

Taxi Driver/ Ride-Hailing Driver/ Chauffeur

Snapshot

Career Cluster(s): Business, Management & Administration; Human Services; Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Interests: Driving; passenger transportation

Earnings (Yearly Average): \$25,980

Employment & Outlook: Much Faster Than Average Growth Expected

OVERVIEW

Sphere of Work

Taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs drive people to and from the places they need to go, such as homes, workplaces, airports, and shopping centers. They must be familiar with city streets and locations to take passengers to their destinations. Self-employed ride-hailing drivers may utilize smartphone apps—sometimes more than one—to connect with customers and maximize profits.



A rideshare driver and customer. Photo via [iStock.com/avdeev007](https://www.iStock.com/avdeev007).
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Work Environment

Taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs spend much of their day on the road, driving between pickup and dropoff locations and waiting for new fares. Work hours vary. Some work part-time. Evening and weekend work is common. Some drivers work late at night or early in the morning.

Taxi and ride-hailing drivers work with little or no supervision, and their work schedules are flexible. They can take breaks for a meal or rest whenever they do not have a passenger.

Chauffeurs' work schedules are much more structured. They work hours based on client needs. Some chauffeurs must be ready to drive their clients at a moment's notice, so they remain on call throughout the day.

Occupation Interest

Taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs are people- and customer-oriented individuals who enjoy transporting others to their destinations. They have

Duties and Responsibilities

- Driving taxicabs, limousines, company cars, or privately owned vehicles to transport passengers
- Picking up passengers and listening to where they want to go
- Helping passengers load and unload their luggage
- Obeying all traffic laws
- Checking the car for problems and do basic maintenance
- Keeping the inside and outside of their car clean
- Operating wheelchair lifts when needed
- Keeping a record of miles traveled

weather. Taxi drivers and chauffeurs must also follow vehicle-for-hire or livery regulations, such as where they can pick up passengers and how much they can charge.

Profile

Interests: People, Things, Data

Working Conditions: Both Inside and Outside

Physical Strength: Medium Work, Heavy Work

Education Needs: On-the-Job Training

Licensure/Certification: Driver's License,
Licensure Varies by State and City

Opportunities for Experience: Part-Time Work

Interest Score: RE

an aptitude for driving and are good communicators who like interacting with others. Mental alertness is crucial, as some work may be performed early in the morning or late at night, and in all types of weather.

A Day in the Life—Duties and Responsibilities

Taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs must stay alert and watch the conditions of the road. They must take precautions to ensure their passengers' safety, especially in heavy traffic or bad

Good drivers are familiar with the streets in the areas they serve. They choose the most efficient routes, considering the traffic at that time of day. They know where the most often sought destinations are, such as airports, train stations, convention centers, hotels, and other points of interest. They also know where to find fire and police stations and hospitals in case of an emergency.

OCCUPATION SPECIALTIES

Chauffeur

Chauffeurs take passengers on prearranged trips. They drive limousines, vans, or private cars. They may work for hire for single trips, or they may work for a person, a private business, or for a government agency. Customer service is important for chauffeurs, especially luxury vehicle drivers. Some do the duties of executive assistants, acting as driver, secretary, and itinerary planner. Other chauffeurs drive large vans between airports or train stations and hotels.

Paratransit Driver

Paratransit drivers transport people with special needs, such as the elderly or those with disabilities. They drive specially equipped vehicles designed to help people with various needs in nonemergency situations. For example, their vehicles may be equipped with wheelchair lifts, and the driver helps a passenger with boarding.

Ride-hailing Driver

Ride-hailing drivers pick up passengers who seek service through a smartphone app. The fare rate can fluctuate depending on demand; however, passengers are notified if the current fare rate is higher than usual. Passengers pay for rides through a credit card linked to the app. Drivers use their own private vehicles and set their own hours.

Taxi Driver

Taxi drivers, also called cabdrivers or cabbies, use a meter to calculate the fare when a passenger requests a destination. Many customers request a cab by calling a central dispatcher who then tells the taxi driver the pickup location. Some drivers pick up passengers waiting in lines at cabstands or in the taxi line at airports, train stations, and hotels. Cabbies drive around the streets looking for passengers in some large cities.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Immediate Physical Environment

Some drivers contract with a dispatch company that refers passengers and allows the driver to use their service facilities for a fee. Drivers who do not own their taxicab may lease a dispatch company's car as part of the fee. Drivers usually pay for their own expenses such as fuel.

Driving for long periods, especially in heavy traffic, can be stressful for these workers. In addition, they often have to pick up heavy luggage and packages.

Taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs sometimes get injured on the job. Most injuries result from traffic accidents.

Human Environment

Human interaction is a key part of this work, as drivers must safely and respectfully transport paying passengers to their destinations. Drivers may have many fares per day and must always be attentive and courteous. Self-employed drivers who utilize smartphone apps often rely on ratings to maintain their business, and tips increase overall earnings.

