



Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks maintain records and prepare shipments.

clerks. In larger establishments, receiving clerks may control all receiving-platform operations, such as truck scheduling, recording of shipments, and handling of damaged goods.

Traffic clerks maintain records on the destination, weight, and charges on all incoming and outgoing freight. They verify rate charges by comparing the classification of materials with rate charts. In many companies, this work may be automated. Information either is scanned or is hand-entered into a computer for use by accounting or other departments within the company. Also, they keep a file of claims for overcharges and for damage to goods in transit.

Employment

Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks held about 890,000 jobs in 2000. Nearly 4 out of 5 were employed in manufacturing or by wholesale and retail establishments. Although jobs for shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks are found throughout the country, most clerks work in urban areas, where shipping depots in factories and wholesale establishments usually are located. (For information on shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks working for the U.S. Postal Service, see the statement on Postal Service workers elsewhere in the *Handbook*).

Job Outlook

Employment of shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks is expected to grow more slowly than the average for all occupations through 2010. Employment growth will continue to be affected by automation, as all but the smallest firms move to reduce labor costs by using computers to store and retrieve shipping and receiving records.

Methods of material handling have changed significantly in recent years. Large warehouses are increasingly automated, using equipment such as computerized conveyor systems, robots, computer-directed trucks, and automatic data storage and retrieval systems. Automation, coupled with the growing use of hand-held scanners and personal computers in shipping and receiving departments, has increased the productivity of these workers.

Despite technology, job openings will continue to arise due to increasing economic and trade activity, and because certain tasks cannot be automated. For example, someone needs to check shipments before they go out and when they arrive to ensure that everything is in order. In addition to those arising from job growth, openings will occur because of the need to replace shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks who leave the occupation. Because

this is an entry-level occupation, many vacancies are created by normal career progression.

Related Occupations

Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks record, check, and often store materials that a company receives. They also process and pack goods for shipment. Other workers who perform similar duties are stock clerks and order fillers; production, planning, and expediting clerks; and cargo and freight agents.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about job opportunities may be obtained from local employers and local offices of the State employment service.

(See introduction to the section on material recording, scheduling, dispatching, and distributing occupations for information on working conditions, training requirements, and earnings.)

Stock Clerks and Order Fillers

(O*NET 43-5081.01, 43-5081.02, 43-5081.03, 43-5081.04)

Nature of the Work

Stock clerks and order fillers receive, unpack, check, store, and track merchandise or materials. They keep records of items entering or leaving the stockroom and inspect damaged or spoiled goods. They sort, organize, and mark items with identifying codes, such as prices or stock or inventory control codes, so that inventories can be located quickly and easily. They also may be required to lift cartons of various sizes. In larger establishments, where they may be responsible for only one task, they may be called *stock-control clerk*, *merchandise distributor*, or *property custodian*. In smaller firms, they also may perform tasks usually handled by shipping and receiving clerks. (A separate statement on shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks appears elsewhere in this section of the *Handbook*.)

In many firms, stock clerks and order fillers use hand-held scanners connected to computers to keep inventories up to date. In retail stores, stock clerks bring merchandise to the sales floor and stock shelves and racks. In stockrooms and warehouses, stock clerks store materials in bins, on floors, or on shelves. Instead of putting the merchandise on the sales floor or on shelves, order fillers take customer orders and either hold the merchandise until the customer can pick it up or send it to them.



The growing use of computers and automated equipment is expected to slow growth in demand for stock clerks and order fillers.

Employment

Stock clerks and order fillers held about 1.7 million jobs in 2000; they were, by far, the largest material recording, scheduling, dispatching, and distributing occupation. About 76 percent work in wholesale and retail trade. The greatest numbers are found in grocery stores, followed by department stores. Jobs for stock clerks are found in all parts of the country, but most work in large urban areas that have many large suburban shopping centers, warehouses, and factories.

Job Outlook

Employment of stock clerks and order fillers is projected to grow more slowly than the average for all occupations through 2010, due to the use of automation in factories and stores. Because this occupation is very large and many jobs are entry level, however, numerous job openings will occur each year to replace those who transfer to other jobs or leave the labor force.

The growing use of computers for inventory control and the installation of new, automated equipment are expected to slow growth in demand for stock clerks and order fillers. This is especially true in manufacturing and wholesale trade industries whose operations are most easily automated. In addition to computerized inventory control systems, firms in these industries rely more on sophisticated conveyor belts and automatic high stackers to store and retrieve goods. Also, expanded use of battery-powered, driverless, automatically guided vehicles can be expected.

Employment of stock clerks and order fillers who work in grocery, general merchandise, department, apparel, and accessories stores is expected to be somewhat less affected by automation because much of their work is done manually and is difficult to automate. In addition, the increasing role of large retail outlets and warehouses, as well as catalogue, mail, telephone, and Internet shopping services, should bolster employment of stock clerks and order fillers in these sectors of retail trade.

Related Occupations

Workers who also handle, move, organize, store, and keep records of materials include shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks; production, planning, and expediting clerks; cargo and freight agents; and procurement clerks.

Sources of Additional Information

State employment service offices can provide information about job openings for stock clerks and order fillers. Also, see office and administrative support occupations and sales occupations elsewhere in the *Handbook* for sources of additional information.

General information about stock clerks and order fillers in retail trade can be obtained from:

► National Retail Federation, 325 Seventh St. NW., Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004. Internet: <http://www.nrf.com/nri/>

(See introduction to the section on material recording, scheduling, dispatching, and distributing occupations for information on working conditions, training requirements, and earnings.)

Weighers, Measurers, Checkers, and Samplers, Recordkeeping

(O*NET 43-5111.00)

Nature of the Work

Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers weigh, measure, and check materials, supplies, and equipment in order to keep relevant records. Most of their duties are clerical. They verify quantity,



Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers verify the quantity and quality of items purchased or sold against records.

quality, and overall value and condition of items purchased, sold, or produced against records, bills, invoices, or receipts. Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers check and document items using either manual or automated data processing systems. They check the items to ensure accuracy of the recorded data. They prepare reports on warehouse inventory levels and use of parts. Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers also check for any defects in the items and record the severity of the defects.

These workers use weight scales, counting devices, tally sheets, and calculators to properly record information about the products. They usually move objects to and from the scales using a handtruck or forklift. They issue receipts for the products when needed or requested.

Employment

Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers held about 83,000 jobs in 2000. Their employment is spread across most industries. Department stores and air carriers accounted for about 16 percent of these jobs. Wholesale trade and services comprised 28 percent of employment.

Job Outlook

Employment of weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through 2010. The emphasis on accurate and nondefective materials, as well as the use of records for verifying information, is an increasingly important responsibility for companies that will increase the need for weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers. Furthermore, automation should not have a significant effect on employment in this occupation because most of its duties need to be done manually. In addition to those resulting from job growth, openings should arise from the need to replace workers who leave the labor force or transfer to other occupations.

Related Occupations

Other workers who determine and document characteristics of materials or equipment include cargo and freight agents; production, planning, and expediting clerks; shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks; stock clerks and order fillers; and procurement clerks.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about job opportunities may be obtained from local employers and local offices of the State employment service.