

BRADENTON HERALD

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Education Today / Career Tomorrow

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Boat and Yacht Repair Technician

In the fiberglass industry, there are many career options when it comes to repairing and refinishing. The most important skill a boat repair technician masters is working with composites. After training, technicians can work with boats, automobiles, airplanes, and fiberglass pools or hot tubs. Technicians can choose to work anywhere from repair shops to manufacturing facilities.

There are numerous steps in the refinishing process. First, a

technician evaluates the damage and determines what needs to be done. They choose which tools to use to make the spot uniform, such as grinders, cut out wheels, and whole saws. Technicians bevel the old surface to accept the new material. The next step is to let the material dry, fair the surface, and prepare for painting or retexturing. After this, a technician applies spray paint or gel coat chemicals. The final step of the process is to

buff the surface to give a glossy finish.

Technicians who are most successful know the importance of focusing on detail. They pay close attention to the work that they do. The technician becomes knowledgeable on how tools affect the surface that they are working on. An eye for detail is extremely important. Also, good work ethic is an excellent quality to have. Technicians need to see a project from start to finish.

Job Outlook

Within the boating industry, there will always be a need for qualified boat repair technicians. Some graduates may find themselves working with a large boat manufacturer while others work independently or in a small shop setting. Because fiberglass is a composite material that has many applications, students can transfer their skills to other industries such as aerospace, automotive and recreation. Opportunities are vast for those who have desire and ambition.

Money

Career: Boat and Yacht Repair Technician

Annual Salary: Those who master the craft of working with fiberglass, gel coat, and paint can expect to enter the job market making \$25,000 to \$32,000 a year.

For more information on how to start your career in Boat and Yacht Repair, please contact:

Career Counselor Vickie Miller
 (941) 751-7900 ext. 2016
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Education

Training is available at Post Secondary Education centers. In a Boat and Yacht Repair program, students learn a variety of all skills necessary to work in the industry. While students learn some theory, a large majority of class time is spent in the lab in a hands-on setting. Once a skill is taught, students are given ample opportunities to practice. Students not only learn how to work with fiberglass and resin, they also spray paint boats, replace the wiring and rig the boats. When a boat is finished, students are given the opportunity to participate in Sea Trials where their Navigation and Seamanship skills are developed. They gain general knowledge of different aspects of the job; this helps the student decide what they really want to do as a career.

To prepare for training, students should take art classes in high school. This aids learning using clay, molds, painting, and detailing. Also, students should take a vocational class that involves hands on tools, especially screwdrivers, wrenches, and sanders. Wood working is also a helpful class.

Once an employee in the industry, technicians do have advancement opportunities. Technicians need to exhibit an eagerness to learn new skills.

It's a
Matter of
Perspective

Teacher	Student
<p>"The job outlook for this business is promising, especially with the economic downfall. People are repairing rather than buying new boats. There is a lot of opportunity in this area, as well. In class at Manatee Technical Institute's Boat and Yacht Repair program, students are expanding their knowledge. They are working with fiberglass, which is a skill they can use in numerous other trades."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Doug Fallin</p>	<p>"I got into the program because I was raised around boats and enjoyed being on the water. Right now, we are working with fiberglass in class and I am learning a lot. After graduation, I want to work in a marina. I feel this program prepares students for the world— and the work that they will need to do, day to day. The program has high standards, which will only make me a better employee!"</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Prisley Delossantos</p>

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