Technological Environment

Taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs must be confident and knowledgeable behind the wheel. An understanding of car mechanics, even rudimentary, can be an asset if their vehicle encounters problems on the road. Self-employed drivers who use smartphone apps to facilitate their services must be able to use mobile technology to their advantage in order to maximize profits. Familiarity with Global Positioning System (GPS) and navigation software is also an asset.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND ADVANCEMENT

High School/Secondary

There are usually no formal education requirements, although many taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs have a high school diploma or equivalent.

Suggested High School Subjects

- Algebra

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Civics
- Economics
- English
- Entrepreneurship
- Geometry
- History
- Physics
- Pre-Calculus
- Statistics
- Trigonometry

Related Career Pathways/Majors

Business, Management & Administration

Career Cluster

- General Management Pathway

Human Services Career Cluster

- Consumer Services Pathway

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Career Cluster

- Sales & Service Pathway
- Transportation Operations Pathway

Transferable Skills and Abilities

Customer-service Skills

- Interacting with customers and representing their company positively, and ensuring passenger satisfaction
- Because passengers rate ride-hailing drivers after each trip, excellent customer-service skills can lead to a favorable review

Hand-eye Coordination

- Watching surroundings and avoiding obstacles and other hazards while driving a vehicle

Initiative

- Working with little or no supervision
- Being self-motivate and taking the initiative to earn a living

Patience

- Remaining calm and composed when driving through heavy traffic and congestion or dealing with rude passengers

Reliability

- Picking customers up on time and quickly transport them to their destination

Visual Ability

- Passing a state-issued vision and driver's license test

Adult Job Seekers

Anyone with a good driving record, clean background check, access to a vehicle, and a smartphone can become a ride-hailing driver. Some taxi drivers start their own cab service by purchasing a taxi rather than leasing one through a dispatch company. Chauffeurs may work towards driving more important clients and different types of cars.

Professional Certification and Licensure

All taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs must have a regular automobile driver's license. States and local municipalities set other requirements; many require taxi drivers and chauffeurs to get a taxi or limousine license. This normally requires passing a background check, drug test, and a written exam about regulations and local geography.

Regulations for ride-hailing drivers vary by state and city. Check with your local area for more information.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) requires limousine drivers who transport 16 or more passengers (including the driver) to hold a commercial driver's license (CDL) with a passenger (P) endorsement. Drivers must pass knowledge and driving skills tests to receive a CDL.

Additional Requirements

Most taxi and limousine companies provide their new drivers with a short period of on-the-job training. This training usually takes from 1 day to 2 weeks, depending on the company and the location. Some cities require training by law.

Training typically covers local traffic laws, driver safety, and the local street layout. Taxi drivers also get training in operating the taximeter and communications equipment. Limousine companies, with an emphasis on customer service, usually train their chauffeurs. Ride-hailing drivers receive little to no training beyond how to work the electronic hailing app so they can pick up customers. Paratransit drivers receive special training in how to handle wheelchair lifts and other mechanical devices.

EARNINGS AND ADVANCEMENT

Earnings depend on type of job, location, hours worked, and number of fares. Median annual earnings of taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs were \$25,980 in 2019. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$19,240, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$40,360.

These wage data include money earned from tips. Taxi drivers and chauffeurs who provide good customer service are more likely to receive higher tips on each fare.

Taxi drivers and chauffeurs may receive benefits from their employer, although this varies greatly. Self-employed ride-hailing drivers usually do not receive benefits, although third party ride-hailing apps may provide financial incentives to their drivers.

EMPLOYMENT AND OUTLOOK

Taxi drivers, ride-hailing drivers, and chauffeurs held 370,400 jobs in 2019. Forty-three percent were self-employed. Employment is expected to grow much faster than average for all occupations through the year 2029, at a rate of 20 percent.

The growing demand for ride-hailing services, which use electronic hailing (also referred to as e-hailing) through smartphone apps, should increase job growth. Specifically, employment of self-employed workers in this occupation is projected to grow 37 percent from 2018 to 2028.

Taxis and ride-hailing services generally operate in urban areas and complement public transit systems because people who regularly take a train or bus are more likely to use a taxi or ride-hailing service. Therefore, increasing demand for taxis and ride-hailing services should mostly occur in larger metropolitan areas.

Job prospects for ride-hailing drivers should be excellent. The occupation does not require any formal education and has low barriers to entry. Applicants who can pass a background check and have a clean driving record should have no problem contracting with a ride-hailing company.

Related Occupations

- Automotive Service Technician/Mechanic
- Bus Driver
- Delivery Truck Driver/Driver/Sales Worker
- Heavy/Tractor-trailer Truck Driver
- Railroad Worker
- Water Transportation Worker

MORE INFORMATION

American Drivers Association

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Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

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Rideshare Association

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