

I want to be a ...

# TECHNICIAN

the facts



Technicians – people who have a thorough but practical understanding of the general principles of their field – fill a varied range of vital roles both on and offshore. Technicians can work in a variety of disciplines and may become multi-skilled across several.

Today there is a shortage of skilled technicians in all areas, including mechanical and hydraulics technicians, electrical technicians, and electronics or instrument technicians.

- **Mechanical technicians**, also known as maintenance technicians, operate and maintain a range of plant and machinery. Typical equipment could include engines, pumps, compressors, valves, heating and ventilation equipment and hydraulic equipment
- **Hydraulics technicians** work in maintenance and repair of hydraulic systems, which range from those found in winches and launch and recovery systems for subsea equipment, through to the very sophisticated hydraulic equipment used to operate pipe-laying towers and pipe reels, some of which can weigh hundreds of tonnes. Hydraulic tooling technicians work on the operation and maintenance of sophisticated hydraulic tools used in subsea robotics
- **Dive technicians** work maintaining, operating and certifying life support equipment and subsea tooling systems used in support of diving operations. The dive technician often needs a broad range of skills as he could be dealing with hydraulic, electronic, pneumatic and mechanical systems all of which interface into the diving and life support systems (see separate factsheets covering working as a diver or as a life support technician)
- **Electricians** might work maintaining and troubleshooting electrical equipment including three-phase power generation, AC/DC drives and air conditioning plant
- **Electronics or instrument technicians** might operate, maintain and repair a wide range of electric and electronic instruments and systems, including meters, indicators and gauges, radio and radar transponders, using test equipment such as pulse and signal generators and oscilloscopes

## Education and Qualifications

In general, technicians enter the industry with some form of engineering/technical qualification, relevant experience, or after military service.

## Skills and Training

Training for technicians is dependent on the discipline. Generally, vocational technical qualifications from college or a tertiary technical educational qualifications (which may take between one and three years to gain) are available in many countries for the main technical disciplines in use offshore.

Military technical training can also be of use in finding work offshore in the marine contracting industry. It is important to realise that a thorough technical grounding is essential to gain work as a technician of any kind.





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To work offshore in any capacity it is usually necessary to complete a basic offshore safety induction and emergency training (BOSIET) course. This generally includes first aid, safety at sea, the basics of fire and fire fighting and helicopter underwater escape training (HUET). In many regions, someone who has not successfully completed a course of this nature will not be permitted to work offshore.

## ■ **Medical Fitness**

In many areas of the world, potential offshore workers must undergo and pass a special medical examination. These requirements may vary from country to country, but usually involve a medical leading to a certificate which may be valid for one or more years. The requirements are not unduly onerous for fit and active people but certain common conditions, or previous injuries, can be a cause for failure. If in any doubt, interested persons should seek out a doctor knowledgeable about offshore standards before they seek work or embark on a course of training.

## ■ **Working Conditions and Prospects**

Technicians can expect to find work in the offshore oil industry all over the world. They have to be resourceful, resilient and be able to work in both a team and a remote environment. Whilst much work is vessel based, there are opportunities for on-shore and office based duties.

After a number of years field experience it is possible for a technician to move to into a supervisory role offshore. After several years offshore experience, many move into managerial and technical support roles onshore. Prospects for moving up through the ranks are good and, for the ambitious, there is no limit to what can be achieved.

## ■ **Further information**

For more details on the range of careers available to technicians in the marine contracting industry, visit [www.imca-int.com/careers](http://www.imca-int.com/careers)

Also available from IMCA:

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- Diver
- DP operator
- Geophysicist
- Life support technician
- Offshore engineer
- Project manager
- ROV pilot/technician
- Surveyor
- Survey data processor
- Survey engineer/technician
- Technician

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