Understanding hairdressing
Ever had a bad hair day?
Or just wanted a New look?
You’d go to a Hairdresser!
The AWESOME of hairdressing
Are you a people person?

yes!
Awesome! You may enjoy working in hairdressing.

no...
Awesome! If you work in hairdressing you will learn these skills.
Are you Creative?

**yes!**
Awesome! The world is looking forward to your input!

**no...**
Awesome! Hairdressing can help open up your underlying creative instincts.
Do you like solving Problems?

**yes!**
Awesome! Good hairdressing is all about solving your clients’ problems and making them feel good.

**no...**
Awesome! Many hairdressing tasks are routine, giving you certainty, and with experience you will learn to solve your clients’ problems – making them feel good.
Do you like to work in a team?

**yes!**
Awesome! Most salons have hairdressers at different levels, all working together as a team.

**no...**
Awesome! If you become a trained hairdresser, you can find jobs where you work one-on-one with your client, in the midst of other stylists also doing their own thing.
Are you looking for heaps of variety?

yes! Awesome! As a fashion industry, hairdressing is always changing, and every different client gives you something different to do.

no... Awesome! Although you will get variety in hairdressing, many of your clients want “the same as before” and you can develop a routine.
The CHALLENGE of hairdressing
Working hours

Hairdressers tend to work at least one late night, also on Saturdays and sometimes on Sundays.

This can be a problem during your training, but once experienced, you can find jobs with hours that suit you.

Working weekends means you get days off on weekdays when it is easier to organise things you want to do.
Hardwork

Hairdressers need to be able to stay on their feet for much of the day, and to cope with periods of strong work pressure.

Think of a busy day at work like a gym session you’re being paid to attend! You get better as you go along.

A busy day makes you tired, but most hairdressers say it’s a ‘good’ tiredness.
Pay

The legal minimum pay for a qualified hairdresser seems quite low, but it gets added to for weekend work and some late nights.

Most experienced hairdressers get well above the award minimum, either through negotiated higher wages, or through a commission system based on the income they generate for the salon.

While you are in training, the wages are low, reflecting that you are getting trained. This doesn’t last forever.
Sounds like hairdressing could be good.
How do I become a hairdresser?
Initially there are two qualifications to consider, and different pathways to achieve each qualification.

**Certificate II**
Certificate II teaches you to be a good salon assistant, and improves your chances of getting an apprenticeship to become a full hairdresser.

This can be learnt through a short course, including work experience.

**Certificate III**
Certificate III is the qualification most working hairdressers have. This can be learnt through an apprenticeship which is competency based (no longer than four years) or through a one year fulltime course.
Certificate II in Hairdressing

This teaches the skills needed to be a salon assistant. There are not many ongoing jobs for salon assistants, so this course is mostly used as an introduction to hairdressing, and becomes the early stages of a full certificate III.

Having a certificate II makes it easier to get a certificate III apprenticeship in the ACT, will shorten your training time, and may enable you to finish your full apprenticeship sooner.

In a certificate II you learn shampoo-bar skills, blow waving hair and applying colours, but not cutting, nor do you learn any of the consultation and decision making skills.

You work under the direct supervision of a stylist.
In a Certificate III apprenticeship, you get a paid job with a salon, and experience while you train. You enter a formal contract for up to four years, which can be completed earlier.

It is possible to start your apprenticeship part time while still at school. This is called an ASBA (Australian School Based Apprenticeship). You will attend an RTO (Registered Training Organisation) one day a week (paid time) to learn theory and basic skills.

Your employer will give extra training on-the-job. When you have finished your structured training at the RTO, a further period of on-the-job experience is needed to bring you to full industry standard.

When your employer and you feel you are ready, you can arrange for the RTO to assess your overall competence and declare you qualified, with your employer’s agreement.
More on Apprenticeships

More information on Certificate III can be found on the Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service website.

This site also lets you explore more about apprenticeships, including pay rates, and videos about the industry, and an interesting quiz.
Certificate III (full time) in Hairdressing

Becoming a hairdresser through full time study is often referred to as fast track, or as a formal course. Generally there is no government payment for this course, so course fees will apply. Students may be eligible for Austudy, ABSTUDY or Youth Allowance.
Where should I work?
There are a number of pathways to help you decide!

- Talk to your friends, or hairdressers.
- Get help from your careers advisor or employment consultant.
- Talk to an RTO.
- Think hard about your personality, and where you think you would fit in.
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