9 Reasons Sears' Repair Training Program Is the Top of Its Class

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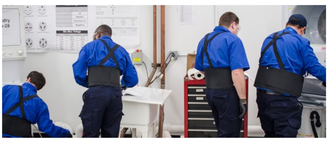

Get a behind-the-scenes look at the Sears Technical School to see how this one-of-a-kind learning experience helps deliver the best repair experience for customers.

From the first online test to the in-truck ride-alongs and mentoring program, the comprehensive Sears Technical School helps ensure that repair technicians are fully prepared for any type of service call. "Prior to their arrival at a Sears training facility, all techs are evaluated for electrical and appliance repair knowledge," says Paul McDaniel, National Manager of Technician Capabilities at Sears.

From there, they move on to training that's focused on a specific area — say, refrigeration or laundry — or train as a generalist who can work on a range of appliances. And the learning doesn't stop there, thanks to an ongoing mentoring program with more seasoned technicians once the trainee returns home.

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This intensive program is unlike any other in the country. Here are 9 reasons why it's unique.

1. There are hundreds of test appliances available to practice on.

"Nationally, we have over 50 different refrigerators, over 100 washers and dryers, and a myriad of stovetop ranges and other equipment in our different training locations from multiple manufacturers," McDaniel says. In comparison, other training programs may have a few pieces of equipment total, he says.

2. Sears has a strong knowledge of upcoming trends and products from manufacturers.

Sears knows how to fix that brand-new oven before it even arrives in your kitchen. "Let's say, for example, we know a new range is going to start hitting the market next month," McDaniel says. "We can bring one into the facility. We can plug it in. We can take it apart. We can put it back together, and we can add it to our training content in very short order."

3. Classroom learning with expert instructors is followed immediately by hands-on lab time.

Technicians in training aren't just sitting in a classroom learning how to fix your appliances — they're also practicing repairing them in real time. "We've placed designated lab time with the curriculum to prove capability, come back to the classroom and repeat," he says.

4. Techs are trained to use a torch and other specialty tools to perform high-difficulty, time-intensive repairs.

This ensures that the first time a Sears technician uses an open flame to fix a failed fridge compressor isn't in your kitchen. "At Sears, we see repairs that some of the local repair people choose to avoid because it takes three to four hours to complete one repair," McDaniel says. "We have been around for over 50 years as a repair business. We're happy to take on the difficult repairs. We'll do whatever it takes to satisfy the customer."

5. Last year there were almost 50,000 hours of training.

About 1,500 technicians came through the new-hire training program in 2016. That's a huge investment for Sears — but one the company feels is essential to offering quality repairs.

6. There are training facilities across the country.

Sears offers satellite training for technicians in Chicago; Atlanta; San Antonio; Citrus Heights, California; and outside of Washington, D.C.

7. The instructors used to be technicians themselves.

With several instructors having between 20 and 40-plus years of experience, they've seen just about everything, making them some of the best teachers for Sears technicians in training.

8. Techs are trained to fix all major appliance brands — no matter where the appliance was purchased.

"We teach courses on all the major appliance brands, and we have actual examples for the technician to go and learn on the piece of equipment in the lab, tear it apart and put it back together," McDaniel says. "We repair almost everything, which makes us unique in the marketplace."

9. At the end of the day, techs can always "phone a friend."

Even with the best training, technicians may still run into an issue they need help with once they graduate and hit the road on their own. When that happens, they have a network of master techs whom they can reach via video chat with the press of a button. This helps to ensure that Sears customers always get the best appliance repair expertise in the business.

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