

Careers Information

Job title:

Chef

College

One way to become a chef is to take a college course, such as:

- Level 3 Diploma in Professional Cookery
- T Level in Catering
- Level 4 Diploma in Professional Culinary Arts

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, for a level 3 course
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths for a T Level
- 1 or 2 A levels, a level 3 diploma or relevant experience for a level 4 or level 5 course

Apprenticeship

You could also do an apprenticeship to become a chef, including:

- production chef intermediate apprenticeship
- commis chef intermediate apprenticeship
- senior production chef advanced apprenticeship
- chef de partie advanced apprenticeship

You can also train to be a chef through an apprenticeship in [the armed forces](#).

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- some GCSEs, usually including English and maths, or equivalent, for an intermediate apprenticeship
- 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths, for an advanced apprenticeship

Volunteering

If you have no experience, you could volunteer in a community kitchen before applying for a job.

More Information

Career tips

You'll need a food safety certificate for this job. Training courses last 1 to 2 days and are widely available through local authorities, colleges and private training providers.

Further information

You can [find out more about how to become a chef](#) from Caterer.co

You'll need:

- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- knowledge of food production methods
- the ability to accept criticism and work well under pressure
- leadership skills
- the ability to work well with others
- knowledge of manufacturing production and processes
- maths knowledge
- the ability to work well with your hands
- to be able to use a computer and the main software packages competently

Depending on the type of chef you are, you could:

- prepare attractive menus to nutritional standards
- control and order stock and inspect it on delivery
- prepare food for cooking
- cook and present food creatively
- work under pressure so food is served on time
- keep to hygiene, health and safety and licensing rules

Working environment

You could work at a restaurant, in an NHS or private hospital, at a school, at a college or on a cruise ship.

Your working environment may be hot, physically demanding and humid.

You may need to wear a un

Career path and progression

Look at progression in this role and similar opportunities.

With experience, you could progress through the different levels of chef:

- **station chef:** looking after a particular area, such as desserts
- **sous chef:** running an entire kitchen when the head chef is busy
- **head chef or chef de cuisine:** running a kitchen, creating menus and managing the budget
- **executive chef:** only at very large companies, managing multiple kitchens, doing little cooking

You could also:

- become a specialist chef, such as a pastry chef
- move into the business side of running a restaurant
- [teach chef or catering skills at a college](#)