Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
Ressources humaines et Développement des compétences Canada

Now and Tomorrow
Excellence in Everything We Do

Essential Skills and Apprenticeship

Essential Skills for Your Apprenticeship Training

Apprenticeship training combines in-class learning and on-the-job experience. Having strong Essential Skills such as reading, document use, writing and thinking can help you succeed in this training. The following tips and strategies will help you practise these skills so you will be able to:

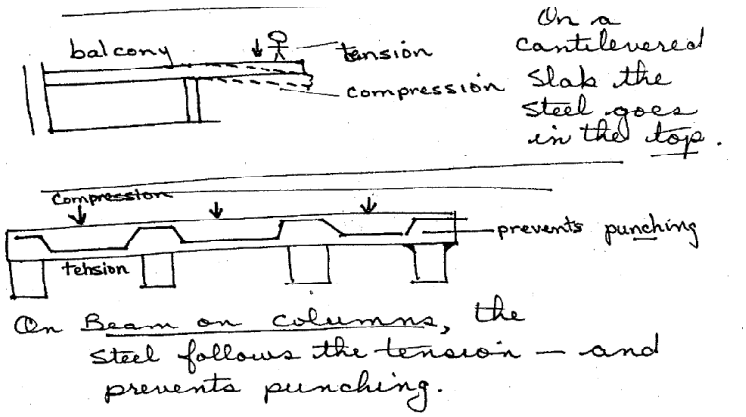
- prepare for in-class training;
- take effective notes; and
- understand and remember what you have learned.

Preparing for in-class training

- Arrive in class with all your assignments completed.
- Bring all the materials you need (e.g., pen, pencil, binder, textbook).
- Review your notes from the previous class.
- Read new material before each class.
- Use a three-ring binder instead of a notebook for taking notes. A binder will allow you to take out pages for review and add in handouts from class and group notes that should go together.

Taking effective notes

- Sit near the front of the class so you can see and hear the instructor.
- Label your notes: add the date, title(s) and page numbers.
- Use point form or abbreviations to get the information down quickly.
- Write on one side of the page only; this will allow you to spread your pages out to see all your notes at once.



Canada

- Use highlighting, circles, boxes or stars to identify important information in your notes.
- Ask questions during or after class to have information repeated or explained again.
- Use question marks in your notes to show where your information might be incomplete or if it is difficult to understand.
- Be alert for important information being presented; your instructor may show that it is important by:
  - ✔ writing the information on the board (diagrams, drawings, formulas, definitions, etc.);
  - ✔ spending a lot of time on the information;
  - ✔ repeating the information;
  - ✔ getting excited or more lively when discussing the information;
  - ✔ telling you directly that certain information is important or that it will be on the exam.

Activity

Practise taking notes:

Take notes as you watch or listen to a news broadcast. Practise listening carefully, focusing your attention, writing down important points, writing quickly, recalling the information and reviewing your notes.

Review your notes after class

Immediately after class, try to remember what you learned without looking at your notes. You can do this silently, out loud or on paper. Check your notes to see how much of the material you remember.

Review and edit your notes within 24 hours. Rewrite notes that are difficult to read and add details that may be missing while you still remember the information. Your notes should make sense when you study from them later.

Activity

Review by teaching:

Teach the lesson to another apprentice or to a friend. When you teach someone, you will find that you need to have a good understanding of the subject to explain it well.

Study your notes and other materials often

Studying is just as important as attending classes.

- Schedule your study sessions for the times you work the best.
- Decide how you should study: alone in a silent setting; alone, but with people around you; or with others in a study group. The setting that is best for you should help you to study, not distract you.
- Divide your study sessions into 30-minute blocks, with 10-minute breaks between each block. Study one topic during each block. Do not study for more than two hours per session.

Activity

Decide how to study:

What are your best hours for studying?

_____

What is your best study setting?

_____

Understanding and remembering what you have learned

You will read a variety of textbooks, reference books and handouts during your training.
Use the following strategies and tips to improve your reading skills.

