



## Overview of Opportunities in the Maritime Industry

Welcome to the Workboat Academy and thank you for taking an interest in working as a United States Merchant Mariner. This overview will brief you on some of the opportunities that the maritime industry has to offer you.

The United States Merchant Marine is comprised of civilian mariners operating commercial vessels ranging from Small Passenger Vessels, Cruise Ships, Tugboats, Workboats, Ferries, Offshore Supply Vessels, Tankers, Containerships, and even Military Support vessels.

Certain sectors of the maritime industry are expanding, while other areas are contracting. Regardless of what sector you are looking at, there are opportunities to be had at every level. In this industry especially, your **hard work and persistence will pay off.**

Although vessels vary in their crew sizes, all Merchant Vessels carry a deck department, an engine department and a steward Ddepartment. Since the Workboat Academy is primarily oriented to deck training, this overview is solely for those interested in the deck department. If you are interested in engineering, you may want to contact the Seattle Maritime Academy at 206 782-2647.

**The Deck department** includes the following positions; Ordinary Seaman (OS), Able Seaman (AB), Mate and Captain. The majority of vessels carry three Able Seaman, two or three Mates and one Captain.

The Ordinary Seaman is the entry level position in the Merchant Marine (*no previous sea-time required*). The duties of an Ordinary Seaman can vary from cleaning the ship, deck maintenance, assisting with securing the vessel for sea, to being a lookout. The Ordinary Seaman is somewhat of the 'gopher' on board. An Ordinary Seaman employed in a full-time position, typically works 8 months per year.

The Able Seaman (AB) normally has a *minimum of 1 year of sea-service* as an OS, and is primarily responsible for standing a helm watch, a lookout watch, handling lines for tie up and let go in port, and deck maintenance. The AB typically works directly for and answers to either the Bosun or the Mate. An AB employed in a full-time position, typically works between 7 and 8 months each year.

The Mate (Oceans) has a *minimum of 3 years of sea-service, 6 months of which was as an Able Seaman*. The Mate on board is primarily the navigation officer and is responsible for standing a watch on either a six hour on six hour or 4 hours on and 8 hours off schedule. The Mate is also generally responsible for safety equipment, chart upkeep and also supervises the deck maintenance. A Mate typically works six to eight months each year.



In order to obtain a Captains License (Oceans), you will normally be required to have a minimum of three (3) years of sea-service sailing as Mate. The Captain on board may or may not stand a navigational watch. The Captain is responsible for the day to day operations of the vessel. He generally sits in a management capacity and is always in-charge. He supervises the mates on the bridge, in collision avoidance or pilotage situations, and at all other times he or she deems necessary. The Captain typically works six months each year.

Please note that the job descriptions listed above are extremely rudimentary and are meant to give a quick overview of only the deck department. If you have questions regarding the manning requirements and specific job descriptions of a certain type of vessel, please ask one of our counselors directly.

**Your First Step:** Define your goals. There are numerous methods of joining the merchant marine, which direction you decide on should be depend on your personal goals and budget. Visit [www.workboatacademy.com](http://www.workboatacademy.com) to get started, make sure you look closely at the six Maritime Academies.

Most mariners that we interview and advise have the long term goal of being the Captain. This is a LONG TERM goal. Although there are several paths to becoming a Captain, each direction requires your dedication and extended sea-time. There are currently three pathways to become a Captain in the Merchant Marine. We will do our best to define these approaches emphasizing the amount of sea-time, training and overall time that is necessary to get to each level.

1. **The Traditional Hawse pipe method:** The hawse pipe is the hole in the front of a vessel that the anchor chain runs through. The reason they call this career approach "the Hawse pipe" is, try to picture the Ordinary Seaman climbing out of the water, up the anchor chain and on to the deck. This is the "On the job training method".

