

HOW TO GET A JOB ON A CRUISE SHIP: WHAT IT IS LIKE WORKING ON A CRUISE SHIP



Summary: *What is it like working on a cruise ship? How can you get a job working on one? Learn the answers to both of these questions in this article.*

Want to get away from the cold this winter? Then consider applying for a job aboard a cruise ship. Picture yourself sailing the Caribbean for four to six months, visiting islands such as Barbados, St. Thomas, Aruba and the Bahamas. It's what I did for five years after graduating college, and you can do it, too.

[Click here to find and apply for cruise ship jobs.](#)

A Major Commitment

Before you run to send your resume to every cruise-ship company in the world, consider that while cruise-ship life has many perks, it also has its drawbacks. For instance, living quarters are typically smaller than most walk-in closets and employees are often required to share that small space with another staff member. Employees also must obey strict rules, such as curfews and dress policies. Further, they're scheduled to work every day throughout the entire voyage. Yes, every day. Some positions allow for days off, although I haven't yet experienced any.

Cruise-ship jobs are a great fit for students taking time off from school or for graduates seeking a break before they enter the "real" world. They require about a four- to six-month commitment, so they're not suitable for those who have responsibilities on land such as caring for a family member or pet. An exception is during the winter holidays when ships are often short-staffed. Some jobs are available then for a two- to three-week period.

Cruise ships set sail with more than 2,000 guests and as many as 800 employees. They're similar to small cities traveling the ocean. Therefore, if you've worked on land, you can probably find the same job on a cruise ship. Salaries range from \$300 to \$1000 per week and day-to-day costs such as meals and laundry services are covered under the employment contract. Also included are travel expenses to and from the ship.

Getting On Board

To work aboard a cruise ship, you must have a valid passport, friendly personality, drug-free bill of health, and the ability to begin immediately after being offered a position. When applying for jobs, be sure to highlight your past work experiences on your resume, so recruiters can match you with opportunities. Also, check that your resume is void of punctuation, grammar and spelling errors. I've learned from friends who've worked as human-resource managers at major cruise lines that resumes with these gaffes are immediately discarded. Also frowned upon are resumes with nontraditional fonts, formats or colors, and ones that are unnecessarily long. Your best bet is to keep your resume simple, neat and consistent in style.

Keep in mind that major cruise-ship companies receive thousands of resumes every week, so you may not get a response on your first attempt. But if you're persistent, chances are good that you'll escape the cold this winter with a [job aboard a cruise ship](#).