Reading strategies	Tips to implement the strategies
1. Get to know the training textbooks.	• Review the table of contents to see what topics are included. • Check for a glossary or an index at the back of the book. • Note whether there are chapter questions or quizzes at the end of each chapter.
2. Pick the right reading style to suit the purpose of your reading.	• Decide if you want to: ✔ scan for specific information; ✔ skim for overall meaning; ✔ read the full text to understand and to learn; ✔ read the full text to critique or to evaluate.
3. Look at the chapter questions before you start reading the text.	• Remember that the questions usually reinforce the main ideas and concepts of each chapter. • Use the questions as a purpose for your reading.
4. Read the headings of a chapter or handout to identify the main ideas.	• Remember that headings often contain the main ideas of a chapter or handout. • Use the headings to get an overview of the whole text.
5. Bring information together.	• Add the information that you find in other sources to your notes or to the textbooks so that you have all the information in one place.

Highlighting

Highlight important information in your training materials to help you review and study for exams.

You should highlight:

- terms and definitions
- information that your instructor says is important
- answers to chapter questions and tests

Activity

Highlight the information in this booklet that you find most useful.

Flashcards

Flashcards can help you learn and remember information such as:

- terms and definitions
- formulas
- information that your instructor says is important

Activity

Create flashcards:

Write a word or question on one side of an index card and write the definition of the word or the answer to the question on the other side.

Use both sides of the index card to study and test yourself:

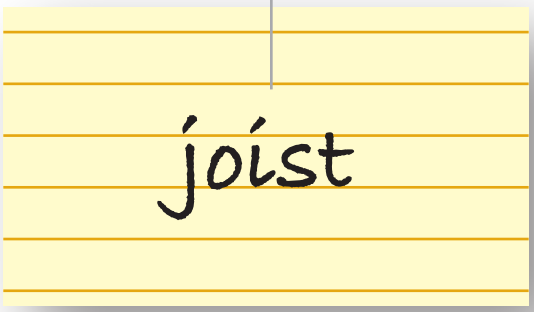
- read the word, then recall the definition and key points; and
- read the definition and key points, then recall the word.

Example:

