

Part 2

Opportunities



"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door" - Milton Berle



Opportunities

You need to do everything you can to put yourself at the front of the queue for entry level mining jobs. Here are some of the most common opportunities for people seeking entry level mining jobs after they have *undertaken the appropriate mining training courses*.

Look out for the following positions

First up, we suggest you look out for trades assistant or support service staff jobs, including cleaners and/or kitchenhand jobs.

Starting on the ground floor

Networking with everybody and getting to know about the culture of working on the mines is the best way to break into entry level mining jobs.

Think about it seriously from an employer's perspective. If an employer has the choice between two employees, he would make a choice based on the following:

- moved to the mine and familiarised themselves with the remote lifestyle and safety culture; and
- is job ready with a mine site induction, a coal board medical and have relevant tickets.

Who do you think they will offer the next mining job to?

With the expense of training new staff (many who leave within a few short months), who is the bigger gamble?

Because the industry is fiercely competitive and more and more people are willing to go the extra mile to grab entry level mining jobs, a complete newbie without any on-site mining experience or training is less likely to land one of these coveted jobs.



Entry level mining job opportunities

Types of entry level and trainee jobs you can do on a mine site.

Mining jobs can be full-time, part-time, casual or contract.

- Housekeeping
- Storeperson
- Cook
- Catering Assistant (kitchenhand)
- Handyperson
- Cleaner
- Receptionist
- FIFO Bus Driver
- Security Officer
- Trades Assistant
- Workshop Administrator
- Light Machinery Operator
- Labourer
- Dump Truck Driver
- Administration or Office Assistant
- Data Entry Operator
- Customer Service Officer
- Site Clerk
- Accounts Assistant
- Lab Assistant
- Geologist Assistant
- Field Assistant
- HR Assistant
- Service Administrator





Some Basic Requirements

To qualify for these types of entry level mining jobs there are a few essential things you can do to ensure you stand out from the crowd. Keep in mind, the circumstances of employment differ in every state, with the requirements ranging from government certification, safety courses having been completed, mining induction training and of course recognised qualifications. The basics of ensuring you are mine-ready are:

Standard 11 Mining Induction and/or mine-site specific induction training is required on most sites, so ensure you have completed this as a minimum. You must do a *Mining Induction safety training course* if you want to work on a mine site in Queensland. This qualification covers a wide range of safety topics including;

- Occupational health and safety
- Emergency escape procedures
- First aid
- Training and assessment
- Hazard management
- Risk assessment
- Reporting
- Competency standards compliance
- Site standard procedures
- Fire fighting theory
- Working around vehicles and machinery
- Communications
- Team operations
- Introduction to mining terminology
- Isolation
- Tagging and atmosphere testing

Specific skills need to stand out on your application: Some of the job requirements include: strong work ethic, strong communication skills, a positive attitude, literacy, numeracy and technology skills. Keep in mind all of these things are key attributes which should shine through on your *resume* and in your application.

How to use your civil training and experience: If you have manual labour or trade experience, or relevant civil experience. This can also be a huge advantage.

For experienced machinery drivers, there are many courses you can do to upgrade your machinery tickets to mining. They are referred to as *Black Coal Competency upgrades (RIL competencies)* that recognise previous experience on specific mining machinery.

Also, if you have experience driving heavy machinery in a civil environment you can attain a credit towards the mining training courses by applying for recognised prior learning (RPL). This can help you transfer tickets from civil to mine qualifications and can shorten your study time. We recommended you do this before applying for roles.



More on training, qualifications and options

RPL- Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process of giving a person credit/ recognition for skills, knowledge and experience they have gained through working or learning. RPL can be done for any course/unit or qualification as long as it is within our scope of registration (i.e. An RPL can be given to someone for the Cert IV WHS) This credit can be given for skills they work in their normal day job, in a volunteering role they may have undertaken or through formal and informal learning. This credit adds towards a national recognised unit of competency or qualification that in most cases will assist in their job possibilities.



Example: You are an excavator operator on a civil/quarry site and drive this machinery day in and out, however you have never formally received a certificate for driving the excavator.

You may qualify for RPL, however to do this you would need to provide evidence such as letters from supervisors/employers, photo evidence with an explanation of what is happening in the photo, sign-in documents and risk assessments completed on the machine. (All this evidence is weighted differently depending on what is on the document and will be judged by a trainer when it is all collected). The trainer then may deem the evidence enough for you to receive a certificate for the Mining Excavator or you may need to do a half day practical assessment for the trainer.

This processes speeds up/cuts out the amount of training you need to do to attain a certificate.

BCC- Black Coal Competency/ RII Upgrade

This process can apply to you if you're upgrading from a civil machinery certificate that you currently hold to a mining specific certificate. RII is short for Resources and Infrastructure Industry. The term covers mining (resources) and infrastructure industry (civil building & construction). If you hold a civil RII unit of competency or an old WHS Licence you can attend a one day course to attain the mining certificate. Within the one day course you would undertake a small amount of training, whereby the trainer would go through the differences of a civil machine and a mining machine, you would then be required to show the trainer you have the skills to drive the machinery and undertake a short answer assessment book to show you have the knowledge.

Undertaking BCC/RII Upgrade means you may only need to do a one day course instead of a 3-5 day course, cutting down the time needed and also the money spent.



Example: A person two years ago undertook a civil excavator training course and was issued with a certificate for the RIIMPO320B - Conduct civil construction excavator operations. They now want to try and get a job in the mines. They would show us their RIIMPO320B certificate and would be booked in for a BCC/RII upgrade for the Excavator. They would attend a one day training course for approximately \$500 (depending on the machine) instead of thousands, and would attain RIIMPO301C Conduct hydraulic excavator operations. This would assist them in attaining a mining job as they have not only the civil but the mining excavator competency/certificate.

