

MECHANICAL

Carpentry Instructor

About my work



My husband Will and I own and run the Heartwood School in Washington, MA, where we teach our students the skills to build an energy efficient house. People come here from all over the world. I find it very satisfying to teach carpentry to them and help them learn homebuilding, woodworking, and timber framing.

Special qualifications for carpentry include being good at working with your hands, and developing good problem-solving skills, patience, and the ability to follow through.

As a carpenter, you can learn by doing. I encourage a woman who wants to be a carpenter to take a class at our school, talk to carpenters and salespeople at the lumberyard, read books about carpentry, and try your hand at simple projects under someone's supervision. Try to find a carpenter to work with or volunteer with Habitat for Humanity. You can also join the union and serve an apprenticeship.

You'll learn to work from blueprints and architectural drawings. As you get more advanced projects, good math skills are important. I love carpentry work because, at the end of the day, you can see what you're creating—what grows from the building process.

Carpentry will always be an important career. Everyone needs a home to live in, and carpenters also renovate and repair buildings.

I know I'm doing a good job when I approach a project with thought and then feel satisfied when it's complete.

I like to remind women that none of us was born knowing what we know now. As you expose yourself to new learning experiences, your skillfulness will increase. Nothing is magic. It takes time and patience to learn a skill like carpentry. In the end, you will be rewarded by having a satisfying, creative, and useful career.

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