This is where your career in the oil and gas industry can begin. You might not know much about the industry, but you have a positive attitude, a willingness to learn and a strong work ethic.

As a Drilling and Service Rig Labourer, you learn the ropes. You’ll get exposure to different occupations required to drill or service wells, such as Power Tong Operators, Coiled Tubing Operators, Testers and Cementers.

DRILLING & SERVICE RIG LABOURERS

You assist others in their duties such as cleaning equipment to make sure it is properly functioning. You may work at a drilling site for weeks or months as new wells are drilled. Or, you may work on a service rig for a few days or weeks, helping to operate, maintain or move the equipment in the ongoing production of oil or natural gas.

Work on a land-based drilling rig is seasonal with the vast majority of the work occurring during the fall and winter months. Offshore drilling is carried out by drill ships or platform drill rigs known as “jackup rigs.” Both onshore and offshore drilling rigs operate 24 hours a day and can take several weeks to drill a single well.

On a drilling rig, Floorhands assist with placing pipe into wells, collecting samples of drill debris for analysis, mixing mud and chemicals, and cleaning and maintaining equipment. Leasehands also work on drilling rigs and typically perform general labour and maintenance tasks around the rig site, including loading and unloading trucks.

On a service rig, Floorhands assist with moving the rig and equipment from one site to another and can also help move tubing in and out of the wellbore.

What would I do?

You perform a variety of general labour activities. You also ask questions – it’s expected of you. You provide general assistance, such as unloading trucks or clearing ice from walkways. This occupation includes a good deal of mentorship.

You do get to do some of the rig work – helping to move rigs on and off the site, or working with sections of pipe or drill stem at the rig floor. General duties also include:

- Learning safety procedures and attending safety meetings
- Cleaning tools and putting them away
- Organizing materials to prepare them for use
- Providing assistance to extraction workers, such as drillers and derrick operators
- Dismantling extracting and boring equipment used for excavation

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PATHWAYS

You could move into roles such as:
- Service Rig Derrickhand
- Service Rig Operator/Driller
- Service Rig Manager
- Drilling Rig Motorhands (Rig Technician 1)
- Drilling Rig Derrickhands (Rig Technician 2)
- Drilling Rig Driller (Rig Technician 3)
- Drilling Rig Manager
- Other well services operators

You could transfer to different sectors such as:
- Forestry and logging
- Mining and quarrying
- Utilities, including renewable energy
- Construction of buildings
- Heavy and civil engineering construction

What competencies do I need?
You have a strong work ethic and a mechanical aptitude. You also have these skills and knowledge:

ENTRY LEVEL
- Energetic
- Stress tolerance
- Attention to detail
- Public safety and security knowledge
- Mechanical knowledge
- Active listening

0-5YRS

SENIOR LEVEL
- Troubleshooting
- Operation and control
- Equipment selection
- Operation monitoring

5-10YRS+

What can I expect?
You may need to perform physically demanding activities in a variety of weather conditions. Typically while employed in the oil and gas services sector, you receive a lot of on-the-job training.

How can I learn more?
To find out more about the roles related to Drilling & Service Rig Labourers and other careers in the oil and gas industry, visit the Careers in Oil + Gas online tool at careersinoilandgas.com.