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TECH JOBS:

Your Guide to Launching a New Career

Everything you need to know about the tech industry, expanding opportunities, job training, and more.

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Explore a Career in the Tech Industry

The tech industry is big – and still growing at a rapid pace. It's filled with innovation and growth opportunities. Learn why now is the right time to pursue this exciting career path.

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Why pursue a tech career?

Technology is all around us, impacting how we live our lives, interact with others, do business, and express ourselves. In your day-to-day life, do you use technology for socializing? For listening to music? Paying bills? Ordering groceries? Medical care?

You likely answered yes to at least a couple of those questions – and the list could go on and on.

The ever-expanding use of technology has paved the way for a growing number of jobs to ensure the tech we depend on is **functional, reliable, innovative, and safe**.

Maybe you have an interest in tech, but you're unsure how to approach a career change – or perhaps you're not sure tech is the right professional path for you.

In this guide, we'll help you evaluate your options and explore possibilities before making any decision.

9.4 million
Number of tech roles in the U.S. in 2023

2x
The projected growth rate for tech jobs over the next decade is nearly twice the national jobs rate.

Source: 2023 State of the Tech Workforce, CompTIA

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To start, take a look at some of the many benefits of a tech career:

Opportunities to make an impact: You'll work on projects that improve consumers' daily interactions with the tech they use and love – and companies are ready for you to get started.

93% of managers say it's difficult to find the tech workers they need to fill open roles.

Competitive salaries: The need for skilled tech workers creates a robust marketplace, resulting in competitive pay that can positively impact your life.

51% of hiring companies are increasing starting pay to attract top talent.

Continuous learning: In tech, you're always learning new skills and ways of thinking. You'll evolve as tech evolves, which will lead to exciting career possibilities (plus, you won't be bored at work!).

80% of workers consider professional development and training opportunities to be important when accepting a job.

Growth potential: Because tech touches so many areas of modern life, companies need qualified, motivated employees in order to compete and expand. This need incentivizes companies to offer opportunities for growth as they attempt to retain workers and build effective teams.

49% of software developers say growth opportunities in the field add to overall job satisfaction.

Teamwork: Tech roles often require high levels of teamwork to accomplish complicated projects, and teamwork is shown to increase employee well-being across industries.

80% of workers are more likely to report higher emotional well-being when honest feedback, mutual respect, and personal openness are encouraged.

Sources: 2024 Market Outlook, Robert Half | Pulse Survey: Developer Happiness, 2022 | 2024 Market Outlook, Robert Half Atlassian teamwork survey | The Harris Poll COVID-19 Tracker Wave 101, 2022

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Widespread opportunities: All companies are tech companies now.

When people hear the phrase "tech jobs," they immediately think of industry giants like Google, Apple and Microsoft. While those companies certainly employ many tech workers doing incredible work, the existence of tech jobs is much more widespread.

As an example, let's look at data that compared software developer jobs from 2019 and 2023 when the demand for open roles outside of traditional "big tech" companies rose across industries:

- Retail jobs grew from 4% to 7%
- Manufacturing jobs grew from 10% to 16%
- Finance and insurance jobs rose from 8% to 14%

Additionally, the current healthcare IT market is valued at around **167.7 billion and is expected to grow by about 16.5% from 2023 to 2030.**

This means that opportunities to work in tech outside of traditional big tech companies are more vast than ever before – and it also means that during times of upheaval at big tech companies (like we saw during the large-scale layoffs of early 2023), there are other options for you to explore.

These are just a few examples of the many industries expanding their tech worker pool to meet growing demand.

Bottom line: tech needs you!

Source: Grand View Research, Healthcare IT Market Size, 2023

Why are these industries expanding their tech teams?

Retailers know the future is in online shopping and e-commerce, which have shown consistent growth year-over-year. Additionally, retailers are shifting toward experiential shopping for their in-person stores, as well as seeking better use of consumer and third-party data.

Manufacturing companies are using technology in inventory, as well as warehouse management and process automation. They're using robotics to automate factory operations that are too dangerous or repetitive for workers.