The fact is, you will be particularly competitive if you have this experience AND have qualified yourself for working in the mines. For many workers seeking entry level mining jobs, we highly recommend Mining Induction, Working at Heights and/or Working in Confined Spaces certification.

Keep in mind, if you are mine ready you are job ready and employers and recruiters will look favourably on your application. Many trade courses lead to mining careers it's true. There are many trades for people who are unemployed, underemployed or have completed an apprenticeship outside of mining.

Start your up-skilling now and to attain your RII qualifications or to find out if you can qualify for RPL (recognised prior learning) and change your life – completely.

- Being physically fit for a mine job is crucial! Showing this in your resume is a great way to again stand out from your competition. To prove you are physically fit you will be required to have a current Coal Board Medical certificate. You may also have to complete a second pre-employment medical before being offered a job with a mining company. More often than not, you could be required to undergo a chest x-ray as well. You must pass a drug and alcohol test. These will be ongoing for the term of your employment. Mining companies are very strict on this type of compliance. You will be working with and around heavy machinery, large mechanical and electrical machines, in confined spaces and possibly at heights, and more often than not, if you're not 'clean' you may run the risk of your employment being terminated.
- Make sure your driver's licence is valid, although it may not be essential for some roles as workers can be bussed to and from the mine site.
- You must have authority to work in Australia and have a valid visa if you are going to work whilst travelling.
- In some states it is a requirement you pass a criminal history check



Deciphering the language for entry level job seekers

- FIFO (fly in fly out)
- BIBO (bus in bus out)
- BIBO (boat in boat out)
- DIDO (drive in drive out)

Rosters for entry level mining jobs

Typically, rosters for entry level mining jobs are: 2 weeks on and 1 week off, or 7 days on 7 off, or 3 days on 2 off. Realistically the ideal shift is a 3 week on 3 week off type scenario – this is seen as the crème de la crème.

If you can prove your worth, hang in there for a few stints and you will adapt and move up the pecking order.

Most jobs in the mines are set in remote areas with “dongas” or mining accommodation. Often this is so different from your usual comfy home and can be challenging to adjust to, with long days and little sleep.

Donga’s can be single or shared cabins set close to the mine, so be prepared for close quarters and communal living. Living onsite in the mines, you really get to know someone – warts and all! Most mine-site facilities include rooms with TV’s (inc. Foxtel), bar fridge, air conditioning, internet, en-suite shower and toilet.

“Hang in there for a few stints and you will adapt”

Mining apprenticeship opportunities

Mining apprenticeships and *mining traineeships* are a fantastic way to gain entry level jobs in the mines. Like any other type of apprenticeship, it provides a win-win situation (where both you and the company are financially rewarded to train and learn).

Many people are now looking for a supportive transitional role into the mining industry or are seeking on-the-job experience, mine site training and formalised study in the mines whilst being paid. Each year major Australian companies gear up for another round of mining apprenticeships, typically between the months of August through to October.



Landing yourself one of the mining apprenticeships is a great way to attain exceptional training, gain a recognised qualification and highly valued practical skills, all whilst enjoying the security of paid work.

Adult Apprenticeships are ideal if your re-entering the workforce or simply if you want a change of career. An apprenticeship offers a backdrop to gain experience working in the mines, whilst earning a nationally recognised qualification. This will look good for any potential employer looking to recruit for their next stint of entry level mining jobs.

Most of these opportunities are offered directly through the company – so start checking out the websites of Rio Tinto, BHP Billiton, Bechtel, Fortescue, BP, Thiess, Anglo Coal Australia, Minara Resources, Newmont Australia Limited, XstrataGlencore. Or go directly to [Apprenticeships Australia](#). You can search via the [seek.com.au](#) website.

If you don't have specific technical skills or direct experience in the mining sector, an adult apprenticeship may be your best way to go. The [National Apprenticeship Program](#) (NAP) offers many opportunities to learn as you go. Their various apprenticeships can allow you to get the training you need in half the time it would ordinarily take.

Most people coming into the mining and resource industry for the first time can take up to 18 months to get properly certified. Through the NAP, you can crossover some of the skills you already have and apply them to the certification training to speed up the process. This way when you look for mining jobs no experience in the field will not be a stumbling block as you'll have your apprenticeship to help you get a head start.

There are many support structures in place to help individuals gain employment in the industry, as mining is such a vital part of Australia's economic structure. The industry is one of the biggest and most productive in the country, and as such is constantly growing and seeking additional employees at every level.

"Fast-tracked adult apprenticeships should be on your radar"



Students, Internships, Holiday Programs, Graduates

Many mining companies in Australia seek out students and graduates for holiday work placements or internships, with paid entry level jobs in the mines on offer each year during the university summer holiday period.

Keep an eye out for these types of opportunities in July and October or better still jump on the phones and check with mining companies in the area you wish to gain internships/graduate work experience.

Mining internships are offered usually on an annual basis and depend on the operational demands of the mine. They provide an invaluable platform to seamlessly transition from your study into an entry level job in the mines, as you have been mentored into the culture from the ground up.

Employers will know you have gained experience with site rotations, the remote lifestyle, on-site inductions and WHS. It is also fantastic for networking and establishing some great mining connections.

Students and graduates will be considered for many types of entry level mining jobs including engineering assistants, law, accounting, science field work and surveying, as well as IT, HR, WHS, business support and many other types of roles.

End of Part 2 - Opportunities

