

Job of The Week

Rail track
maintenance
worker

Key Skills

- knowledge of engineering science and technology
- knowledge of building and construction
- the ability to use, repair and maintain machines and tools
- the ability to work well with others
- excellent verbal communication skills
- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- to be flexible and open to change
- problem-solving skills
- to be able to carry out basic tasks on a computer or hand-held device

Salary

£28,000 - £43,000

Working hours

42 – 47 per week
Evenings/weekends/bank
holidays
On Shifts

Aspire | Challenge | Achieve

Rail track maintenance worker

Entry requirements

- Some GCSEs, usually including English and maths, or equivalent, for an *intermediate apprenticeship*
- 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths, for an *advanced apprenticeship*

Apprenticeship

You could apply to do a Rail Engineering Operative Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship, or Rail Engineering Technician Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship.

You can find apprenticeships with companies like Network Rail and Transport for London.

Restrictions and Requirements

As a rail track maintenance worker, you'll work in a safety critical environment around live wires and on train tracks. You'll have a medical as part of the selection process. This will include checks of your hearing and vision.

You might also need to:

- Take regular drug and alcohol checks
- Have a driving licence so you can drive rail company vehicles
- Live no more than an hour away from the location you wish to work

College

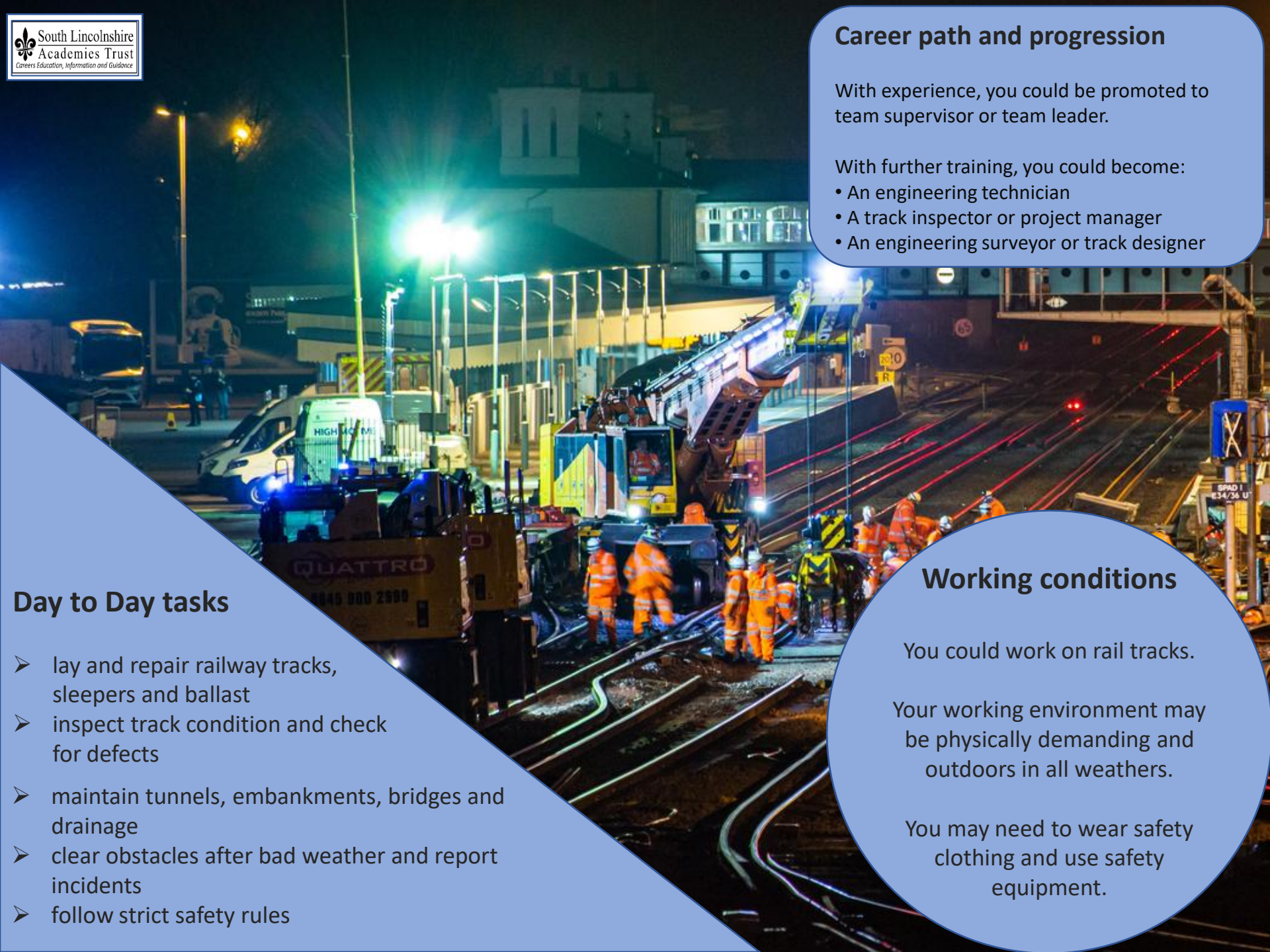
You might find it useful to take an engineering qualification at college before looking for work as a trainee.