Financial Services companies want to enhance privacy and security. They aim to improve automation in trading, fraud detection, and risk assessment.

Healthcare companies want to improve patient experiences, as well as provide greater peace of mind regarding private personal data. They're also focused on AI integration and medical accessibility, as well as expanded telehealth options for patients

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Types of Tech Jobs

Opportunities in tech are plentiful. Learn about the many types of available tech jobs and explore what aligns most with your interests and passions.

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Explore 4 types of tech job paths.

For those just starting to explore the wide world of tech jobs, the possibilities can feel endless. This might be exciting, or overwhelming – or even a mix of both!

Whatever the case, it can help to start exploring the types of tech jobs available to you, including associated salary ranges and career growth projections.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are **10 tech career categories,** and within each are multiple job options. Let's take a look at four of the many paths you can pursue.

What exactly are tech jobs?

While definitions of a "tech job" can vary, we define it as encompassing:

Any role that has to do with building, maintaining, and/or supporting software or hardware

AND/OR

Any role that has to do with supporting the user experience

This definition applies no matter the type of company or industry.

2023 Average Tech Salary:
$111,193

Software Development

Using various skills and tools, software developers design, build, and maintain software that powers networks and devices.

Possible jobs: Software Developer, Software Engineer, Senior Software Engineer

Median annual salary: $124,200

Projected growth through 2032: 25%

Computer Systems Analyst

These analysts study a company or organization's current computer systems and procedures, then design improvements.

Possible jobs: Computer Systems Analyst, Systems Architect, IT Project Manager

Median annual salary: $102,240

Projected growth through 2032: 10%

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity roles protect computer systems, devices, and sensitive information.

Possible jobs: Cybersecurity Analyst, Cybersecurity Engineer, Information Security Manager

Median annual salary: $112,000

Projected growth through 2032: 32%

Computer Support

These roles support different aspects of computer operations and find solutions for various issues and challenges that might arise.

Possible roles: IT Support Technician, Help Desk Technician, Service Desk Supervisor

Median annual salary: $59,660

Project growth through 2032: 6%

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It's useful to know what tech jobs are – and what they're not.

While researching a career transition into tech, you may encounter common myths that could discourage you from pursuing this path.

By reading through some of them now, you can identify them as myths, bust them, and then proceed toward an exciting new career in an industry that has room for everyone.

Here are four common myths:

The tech industry is oversaturated. Companies across industries need workers to power their tech, improve upon it, and create new ways of engaging consumers. This trend is growing, not decreasing – and workers like you are needed across the board.

Hiring in tech, information, and media rose by **9.8%** from December 2022 - December 2023.

Tech jobs are not creative. On the contrary, tech jobs provide opportunities to work on projects that are exciting, challenging, and require out-of-the-box thinking.

Working in tech means getting stuck on a narrow career path. If you're worried about making your way into tech and then feeling stuck, fear not. Due to the ever-changing nature of technology, opportunities for growth and upward mobility often come with the territory, especially considering companies want to retain tech employees so they can compete.

72% of CEOs are investing in upskilling their workforce in priority areas.

Tech jobs are anti-social. Tech jobs require a significant amount of teamwork and collaboration. Employers are looking for workers who possess both the necessary technical and soft skills that allow them to be well-rounded teammates capable of pursuing and reaching both personal and team goals.

Sources: LinkedIn Workforce Report, January 2024 | PwC 26th Annual Global CEO Survey

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Tech Skills: The Training You Need

There's not just one way to prepare for a job in tech. You have options! Explore them here to figure out your best next steps.

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Is a tech career right for you?
Here are 10 signs you'll enjoy it.

Considering a career change means the unknown lies ahead, complete with mysteries about what it takes to launch a new career and find success.

The following list of skills and traits can help you begin to navigate this change. See if you connect with any of the following, which are often found in successful tech workers:

1. You enjoy learning new things.
2. You like puzzles and solving problems.
3. You enjoy working on computers.
4. You're interested in how tech works (and its function in the world).
5. You love building stuff.
6. You're a good communicator.
7. You enjoy teamwork.
8. You're naturally curious.
9. You have patience (especially when answers are hard to come by).
10. You're adaptable and can work through changes.

