

Metal and Plastic Machine Workers

SOC: 51-4021 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$46,800

Median Salary

74,500

Employment

-7.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: See Requirements (BLS)

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Medium Risk - 38.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job has some routine elements but still requires human judgment and interaction.

■ Work-Life Balance

3.3/10 - Challenging work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	8.4/10	Investigative	5.0/10
Artistic	3.8/10	Social	4.6/10
Enterprising	4.0/10	Conventional	8.0/10

■ Top Skills Required

Computer skills, Mechanical skills, Physical stamina, Physical strength

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Metal and Plastic Machine Workers typically perform the following tasks:

- Measure and examine extruded products to locate defects and to check for conformance to specifications, adjusting controls as necessary to alter products.
- Determine setup procedures and select machine dies and parts, according to specifications.
- Start machines and set controls to regulate vacuum, air pressure, sizing rings, and temperature, and to synchronize speed of extrusion.
- Reel extruded products into rolls of specified lengths and weights.
- Install dies, machine screws, and sizing rings on machines that extrude thermoplastic or metal materials.
- Change dies on extruding machines, according to production line changes.
- Clean work areas.
- Troubleshoot, maintain, and make minor repairs to equipment.
- Weigh and mix pelletized, granular, or powdered thermoplastic materials and coloring pigments.
- Test physical properties of products with testing devices such as acid-bath testers, burst testers, and impact testers.
- Load machine hoppers with mixed materials, using augers, or stuff rolls of plastic dough into machine cylinders.
- Maintain an inventory of materials.
- Adjust controls to draw or press metal into specified shapes and diameters.
- Replace worn dies when products vary from specifications.
- Select nozzles, spacers, and wire guides, according to diameters and lengths of rods.
- Operate shearing mechanisms to cut rods to specified lengths.

*Generated by StartRight • Data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics & O*NET*

Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/production/metal-and-plastic-machine-workers.htm>