

Data Scientist

Turn piles of data into predictions and decisions. Math, code and a lot of cleaning up.

TYPICAL PAY

\$96,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$62k to \$145k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 7 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Banks, tech companies,
government, retailers, consulting,...**

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Take every math course: Advanced Functions, Calculus and Vectors, Data Management if your province offers it. Computer science helps.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 to 5 years with co-op
Data science (Waterloo, UBC, Simon Fraser, Toronto and many others now offer it), statistics, math or computer science. Choose co-op. Waterloo admits data science at averages in the mid-80s.
- 3 Projects and co-op** During school
Kaggle competitions, a public GitHub, and paid co-op terms at banks, Shopify, Statistics Canada or startups.
- 4 Master's degree (common, not required)** 1 to 2 years
A 1 to 2 year master's in data science, statistics or computer science. Many jobs ask for it.
- 5 First job** After graduation
Often as a data analyst or junior data scientist, then promoted once you have shipped a model that made the company money.

Pros and cons

- + High pay for a job that does not need a licence
- + Every industry needs it: banks, hospitals, sports teams, government
- + Remote and hybrid work are normal
- Most of the work is cleaning messy data, not building clever models
- Job Bank rates prospects only limited in Ontario and Quebec, where most jobs are
- Many jobs want a master's degree, which adds time and cost

Optional boosts

Machine learning in production. Cloud data platforms. SQL (the language for querying databases) at an expert level. A domain.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Data scientist, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Job Bank: Data scientist, job outlook

University of Waterloo: Data Science program

Vector Institute

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/data-scientist>

Good to know

Canada wrote the first national AI strategy

In 2017 Canada became the first country with a national AI strategy, putting \$125 million into research through three institutes: Vector in Toronto, Mila in Montreal and Amii in Edmonton. A second phase add...

Statistics Canada is a data employer

The federal statistics agency in Ottawa runs the census and hundreds of surveys, and hires statisticians and data scientists straight out of university, with a pension. It is one of the few places where the data i...



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