

Occupations were often written in abbreviated form in historic documents. This was done to save space and money. For example, old city directories would often abbreviate occupations of residents. This allowed more names to be written on each page. Some census records also abbreviate occupations due to the lack of space on census forms.

Some abbreviations of occupations are self evident. Others are not. In this handy reference list, we provide abbreviations for several hundred occupations. Simply match up the abbreviation found in an old document with the list below.

A couple of things to note:

- The most common way to abbreviate an occupation was to remove the vowels from the word. For example slsmn = *salesman*.
- For compound occupations, look up each part. For example: trav slsmn = travelling salesman.
- For a list of first name abbreviations, see the article [First Name Abbreviations](#).
- For a list of street abbreviations found in city directories, see the article [City Directory Abbreviations](#).

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acct	accountant
act serv	active service (in the military)
adj	adjuster
adv	advertising
ag	agriculture
agcy	agency
agt	agent
ap, app	apprentice
appr	appraiser, apprentice
arch, archt	architect
asmlr	assembler
assce	assurance
asst	assistant
atdt, attdt, attndt	attendant

atty	attorney
auctnr	auctioneer
aud	auditor
barr	barrister
bgemn	baggage man
bkbndr	book binder
bkpr	bookkeeper
bkr	baker
bldr	builder
blksmith	blacksmith
blrmkr	boilermaker
booksel, booksl	bookseller
bootma	boot maker
btlr	bottler
brbr	barber
brklyr	bricklayer
brkmn	brakeman
bt	bottle
brkr	broker
btchr	butcher
cbtmkr, cabt mkr	cabinet maker
capt	captain
caretkr	caretaker
carp, carpntr	carpenter
cash, cashr	cashier
chauf	chauffeur
chem	chemist
cheml	chemical
chf	chef
chkr	checker
civ ser	civil servant
clk	clerk
clnr	cleaner
coachm	coachman
coll, collr	collector
com	commission, commercial
comp	compositor
compt	comptometer
cond	conductor

conf, confr	confectioner
cons	consulting
contr	contractor
cors, corres	correspondent
ctr, cutt	cutter
dea	dealer
dec, decrtr	decorator
del	delivery
delctan	delicatessen
dep, depy	deputy
dicta	dictaphone
dir	director
disp	dispenser
dispr	dispatcher
dlr	dealer
dr, drs	daughter(s)
dmnstr	demonstrator
drftsmn	draftsman
drsmkr	dress maker
drug	druggist
drv	driver
drwrs	drawers
&c	etcetera
elec, electn	electrician
electro	electrotyper
elev, elev opr	elevator operator
elevmn	elevator man
embr	embroider
emp	employee
eng	engineer
engr, engrav	engraver
esq	esquire
exam	examiner
exec	executive
exp, expmn	expressman

film opr	projectionist
fin	finisher
firmn	fireman
flgmn	flagman
fnsshr	finisher
for	forester
formn	foreman
forwm	forewoman
frt	freight
F S	female servant
fshrmn	fisherman
ftr	fitter
fur	furrier
furn	furniture, furnace
furng	furnishing
gasftr	gasfitter
gdnr, gardnr	gardener
gds	goods
gen, genl	general
gro, groc	grocer
hairdrsr	hairdresser
hd	hand
hdw	hardware
hlpr	helper
hsekpr	housekeeper
htlkpr	hotel keeper
implts	implements
imp, imptr	importer
imps	implants
ind, indep	independent, of indepedent means
ins	insurance
insp, inspr, insprr	inspector
intr	interpreter
inst	instrument
inst, instr	instructor
ironm	iron maker
ironmon	ironmonger
jan, jntr	janitor

jn	journeyman
jr, jun	junior
jwlr	jeweller or watchmaker
kpr	keeper
lab	labourer
lbr	lumber
lieut	lieutenant
linmn	lineman
lino	linotype
lith, litho	lithographer
lndrs	laundress
lndy	laundry
lndymn	laundryman
lngshmn	longshoreman
ma, mak	maker
mach	machine, machinist
ma, mak	maker
maks	makers
mang	managing
manuf, mfr	manufacturer
mdse	merchandise
mech	mechanic, mechanical
mer, mt, mercht	merchant
messr, msngr	messenger
mfg	manufacturing
mgr, mngr	manager
mkr	maker
mkt	market
mldr	moulder
mlnr	milliner
mlwrt	millwright
mkt gdnr	market gardener
mn	man
mng dir	managing director
mnr	mounter
mono	monotype
moto, mtrmn	motorman
mrnr	mariner
M S	male servant

msngr	messenger
mstr	master
mtrmn	motorman
mus	musician
mus tchr	music teacher
mut	mutual
op, opr	operator
optom	optometrist
osteo	osteopath

a to e | f to 0 | p to z

paperhngr	paperhanger
pass	passenger
pat	patient
pdlr	peddler
pen	pensioner
pharm	pharmacist
photo, photog, photogr	photographer
phy, phys	physician
pkr	packer
plmbr	plumber
plshr	polisher
plte	plate
plstr	plasterer
pntr	painter
police	policeman
pres	president
prin, princ	principal
prod	produce, product
prof	professor
proj	projectionist
prop	proprietor
prov	provisions
prsfdr	pressfeeder
prsmn	pressman
prtr, prntr	printer
ptrnmkr	patternmaker
pub	publishing
publr	publisher
purch	purchasing
rail	railway
ref	refiner
refrig	refrigeration
reg	registered, registrar
rel est	real estate
rep	representative

repr, rpr	repairer
rest, restr	restaurant
ret	retail
retd	retired
Rev	Reverend
ry	railway
san	sanitary
sdlr	saddler or harness maker
sea	seaman
sck	sack
sec	secretary
sec hd	second hand
sen	senior
sgt, sergt	sergeant
ship	shipping
shpr	shipper
silv	silver
sls	sales
slsldy	saleslady
slsmn	salesman
smltr	smelter
smstrs	seamstress
solr	solicitor
sta	stationary
sten, steno, stenog	stenographer
stereo	stereotype
statnr	stationeer
stlwkr	steelworker
stmftr	steamfitter
str	steamer
stud, studt	student
stvdre	stevedore
sup, supt, suput	superintendent
supvr, supvsr	supervisor
surg	surgeon
swchmn, switch	switchman
tchr	teacher
tel	telephone
teleg	telegraph

tinner	tinsmith
tlr	tailor
tlrs	tailoress
tmkpr	timekeeper
tmstr	teamster
tndr	tender
tob	tobacco
tran, trans	transportation
transf	transfer
trav	travelling, traveller
treas	treasurer
undtkr	undertaker
uphol, upholstr	upholsterer
vet	veterinarian
vis	visitor
vulc	vulcanizer
wa, wareh, wareho	warehouse
wd wkr	wood worker
who, whol	wholesale
whsmn	warehouseman
wid	widow
widr	widower
wkr	worker
wldr	welder
wtchmn	watchman
wtr	waiter
wtrs	waitress
ydmn	yardman
ydmstr	yardmaster