

OUTDOOR WORK REQUIRING AN EYE FOR DETAIL BUILD A CAREER IN FENCING

New Zealanders are known for having a ‘number eight wire’ can-do attitude, but most of us wouldn’t know how to tie fencing wire, let alone build a fence. **CHARLIE SIMPSON**, though, is someone who does.

The 21-year-old is a fencer with Rural Worx, a commercial and rural fencing company based in Ōtaki, on the Kāpiti Coast.

Charlie pursued a career in fencing after his dad bumped into a fencing contractor he knew at the supermarket.

“Rob asked if my dad knew any young fellas leaving college who might be interested in working for him building residential fences. . . I went round and talked to him and started working for him a week later.

“I found I enjoyed it and thought it’d be a good way to keep fit and learn about things for when I have my own property and livestock to maintain. Joining the Rural Worx team a year later meant I could learn even more about different types of fencing.”

Digging posts, tying and tensioning wire, stapling battens, digging in stays, screwing in rails, attaching palings – fencing is physical work that requires patience, accuracy and attention to detail, says Charlie.

He likes the variety of work, being outside and the social interaction he gets in his job.

“I enjoy not working in the same office every day, stuck behind a desk, and meeting and interacting with new people.”

Charlie holds New Zealand Certificates in Fencing (Level 3 and Level 4) from NorthTec, nationally recognised qualifications developed in association with Fencing Contractors Association NZ (FCANZ).

A finalist for FCANZ’s Emerging Talent – Youth Award in 2025, Charlie was recognised for his commitment to fencing as a career and for demonstrating excellence in the workplace.

“It was definitely a great feeling that my bosses and the judges felt that the work that I had put in was worthy of making the final list,” he says. “It made me want to work harder to get my skills broader and better.”

So, what makes a good fencer? “Consistent effort, an eye for detail and a willingness to just get stuck in, no matter the job or the weather.”

In Year 13 at Ōtaki College, Charlie took Outdoor Education, PE, Sports Studies and Gateway.

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“I also did courses for credits like getting my forklift licence, first aid certification, and community and workplace fire and emergency management.”

Although Maths was never Charlie’s “strong suit” at school, he says it’s important in fencing and much easier for him now he’s applying it in a practical sense rather than learning it in a classroom.

If you’re interested in fencing as a career, Charlie’s advice is to “Put yourself out there to fencing contractors and show your willingness to work, and when/if you get the opportunity, actually follow up on what you claim.”



KEY FACTS



- **CHARLIE SIMPSON** GOT A JOB IN FENCING STRAIGHT FROM SCHOOL, BUILDING RESIDENTIAL FENCES WITH A LOCAL CONTRACTOR ON THE KĀPITI COAST.
- HE NOW WORKS WITH **RURAL WORX**, A COMMERCIAL AND RURAL FENCING COMPANY BASED IN ŌTAKI.
- WHILE **CHARLIE** HOLDS CERTIFICATES IN FENCING, BEING A GOOD FENCER TAKES MORE THAN CLASSROOM LEARNING; IT’S ABOUT HAVING A STRONG WORK ETHIC AND PAYING ATTENTION TO DETAIL.

ONLINE



For more information on **fencing as a career**, visit www.fcanz.org.nz/careers or find a **fencing contractor** in your area with the **FCANZ online directory** www.fcanz.org.nz