START A CAREER - CALIFORNIA

How to become an auto mechanic in California

What auto mechanics do, the skills and credentials that matter in California, and how to find auto mechanic jobs.

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1 What auto mechanics do

Mechanics inspect, diagnose and repair cars and light trucks: brakes, suspension, engines, electrical systems and computer diagnostics.

2 Skills and training

Many mechanics start through a vocational program or an entry-level job. Voluntary ASE certifications help with advancement. Servicing vehicle air conditioning for pay needs EPA Section 609 certification.

3 Licensing

A BAR license is not required to work as a general automotive mechanic in California, but Smog Check and vehicle safety systems technicians are licensed by BAR. Paid A/C work needs EPA Section 609 certification.

4 Find jobs on NCC

Browse open jobs below or on NCC Jobs.

Requirements at a glance

EPA Section 609 certification for air conditioning work

Required in some cases - Federal - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Required to repair or service motor vehicle air conditioning systems for payment or bartering. A BAR license is not required to work as a general mechanic; Smog Check and safety systems technicians are licensed by BAR.

Official agencies and links

Section 609 Technician Training and Certification Programs

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

https://www.epa.gov/mvac/section-609-technician-training-and-certification-programs

Frequently asked questions

Do auto mechanics need a license in California?

No license for general mechanics; Smog Check technicians are licensed.

This guide is general information, not legal advice. Rules change and can depend on your city or county, so confirm with the official agencies linked below before you apply.