



## 2026 Skilled Trades Salary Guide

*Compensation benchmarks and hiring insights for employers in Construction, Manufacturing, Logistics, Maritime, and Industrial operations.*

Since 1989, **WORKERS.COM** has helped employers nationwide connect with vetted, job-ready talent. This guide provides current pay ranges for high-demand skilled trades positions and practical strategies to remain competitive in today's labor market.

### Why Compensation Strategy Matters

Competitive wages directly influence time-to-fill, applicant quality, retention, and project performance. Employers that align pay with market conditions typically attract more qualified candidates and reduce costly turnover.

### 2026 Skilled Trades Salary Benchmarks

Trade	Typical U.S. Hourly Range (2026)
Welder (MIG/TIG/Flux-Core)	\$24 – \$42+
Pipe Welder	\$32 – \$55+
CNC Machinist	\$26 – \$45+
Industrial Maintenance Technician	\$28 – \$46+
Electrician	\$30 – \$55+
Plumber / Pipefitter	\$30 – \$58+
Heavy Equipment Operator	\$28 – \$48+
Crane Operator	\$35 – \$65+
Shipfitter	\$28 – \$45+
Structural Steel Fabricator	\$24 – \$40+
Millwright	\$32 – \$52+

### Key Factors That Influence Pay

- Geographic market conditions and cost of living
- Union and prevailing wage requirements
- Certifications, licenses, and safety credentials
- Overtime availability and shift differentials
- Travel, per diem, and project complexity
- Urgency and scarcity of specialized talent

## Hiring Challenges Employers Face

Skilled trades shortages continue to pressure operations across the United States. Employers often compete for the same experienced workers, particularly in welding, machining, maintenance, and heavy equipment roles.

## Compensation Best Practices

- Benchmark wages quarterly against current market conditions.
- Use sign-on bonuses selectively for hard-to-fill roles.
- Highlight overtime, per diem, and advancement opportunities.
- Partner with specialized staffing firms to access passive candidates.
- Combine competitive pay with strong onboarding and retention practices.

## How WORKERS.COM Helps Employers Hire Smarter

**WORKERS.COM** provides temporary staffing, temp-to-hire, and direct hire recruiting services nationwide. We help employers reduce hiring risk, control labor costs, and scale quickly with qualified skilled trades talent.

Request Skilled Trades Talent: <https://www.workers.com>

Search Jobs: <https://jobs.workers.com>

Community Resources: <https://www.workers.com/community/>

Staffing Pulse Podcast: <https://www.workers.com/community/podcast/>

**Disclaimer:** *Salary ranges are generalized U.S. benchmarks based on market observations and may vary by location, industry, certifications, and project requirements.*