Courses include:

- Engineering operations
- Mechanical engineering
- Maintenance engineering technology

Entry requirements

Entry requirements for these courses vary.



Career path and progression

With experience, you could be promoted to team supervisor or team leader.

With further training, you could become:

- An engineering technician
- A track inspector or project manager
- An engineering surveyor or track designer

Day to Day tasks

- lay and repair railway tracks, sleepers and ballast
- inspect track condition and check for defects
- maintain tunnels, embankments, bridges and drainage
- clear obstacles after bad weather and report incidents
- follow strict safety rules

Working conditions

You could work on rail tracks.

Your working environment may be physically demanding and outdoors in all weathers.

You may need to wear safety clothing and use safety equipment.

Labour Market Information

In the Careers section of the school website you can find the useful comparison tool the ‘Labour Market Information widget’.

Use the widget to compare different job roles in any employment sector or relating specifically to the ‘Job of the Week’.



Rail construction and maintenance operatives	Engineering technicians	Rail transport operatives
Weekly Pay £1,130 Hours/Week 44h Annual Pay £58,760 Hourly Pay £26	Weekly Pay £820 Hours/Week 47h Annual Pay £42,640 Hourly Pay £17	Weekly Pay £880 Hours/Week 48h Annual Pay £45,760 Hourly Pay £18
Workforce Change (projected) Contraction -1.6% The workforce is projected to contract by -1.6% over the period to 2035, losing 100 jobs.	Workforce Change (projected) Growth 7.3% The workforce is projected to grow by 7.3% over the period to 2035, creating 3,500 jobs.	Workforce Change (projected) Contraction -0.6% The workforce is projected to contract by -0.6% over the period to 2035, losing 100 jobs.
You might find this job in Land transport, etc Warehousing, etc Civil engineering	You might find this job in Specialised construction Electricity, gas, etc Metal products Food products Other trans. equipment	You might find this job in Land transport, etc Warehousing, etc Real estate
More info Clear card	More info Clear card	More info Clear card

Labour Market Information



Rail construction and maintenance operatives

Rail construction and maintenance operatives lay, re-lay, repair and examine railway track and maintain surrounding areas.

Common tasks in this job:

- patrols length of track and visually inspects rails, bolts, fishplates and chairs for distortion or fracture
- checks tightness of bolts and wedges, replaces damaged rail chairs and repacks ballast under sleepers if necessary
- lubricates points, examines fences, drains, culverts and embankments and carries out any necessary maintenance
- spreads ballast and lays sleepers or metal plates at specified intervals

[Back](#)

[Clear card](#)

Engineering technicians

Engineering technicians perform a variety of technical support functions to assist engineers with the design, development, operation, installation and maintenance of engineering systems and constructions.

Common tasks in this job:

- plans and prepares work and test schedules based on specifications and drawings
- sets up equipment, undertakes tests, takes readings, performs calculations and records and interprets data
- prepares estimates of materials, equipment and labour required for engineering projects
- diagnoses and detects faults and implements procedures to maintain efficient operation of systems and equipment

[Back](#)

[Clear card](#)

Rail transport operatives

Rail transport operatives assist drivers in the operation of passenger and goods trains, drive locomotive engines in coal mines, guide wagons and coaches in marshalling yards and sidings to make up trains, operate signals and points to control the movement of rail traffic, and monitor the operation of surface and underground railways.

Common tasks in this job:

- provides crews for breakdown trains, allocates relief and replacement crews as necessary, keeps crews informed of any line repairs or restrictions, and checks train running times for punctuality
- examines schedules and decides priority of movement of trains, monitors movement of trains and issues instructions to drivers, signal operatives and level crossing keepers
- operates signals and opens and closes barriers at level crossings as required
- examines shunting instructions, uncouples wagons and coaches, guides movement of carriages using manual points and wagon breaks, links-up carriages, ensures security of couplings and reconnects brake and heating systems

[Back](#)

[Clear card](#)

Keep looking...

Use these links to learn more about our Job of The Week, consider the various pathways leading to the career, what you can be doing now to help yourself and other roles in the industry...



Take a look at these short videos for inspiration...

Life as an Apprentice



[Life as an Apprentice Technician | West Midlands Railway](#)

Emily's Journey



[From Apprentice to Engineer: Emily's Journey in Signalling & Telecoms | Network Rail](#)

Useful Websites

[Routes into Rail](#)
[Transport for London](#)
[Apprenticeships - Network Rail](#)
[Train Manager - GBRf](#)