Inspector which you can use to market yourself and your skills.

Knowledge of construction, electrical, plumbing and drafting is an asset. You should have an interest in construction techniques, an ability to communicate well, and possess good English language skills.

Post Secondary Possibilities

BCIT offers evening programs in house and property inspection. A certificate or diploma of technology in fields such as building or civil is an excellent foundation.

- Check with your career facilitator or counsellor for other sources of information applicable to education options for this technology.
- A prerequisite to becoming certified as a Property Inspector requires registration with ASTTBC in the applicable technology area as an ASCT, CTech or Associate member.
- The TechWORKS! web site is an important online resource and provides links to career information that will be of interest to students pursuing a career in technology.

¹ Salary figures indicated in the 'How Much Will You Earn?' section are extracted from ASTTBC's Member Compensation Survey or other Canadian sources applicable to the specific technology discipline. These figures are **representative only**; actual figures will vary depending on academic training, practical experience, job responsibilities and location of employment.

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