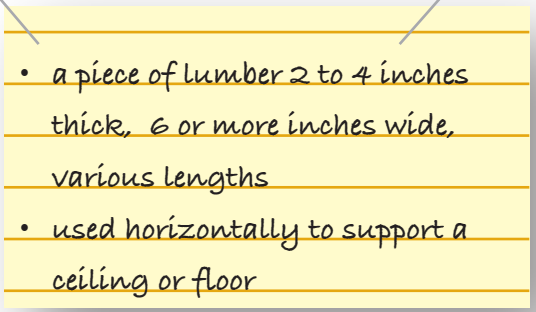
Write the word on the front

Write the definition or important points on the back

Keep it short, to the point and written in your own words



Front

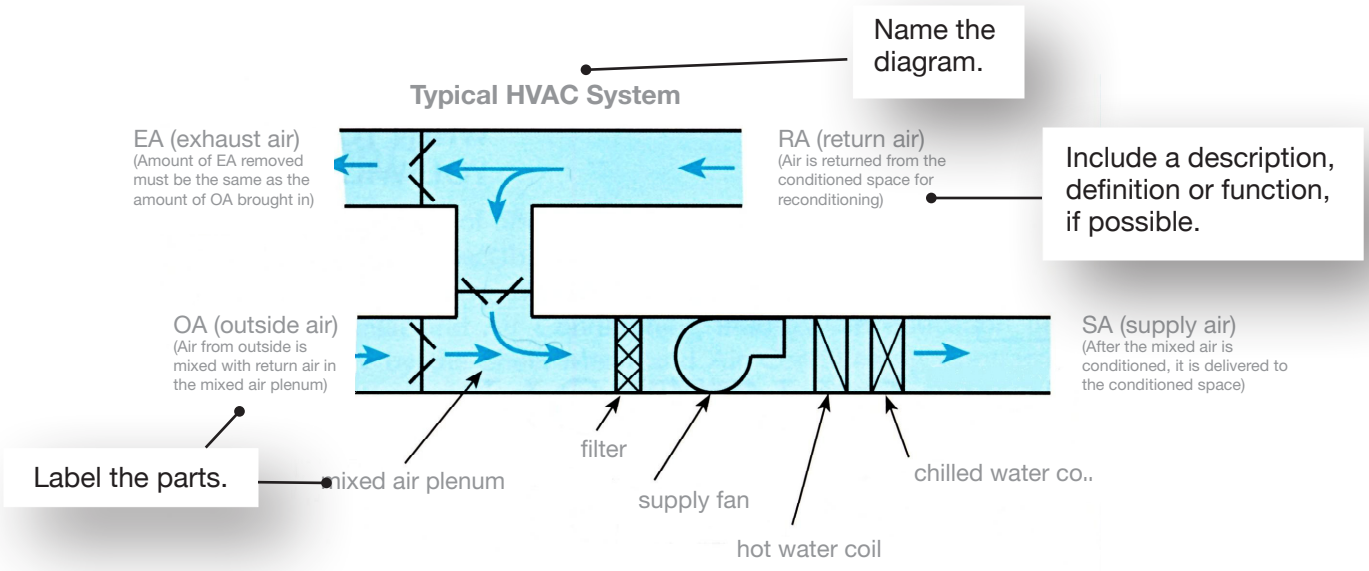


Back

Tip: Use the flashcards you create in training to help you study for your Interprovincial Red Seal exam.

Diagrams and drawings

Diagrams and drawings can show how something works; they can show how the parts are related or even show parts that cannot usually be seen. You may be asked to label parts in a diagram or drawing on an exam. You may also be asked to read a description of a part and then be asked to give its name.



Flowcharts

Using flowcharts can make it easier to learn step-by-step procedures and processes. Flowcharts reduce a procedure to its basic steps and eliminate extra details. Look at the following example to see how a description of a procedure could be made into a flowchart.

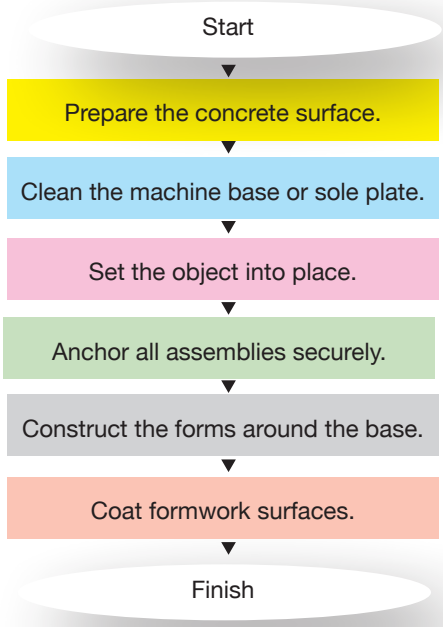
GROUT COLUMNS AND BASE PLATES

This learning guide will outline the basic procedures for grouting columns and base plates. It is important to prepare the concrete surface before setting the column or machine base. The surface must be cleaned and roughened enough to promote adhesion. There are different procedures depending on the type of grout you will be using.

To remove rust, paint, oil, grease, or scale remains, clean the machine base or sole plate. If you will be using a cement grout, devise a means for wetting the metal base before grouting. This will assist the flow of grout around foundation bolts and other metal parts.

Once the machine is properly cleaned, set the object into place so that all items to be grouted are properly positioned and anchored before grouting. This is generally accomplished by using metal shims to set the base or soleplate to grade.

To make sure that the anchors will not shift out of alignment from grout pressure or tamping, anchor all assemblies securely. Once everything is secure, construct the forms around the base. Ensure that the formwork is strong and watertight, and coat formwork surfaces with a recommended release agent.



Making tables from text

Taking information that is in sentence or paragraph form and reorganizing it into a table can help you study.

It is a good idea to change text into tables when you are:

- comparing and contrasting items
- listing problems and solutions
- grouping items by categories or types

Activity

Read the following article and complete the table by filling in the missing information.

HANGING FABRIC WALLCOVERINGS

With any fabric that is unbacked, it is normally best to apply paste to the wall. The adhesive must be applied thinly and evenly, using a good quality ¼" to ⅜" nap roller. If the adhesive is applied too thinly, however, dry spots may occur. If there are heavy spots of adhesive, it may bleed through the material causing a permanent stain.

