

Workforce Australia

Workforce Specialists

Why retail?

Is the industry right for you?

The Retail Trade industry refers to businesses that primarily sell goods to the general public (as opposed to businesses or government). Examples of retail businesses include supermarkets, newsagents, florists, pharmacies, petrol stations and department stores.



1. Financial stability

Retail is one of the few industries that continuously grows every year. An additional **55,000** people will be required for this Industry over the next 5 years. The average full-time worker receives **\$800** a week. You can plan your budget based on how many hours you want to work a week.



2. Flexible work hours

Retail provides flexible hours during the week and weekends. This means you have the option of working hours that best suit you. You can still work on life goals like studying or spending time with your family.



3. Skill requirements

Retail is one of the few industries that offers entry-level jobs. This means less barriers and a focus on communication and problem-solving skills. Anyone has a chance in this industry if they have the **right attitude!**



4. Things to consider

Skills and expectations to be successful in the retail industry include:

Sociable: To actively engage and interact with customers, and communication skills are important.

Customer experience: Making customers feel important and happy is key!

Fast-paced environment: The ability to multitask while providing the best customer service experience can be hard sometimes.

Career progression: Many people start in entry-level roles. With training and hard work, they can move into management roles.



5. Where to start

Ask yourself:

- Do you love helping people?
- Are you good at talking to people and solving problems?
- Do you pay attention to the small things?
- Are you a good listener?

These are all important things to think about if you're considering a job in this industry.



Useful things to know



No experience

Getting your first job can be challenging as most employers ask for local experience. Retail is one of the few industries where your 'soft skills' are highly valued! 'Soft skills' can include teamwork, organisational skills, attention to detail, and communication skills.



What is customer service?

We are all customers, so we know what service we want when we go to the shops. Remember customer service is about how you make someone feel. If you like being helpful, then this is a good first job that offers career pathways.



Not confident in English?

For many migrants and refugees, confident English is often a reason some don't think about jobs in retail. There are so many different roles like being a personal shopper. This is where you don't talk directly to the customer but fill their online orders. You still have to pick products that will make them happy. It is a good starting job for you to build confidence in products, the company, and understanding how to meet customer expectations.



Working hours

Retail is a great industry to have a work and life balance. Many retailers operate 7 days a week and some 24 hours a day. You can choose to work 15 hours a week or full-time hours so you can pursue other interests. Remember retail is all about the customers. You need to be available to work when the customers need you most to be attractive to employers.



Food handling restrictions

In some retail jobs, you may have to handle food like pork products or alcohol. This is a personal choice, and many employers are happy for workers to use gloves. Avoiding contact with these products in supermarkets or convenience stores can be hard. So, this is something to think about.



Digital skills in retail

Every job today needs at least a basic understanding of digital skills. This can be how you may take orders, search for product information or even filling in your timesheets on an App. Don't worry, this is a skill you can learn. You can learn on the job to use specific technology for the workplace.



Are jobs in retail physical?

Yes, in most roles you are standing on your feet for long periods of time. In some jobs there are manual handling tasks like lifting boxes and stacking shelves. Sometimes you need to use ladders, but as part of all preparation training, you will learn how to keep yourself and others safe at work. Being on your feet all day can lead to fatigue so this is why there are rules on the maximum hours you can work on one shift. This also means this industry welcomes people of all ages if you are able to show basic fitness.



I wear a hijab, can I work in retail?

Of course you can. Employers welcome diversity. They support team members in expressing their religious and cultural beliefs. In some roles, loose clothing does need to be secure to avoid accidents with machinery. This is something employers will support you in finding a solution.



Do workplaces support our religious customs?

Yes. Most workplaces provide access to prayer rooms and can be flexible with shift times to support prayer times.



Do I get support on the job?

Yes, most companies have their own ways of working and so you will be trained on the job. In some workplaces, you may have to work shifts on your own or without a manager with you. Being able to work independently is something you will achieve as you get more confidence and experience on the job.

The most important thing about any job is knowing who to ask for help and where you can go for support when you need it.

Get the facts

Did you know that retail is an important part of Australia?

It's the second largest employing industry in the country. With some 1.4 million people working in retail, it's a growing industry. It's expected to hire 55,000 more people in the next 5 years.¹

Retail can be a great job for you. It offers stability with your money, flexibility in your schedule, and a good salary.

If you're over 18 years old, you can earn around \$800 a week². And if you work on weekends or during non-traditional hours, you could earn more. What's great about retail is that it covers a lot of different sectors. So, if you have a hobby or a particular interest, you can find a job in retail that lets you broaden your interests and aspirations.

The best part is that you don't need a university degree or any special qualifications to get started in retail. That means you can find a job that fits you and your interests without too many barriers.

