

Game Developer

Write the code behind video games. Canada is one of the biggest game-making countries on Earth.

TYPICAL PAY

\$100,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$62k to \$160k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Game studios in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and Quebec City, rem...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Math and physics matter more here than in most software jobs: games are physics and geometry running 60 times a second. Make small games in Unity or Godot now.
- 2 Computer science degree or game program** 1 to 4 years
 A 4-year computer science degree is the most common route for programmers. Game-specific programs exist too: Sheridan's 4-year Honours Bachelor of Game Design, or a 1-year Vancouver Film School diploma.
- 3 Build a portfolio** During school
 Finished, playable games, even tiny ones. Game jams (48-hour build events) are the standard way to get them.
- 4 Internship or co-op** During school
 Ubisoft, EA (Electronic Arts), Behaviour, Eidos and many mid-size studios take co-op students.
- 5 First studio job** After graduation
 Junior gameplay programmer, tools programmer or QA (quality assurance) tester who moves into code.

Pros and cons

- + You make the thing you loved as a kid
- + Canada has world-class studios and tax credits that keep them here
- + Skills transfer straight to any software job
- Crunch: long hours before a game ships, still common
- Layoffs after a game ships or a project is cancelled are normal in this industry
- Pay lags other software jobs for the same skills

Optional boosts

Engine and graphics programming. Network and multiplayer. Tools programming. AI and gameplay systems.

Good to know

Montreal is a world game capital

Ubisoft's Montreal studio is one of the largest game studios on the planet, and the city is home to dozens of others. Quebec's tax credits, launched in the 1990s, are the reason Ubisoft came, and other provin...

Ontario pays 35% of a studio's labour costs back

The Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit refunds 35% of eligible labour spending on digital games, with no cap. It is a big part of why Toronto has a growing studio scene.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Computer game developer, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Job Bank: Computer game developer, job outlook

Sheridan College: Honours Bachelor of Game Design

Vancouver Film School: Game Design diploma

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/game-developer>



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