In order to avoid heavy buildup of adhesive at the seam area, do not brush adhesive next to where the seams will be. Instead, use a paste transfer strip. First lay out the surface to be decorated by marking the area where the seams will be. Then apply the paste to the area. Apply the second paste transfer strip over the second seam area. Now remove the first transfer strip you applied earlier. This will eliminate the possibility of heavy buildup or paste oozing out through the seam.

Most fabric wallcoverings come untrimmed with a selvage edge (frayed edge). For unbacked materials, this edge must be trimmed off dry. For backed materials, it may be possible to trim on the table after the strip has been pasted. When trimming fabrics on the table or on the wall, always use a sharp razor blade because fabrics fray easily, especially when wet.

If the materials are completely unwashable, it may be necessary to tape off all areas of the wall that need to be trimmed. All this may seem like a lot of extra work, but it is nothing compared to the time wasted trying to wash adhesive off unwashable wallcoverings.

One of the hardest things to control is the tendency to stretch the material. This is especially true when fabrics have definite horizontal or vertical weaves. If this type of material becomes stretched, it will become wavy and impossible to straighten out. To avoid this problem, always hang any type of material as naturally as possible, next to the plumb line or seam, without forcing it into place.

Problem	Solution
• dry spots • adhesive bleeding through material	• Apply adhesive thinly and evenly to wall.
• fraying edges	•
•	• Tape off all areas that need to be trimmed.
• stretchy fabric	•

a) Use a sharp razor blade; b) Unwashable materials; c) Hang fabric as naturally as possible, next to the plumb line or seam.

Helpful references

To help you remember information more easily, create references for yourself such as the following examples.

Rules of thumb

Metric

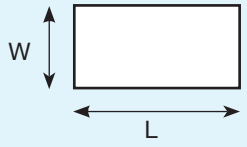
- 1 mm (millimetre) is about the thickness of a dime.
- 1 m (metre) is about the normal stride of an adult.
- 1 km (kilometre) is about the distance covered in a brisk 10-minute walk.
- 1 kg (kilogram) is about the weight of a 1 litre bottle of water.
- 1 t (tonne) or 1000 kg (kilograms) is about the weight of a small car.

Imperial

- ¼” (inch) is about the width of the small end of a regular paperclip.
- ½” (inch) is about the diameter of an AA battery.
- 1” (inch) is about the diameter of a loonie ($1 coin).
- 1’ (foot) is about the length of letter-size paper.
- 1 mile is about the distance covered in a brisk 16-minute walk.

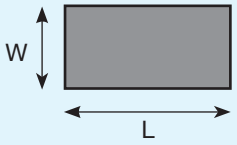
Formulas

Perimeter/Circumference
1-dimensional



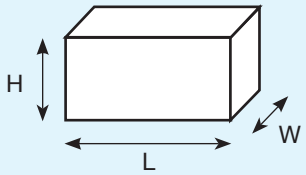
$P = 2(L + W)$

Area
2-dimensional

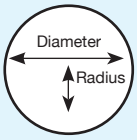


$A = L \times W$

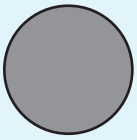
Volume
3-dimensional



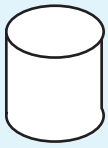
$V = L \times W \times H$



$C = \pi d = 2\pi r$



$A = \pi r2$



$V = \pi\ r2h$

For more information on Essential Skills and related resources, visit **hrsdc.gc.ca/essentialskills**

For more information on the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program, visit **www.red-seal.ca**

You can order this publication by contacting:

Publications Services
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
140 Promenade du Portage
Phase IV, 12th Floor
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0J9

Fax: 819-953-7260
Online: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/publications

This document is available on demand in alternative formats (Large Print, Braille, Audio Cassette, Audio CD, e-Text Diskette, e-Text CD, or DAISY), by contacting 1 800 O Canada (1 800 622 6232). If you have a hearing or speech impairment and use a teletypewriter (TTY), call 1 800 926 9105.

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2009

Paper
Cat. No.: HS18-9/2-2009E
ISBN: 978-1-100-13811-4

PDF
Cat. No.: HS18-9/2-2009E-PDF
ISBN: 978-1-100-13830-5