The Hawse pipe method of promotion is one way to get your foot in the door with a company as an Ordinary Seaman, and work your way up to Able Seaman, then to Mate, and onward to Captain. Please note that the total time takes into account the typical work schedule for each position. (I.e. the Able Seaman works 8 months per year).

<b>Position</b>	<b>Sea-Time Required</b>	<b>Classroom Time</b>	<b>Training Cost</b>	<b>Total Time</b>	<b>Estimated Wages</b>
<b>Ordinary Seaman</b>	None	1 to 3 weeks	\$900 - \$2,000	1 to 3 weeks	\$30 - \$40K
<b>Able Seaman</b>	18 Months as Ordinary	2 Weeks	\$1,500	2.5 Years	\$40 - \$50K
<b>Mate</b>	18 Months,	20 Weeks	\$15,000	2.5 Years	\$60 – 80K
<b>Second Mate</b>	12 Months as Mate	NA	\$0	2 Years	\$70 – 90K
<b>Chief Mate</b>	12 Months as Mate	12 Weeks	\$15,000	2 Years	\$80 – 130K
<b>Master</b>	12 Months Chief Mate	NA	\$0	2 Years	\$80 - \$150K
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>6 Years</b>	<b>37 Weeks</b>	<b>\$34,400</b>	<b>11* Years</b>	

2. **The Maritime Academy:** There are six Maritime Academies in the United States offering college accredited degree educations including a License as Third Mate, Unlimited. For those interested in receiving a college education and are looking for a faster track to become an officer in the Merchant Marine, the maritime academy route may be for you.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Sea-Time Required</b>	<b>Classroom Time</b>	<b>Training Cost</b>	<b>Total Time</b>	<b>Estimated Wages</b>
<b>Third Mate</b>	6 Months Academy Vessel	3 Years +	\$60 – 100K	4 Years	\$60 - \$80K
<b>Second Mate</b>	12 Months as Mate	NA	\$0	2 Years	\$70 – 90K
<b>Chief Mate</b>	12 Months as Mate	12 Weeks	\$15,000	2 Years	\$80 – 130K
<b>Master</b>	12 Months as Chief Mate	NA	\$0	2 Years	\$80 - \$150K
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3.5 Years</b>	<b>3.5 Years</b>	<b>\$75 - \$115K</b>	<b>10* Years</b>	



3. **Vocational Training:** New to the industry is the vocational program or track to become an Mate in the Merchant Marine. Focused on the workboat industry the Workboat Academy offers a 2- Year vocational training program. Successful graduates are licensed as a 1600 GRT Mate. The training provided under this vocational track is solely maritime based (hands on) and does not include college courses.

<i><b>Mate 500 / 1600 GRT Vocational Program</b></i>					
<i><b>Position</b></i>	<i><b>Sea-Time Required</b></i>	<i><b>Classroom Time</b></i>	<i><b>Training Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Total Time</b></i>	<i><b>Estimated Wages</b></i>
<b>Mate</b>	1 Year	27 Weeks	\$33,000	2 Years	\$50 - \$70K
<b>Captain</b>	12 Months as Mate	NA	\$0	2 Years	\$70 – 90K
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2 Years</b>	<b>27 Weeks</b>	<b>\$33K</b>	<b>4 Years</b>	

*\*All Tables above are based on the assumption that the Mariner does not take any extra vacation, works full time, and is promoted immediately upon receiving the license. An additional 50% of time should be factored in for a conservative estimate of Total Time.*

Each of the above pathways comes with their own hurdles. The career counselors at the Workboat Academy do their best to keep up with industry and can help you choose the best pathway to meet your objectives.

The industry is in need of Mariners that are looking at making a life at sea a vocation. Visit [www.workboatacademy.com](http://www.workboatacademy.com) and then call us to discuss the opportunities in more detail.

The above was written from the best of my knowledge. It is always advisable that you discuss your specific opportunities with numerous people prior to making such an important decision.

Best of luck in your endeavors,

Gregg Trunnell  
Director, Workboat Academy