



Motor Mechanic/Automotive Technician

Automotive Technicians/Mechanics are the life- blood of the motor industry in Ireland. These highly skilled crafts- people diagnose, inspect, repair and service a variety of motor vehicles from motorcycles to heavy commercial vehicles. Some technicians work on all parts of the vehicle, while others specialise in one area or one type of vehicle. The increasing use of computers and electronic components in vehicles has changed the job title from Mechanic to Automotive Technician.

What does an Automotive Technician do?

A Motor Technicians' work is practical, hands on work and involves locating and diagnosing problems in vehicles, then using technical know-how to replace or mend the fault, service and carry out routine checks, and test the vehicle to ensure that it is operating safely. The Technician may have to test drive the vehicle or use a variety of testing equipment to identify the source of the problem. In some cases, the motor technician will also deal directly with the customer and give estimates on the cost of the work.

The mark of a good Vehicle Technician is their ability to diagnose mechanical, fuel, electrical and electronic problems and make repairs in the minimal time. You will work in a workshop or a garage, or for a company owning large fleets of cars or for a motoring organisation as vehicle breakdown engineer. Automotive Technicians use a wide range of basic and specialised tools, including the latest in electronic diagnostic handheld scan tools.

They also use precision equipment such a micrometers, ammeters, voltmeters and torque wrenches and increasingly computerised engine testing equipment such as infrared engine analysers, dynamometers, engine analysis units and compressions testers which are used to monitor and locate malfunctions.

With rate of change in modern automobile technology, a Motor Technician continues to learn throughout the whole career.

Types of Motor Mechanic

The apprenticeships in Ireland are:

- Motor Mechanic/Automotive Technician-if you want to work on cars motorcycles, as a breakdown engineer or in motor sport.
- Agricultural Equipment Mechanic-if you want to work on the high-tech equipment used in modern agriculture for example global positioning devices

and yield monitors. Specialised farm machinery has grown in size, complexity and variety and use sophisticated electronics and hydraulics.

- Heavy Goods Vehicle Mechanic- if you want to work on diesel powered trucks, buses and equipment.

How do I become a Motor Technician?

The route to this exciting career is through a four-year apprenticeship. Most of your learning is on the job in the garage or workshop with Master Technicians, with 3 phases of full time study totalling 42 weeks. The first phase of full time study is with FAS, the second and third with an Institute or College, such as an IT.

The minimum entry requirements is at that you are at least 16 years old and have at least a grade D in any 5 subjects in the Junior Certificate (or equivalent grades in other approved examinations). Some employers will look for more than this – up to Leaving Certificate.

Maths, physics, technical drawing, metal work, technology and engineering are particularly relevant school subjects.

What it takes to be an Automotive Technician?

- Physically fit
- Must pass a colour-vision test
- Aptitude for handling tools and equipment
- Aptitude for Maths
- Mechanical Aptitude
- Problem solving skills for diagnosing the machines' malfunction
- Computer skills
- Good reading skills for studying service manuals and analysing complex diagrams.