By no means do you need to relate to **all of the above**, but feeling connected to at least one or more should give you the confidence to know that tech could be a great career path for you.

Love of learning

Curious mind

Likes working in teams

Problem-solver

Likes computer time

Enjoys building things

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How to Get the Tech Skills You Need
Do you need a college degree for a tech career?

For most tech roles, hiring managers used to require college degrees, but that's changing, largely because:

- Tech worker demand is still growing.
- Technical training opportunities outside of college programs have blossomed.
- Not everyone has access to higher education (and that shouldn't mean they're shut out of an entire field).

According to U.S. Census data, **more than 60% of adults over age 25 do not have a bachelor's or higher degree.**

That represents a huge pool of people who've been overlooked for roles that could help companies push their technology forward.

Big tech companies like Apple, Google, and IBM have taken note. They've dropped degree requirements for certain jobs, and many other companies are following suit to diversify teams and meet tech worker demand.

Instead of looking at where someone went to school and what degree they have, they're now hiring based on skills, motivation, and other experience that can translate into tech.

50%
of IBM's U.S. job openings do not require a four-year degree.

45%
of companies plan to eliminate bachelor's degree requirements in 2024.

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This shift in degree requirements helps everyone – employers and employees:

Employers can find workers who better fit their open roles.

Employers who hire workers using skills-based hiring practices are **60% more likely to make a successful hire** than those who don't.

One survey of human resources professionals indicates that **85% support eliminating or relaxing degree requirements** in hiring.

Employees have more opportunities to launch careers and thrive over time.

66% of employees
say they've gained access to new employment opportunities through skills-based assessments.

55% of skills-based hires in IT and data
are very happy in their role compared to just 17% of candidates hired without it.

Plus, this shift helps bridge the industry's diversity gap.

Of the companies that have eliminated degree requirements thus far, 70% say they did so to create a more diverse workforce.

Because there is not equal access to college education, this is an important piece of bridging the still-too-large diversity gap in the tech industry.

Black professionals account for 13% of the overall U.S. workforce but just **4% of all tech workers.**

Hispanic professionals account for 17% of the overall U.S. workforce but **just 8% of all STEM jobs.**

Women make up 47% of the overall U.S. workforce but hold **only 28% of computing and mathematical roles.**

While it takes more than loosening or eliminating degree requirements to solve inequalities in tech, this is an important step toward an industry filled with diverse people who have valuable skills, perspectives, and exciting ideas about the future.

Tech Training Outside of College Programs
If not a college degree, then what?

Bootcamps

A tech bootcamp is a concentrated course that teaches essential skills and provides real-world training. Bootcamps can provide an **accelerated path** to a rewarding tech career at a fraction of the cost of a college degree.

Tech Elevator coding bootcamps, for example, provide proven paths into tech for those interested in software development. The success of this training model has manifested in 4,000+ graduates working as software developers across the vast tech landscape.

Self-Education

There is an incredible amount of free and paid training resources available online, in books, and via one-off courses on various topics. For some, learning on their own is the preferred method for testing their interest in tech and finding out what areas they enjoy. Those who are disciplined can even self-educate enough to be prepared for tech jobs.

In-House Training Programs

Some companies offer in-house training opportunities that allow workers to upskill into different roles, including jobs in tech. **For companies,** this can boost retention and keep talent in-house; for employees, it represents opportunities for growth while being able to stay where they're already familiar.

Internships

Once you've built up some tech skills, a tech internship can give you valuable hands-on experience, networking opportunities, and (in many cases) compensation. A tech internship is a great opportunity to gain on-the-job experience that can set you up to be hired full-time at the company, or provide the opportunity to boost your resume as you look elsewhere.

Apprenticeships

A tech apprenticeship is a structured program that offers hands-on training and mentoring. These apprenticeships help you get your foot in the door and build relationships within the industry. Many apprenticeships can lead to full-time job opportunities.