Just over half (50.2%) of employees work full-time hours up to 36 hours per week³. There are career pathways into management positions. And steps in between like Team Leaders and Assistant Managers. Many employers also offer training that can support your personal and professional development.

The roles available

Supermarkets and grocery stores are the largest sector in the retail trade industry, employing just under a quarter of workers (24.3%)⁴. Other retail trades by sector:

- Fashion and footwear
- Hardware and garden supplies
- Hair and beauty
- Electrical goods
- Pharmacy
- Department stores
- Automotive and motor vehicles
- and more.

Common entry-level roles in retail that do not require a qualification.

Most retail roles require you to work in different areas of the store but here are some common roles and tasks you will likely find in retail.



Sales assistants	Checkout operators and cashiers	Shelf fillers and personal shoppers
<p>Sales assistants play an important role in the growth of a business. They are responsible for building and maintaining relationships with customers. Do you approach your work with positivity and love a fast-paced environment? Then a Sales Assistant role may work for you.</p> <p>A sales assistant's tasks may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding customer requirements and offering advice on appropriate products • Showing customers different goods and services (demonstrations) • Selling food and beverages to the customers • Accepting payment for goods and services by a variety of payment methods • Assisting with the ongoing management of stock. This may be through product inventories and participating in stock takes • Stacking and displaying goods for sale and wrapping and packing sold goods. 	<p>This is a great job that is just right for someone who really likes talking to people. Cashiers usually work in shops, supermarkets, and food places. You also want to have good attention to detail when taking orders and giving change or processing cashless payments.</p> <p>A cashier's tasks may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet and assist customers • Scanning and bagging items • Handling cash transactions and processing card payments • Assisting with customer inquiries • Taking orders and operating computer terminals and point-of-sales systems. 	<p>Shelf fillers and personal shoppers are in high demand in the retail industry now. This is because many customers make the most of online shopping. This role demands attention to detail. With this role you may have less customer contact. You may focus on putting products on display or picking and packing online orders. This is a great place to start for people who are looking at retail for their first job and want to build up their confidence.</p> <p>A personal shopper's tasks may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpacking deliveries and checking all items are received • Placing products neatly on display shelves or racks • Keeping shelves filled with good quality products that are not damaged and in date • Picking and packing customer online orders.

¹ <https://www.retail.org.au/retailinsightsreport/retailasacareer>
² <https://labourmarketinsights.gov.au/industries/industry-details?industryCode=G>
³ Full-time employees - Fair Work Ombudsman
⁴ <https://labourmarketinsights.gov.au/industries/industry-details?industryCode=G>

Get the facts

Things to consider working in retail

The retail industry is one of Australia's 'stable' sectors for finding employment. It has lots of roles available in different sectors. The shopping experience is essential to the retail sector. We've given you a summary of some of the benefits, challenges and opportunities below. This will help you to get you started in thinking about a career in retail.

Benefits	Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sector has a significant growth rate so there are many jobs available. • These positions offer flexible work hours and shifts. This can help fit within your schedule. • For those who possess energy, passion, and enjoy meeting new people, this job is ideal for you. • Within the sector there are many positions available online and on social media platforms. • You don't need formal qualifications or experience. You can still get an entry-level role in retail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you first start an entry-level position, you might have to work at different times (shift work) which makes it hard to plan your time. • Many people choose casual contracts as the hourly rate is higher. However, this means you may have uncertainty in hours per week making it harder to plan and budget. • It's a fast-paced industry. You often have many tasks to do whilst keeping all customers happy. Multi-tasking is a key skill to have. • Confident communication skills are not everyone's strength. This can lead to stressful situations when it comes to dealing with unhappy customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People work in this industry all the time, so, you can have a job all year round. • This industry is always changing. This means you may have more opportunities for promotions quicker than other industries. • You can choose to work in an area that you like and are interested in from food to technology! • Now with an online environment you can find interesting retail jobs like personal shoppers. In these jobs your direct customer contact is limited. This helps in case you are not too confident in the early days.

Depending on the size of the business, many retail roles may also be called 'team members' and give you opportunities to work in different areas. You might handle different products depending on what is sold.

This could range from making barista coffees, to flat pack furniture, organising home deliveries or preparing food.



Some useful links

Retail as a Career by the Australian Retail Association -
<https://www.retail.org.au/retailinsightsreport/retailasacareer>

Australian Government's Jobs and Skills Website (Retail) -
<https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/data/labour-market-insights/industries/retail-trade>

Australian Government's Career Website (Retail) -
<https://www.yourcareer.gov.au/industries/g/retail-trade>



Want support kick start your career in retail?

Contact us via workforcespecialist@communitycorporate.com.au and find out about the job opportunities in retail we have available now.

www.communitycorporate.com.au