

Freestyle Note: Kia ora whanau – use this space to write a message, let your loved one know why you thought they'd be interested in this opportunity.

Would you like to train to become a Shearer?



Pay - Shearers usually earn about \$150 for every 100 sheep they shear. The number of sheep they can shear depends on their experience, their level of fitness, and the breed and size of the sheep.

- Learner shearers may shear up to 200 sheep a day.
- Experienced shearers should be able to shear between 200 and 300 sheep a day, or more.
- Highly experienced shearers may shear 400 sheep a day or more.

Almost all shearers are employed on a casual basis. While some shearers get as much as 10 months of employment a year, others may work for as few as three months a year.

What you will do - Shearers may do some or all of the following:

- catch sheep from a small catching pen
- drag sheep out of the catching pen to the shearing stand
- shear the fleece (wool) off in a set pattern of blows (shearing strokes)
- release sheep into a counting-out pen
- clean combs and cutters and sharpen them using a grinder (usually on breaks during the day or at night after work).

Skills and knowledge - Shearers need to have knowledge of:

- how to catch and handle sheep correctly
- how to hold sheep in the correct position for shearing

- proper lifting and dragging techniques that minimise strain on the lower back
- good shearing techniques
- how to use and maintain hand-pieces (clippers) and machinery such as grinders
- what type of shearing equipment to use in certain conditions.

Working conditions

- Work eight or nine hours a day and often start early in the morning (about 7am), and sometimes work weekends. Shorter days only occur because of rain (wet sheep cannot be shorn) or when a farmer runs out of sheep to shear
- work mainly during peak shearing times, which run from November to March and from July to September
- work in shearing sheds that are usually busy and sometimes noisy
- normally travel each day to a farmer's shearing shed, and sometimes may be required to stay on the farm in shearing quarters until the shearing on that farm is finished.

Entry requirements

- There are no specific entry requirements to become a shearer because you learn most skills on the job. However, formal qualifications are becoming more common. Shearers can complete a New Zealand Certificate in Shearing – Blade/Crossbred/Fine (Level 4) while working.

Personal Attributes - Shearers need to be:

- efficient and methodical
- self-disciplined
- reliable
- patient and tolerant
- adaptable.
- A competitive streak is useful because it can help shearers increase their daily tallies.



Hey - I'm only 13 years old & I'd like to train to be a Shearer. But I live in a town or city & have never even touched a live sheep?



1. Set your goals for learning the skills you need while you're still at school – Take responsibility for your life.
2. If there is a local NZ Defence Cadet Core, then join. The reason you'd do this is because you'll be exposed to a whole range of experiences such as tramping and shooting that will all add to your skill set. Another valuable lesson you'll learn in the Cadets is self-discipline. & finally – it will look good on your CV. If you don't have a CV, print off my guide to writing a CV.
3. Try and get **any** after-school or holiday job. Even it's a boring job that you don't like – Just do it & do it well. **Why?** Because by working hard you'll be: 1) earning some money. 2) Be able to write some 'work-history' into your CV & 3) If you do a good job, you will be able to ask that employer for a 'work reference.'
4. Set up a saving account at your Bank and start saving money. This way when your 15 years old you will have money to pay for some driving lessons and the driving license fees too.
5. Another reason you'll want to set aside funds is to be able to buy everything you need to make your life as comfortable as possible during your first shearing season.

Once you know what you want to do, 'keep your eye on the prize' & do everything you can to make your goal a reality.

Did you see the Shearing series that ran on Telly? If not YouTube 'Peter Lyon Shearing' & watch some episodes. I took the information below from their website – www.peterlyonshearing.co.nz

Frequently Asked Questions

When are your peak periods?

Pre-lamb shearing: July to October.
Summer Shearing & Crutching: January to April

Where are the closest airports?

Queenstown is one hour away, Dunedin is two hours away & we are happy to pick people up if we are given adequate notice.

Do you work weekends?

Generally, we work when there is work. Our job is very dependent on the weather. This usually means 7 days a week during our busy pre – lamb shearing season.

What about days off?

Give us enough advance notice and we will do our best to accommodate your requirements.

How do we get paid? And how often?

We pay weekly direct into your bank account on a Thursday night.

What Qualifications do I need?

No formal qualifications are required but we offer training courses regularly and in shed training is provided. Good attitude and willingness to work is a great start.

Transport

Transport is provided from our quarters to our work places. There are 12 transit vehicles, 4 Toyota hi ace vans that provide safe and comfortable transport for our traveling gangs. We also get you to the farmers quarters in a camp-out situation.

Accommodation

Our main quarters provide accommodation for 80 people and in the busy pre-lamb season we use accommodation at the Alexandra Tourist Park which Peter and Elsie also own.

We have two full time cooks which provide wholesome food that we are proud of.

Contact: Peter & Elsie Lyon – Lyons Shearing
1 Hillview Road, P.O Box 321, Alexandra
Phone (03) 4486378

You can also email Peter & Elsie from their website: www.peterlyonshearing.co.nz