How to Land the Tech Job You Want

Ready to start applying? Not sure where to start? Get insight into the tech job-seeking process, including interview tips, and a look at career path possibilities beyond the first job.

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How to Find an Entry-Level Job in Tech

Once you have the tech skills needed to land the job, it's time to start your search. Here are three proven ways to find the right role for you.

Explore job boards.

Bookmark some of your **favorite job boards**, and set up alerts using keywords associated with your desired roles. Regularly visit major boards like LinkedIn and Indeed, but don't count out smaller and more specialized boards like Idealist, Out in Tech, AngelList, Purpose Jobs, and others geared toward specific groups and areas of tech.

Tap into your existing network.

Let people know you're looking for a new role. Announce it on LinkedIn or other social platforms where people you know might share the information or keep you in mind when they come across related opportunities. Additionally, you can seek out online or local networking events related to jobs in tech to expand your network.

Choose a training program with built-in career support.

Traditional college programs, as well as most bootcamps, come with **built-in career support**. When considering how you want to train for a tech career, it's important to factor career services into the equation.

Bootcamp career support often includes networking guidance, resume building, interview preparation, and help navigating the tech job market post-graduation. Additionally, as mentioned above, certain internships and apprenticeships can lead to full-time employment.

Tech Interview Tips

Every company has its hiring processes and requirements, but being generally prepared for the interview process is key to helping ease your nerves, quiet your imposter syndrome, and provide the confidence boost you need to do well.

You can prepare for a tech job interview by focusing on:

- The **technical knowledge** and skills you'll need to demonstrate.

- The **mindset** you should attempt to cultivate to set yourself apart from other candidates.

The Technical Side

Depending on the company and the role you're interviewing for, you may be expected to:

Conduct a Phone Interview
You can prepare by practicing how to explain applicable technical concepts aloud. Rehearse discussing examples of how these concepts might be used in real-world scenarios.

Conduct a Full Interview (Technical and Behavioral)
During these interviews, which could be online or in-person, you're likely to be asked to talk through a technical problem and/or explain a related project that you've worked on. Prepare by narrowing down examples you'd like to use and practice talking through them out loud, preferably with a friend, mentor, coach, or anyone else willing to help.

You can also prepare by recording yourself doing a practice interview so you can watch it back and make improvements based on what you see. There are several AI-based mock interview tools available, but most come at a cost. Still, it's something to consider investing in, as these tools can help you work through interview questions and expectations.

The Importance of Mindset

A successful tech career is not solely about technical skills. You also need to demonstrate a positive, resilient mindset.

During your interview, try to find ways to discuss
- Your interest and enthusiasm for the role.
- Your curiosity and ability to ask good questions.
- Your willingness to work in a team environment.
- Your grit and experience in working through challenges.

You've landed the job. What's next?

Once you land your first tech job, you should celebrate in whatever way you see fit. This is hard work, and you accomplished something significant by following the best path for you!

Afterward, as you settle into your role, you can start thinking about this time in your life as the start of a new, fulfilling career, instead of just a job.

There are vast opportunities for growth in tech. Using a software developer as an example, take a look at what a typical career path looks like. →

Beyond software development, other tech career paths – cybersecurity, data science, IT – also show exciting growth trajectories over time.

Whichever you choose, and however you get started, there will undoubtedly be room to keep growing, keep learning, and stay onboard the exciting ride of a long-lasting, fulfilling career.

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Management
6+ years of experience
Average U.S. salary: $146,550

3

Senior Software Developer
5-6 years of experience
Average U.S. salary: $132,930

2

Mid Software Developer
3-5 years of experience
Average U.S. salary: $105,525

1

Junior Developer
1-3 years of experience
Average U.S. salary: $89,300*

*These are averages based on a national scale over the first few years on the job. Entry-level developers usually make between $65k-$80k.

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Ready to launch your tech career?

If you're interested in a career in software development, the Tech Elevator Aptitude Test is a proven way to determine if you're ready for a coding bootcamp.

Take the first step toward an exciting career. Get started today!

Get Started Today

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