

Network Administrator

Keep the wires, Wi-Fi and firewalls running so everyone else can work. A 2-year diploma and one big certification get you in.

TYPICAL PAY

\$75,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$44k to \$114k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Offices, data centres, hospitals, schools, managed service provide...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Math, computer science and any technology courses. Set up a home network and learn what every setting does.
- 2 College diploma** 2 to 3 years
 Computer systems or networking technology at a public college: 2 years for a diploma, 3 for an advanced diploma. Co-op terms give you the work experience employers want.
- 3 Certify** During or right after college
 The CCNA (Cisco Certified Network Associate) is the certification most job ads name. CompTIA Network+ is a good first step. Many students pass one before they graduate.
- 4 First job** 1 to 2 years
 Help desk or junior network technician. Expect to do a year or two of tickets and cable runs before you touch the core routers.
- 5 Network administrator** Year 3 onward
 Running the network on your own, planning upgrades, and mentoring the juniors.

Pros and cons

- + Short, affordable education with a clear entry route
- + Every organization with more than a few people needs one
- + Certifications, not a degree, drive your pay
- On-call evenings and weekend maintenance windows
- Outages are stressful and very visible
- Cloud services are shrinking some traditional network teams

Good to know

One exam, 120 minutes

The CCNA (Cisco Certified Network Associate) is a single 2-hour exam with no prerequisites, and it is the credential that turns a college graduate into a hireable network technician. It costs US\$400 and is v...

Job Bank counts you with the system administrators

Canada's job statistics put network administrators and systems administrators in the same box (NOC 22220). In small organizations that is accurate: one person does both jobs.

Optional boosts

CCNP (Cisco Certified Network Professional). Cloud networking. Security. Wireless.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Network administrator (NOC 22220), wages (updated Nov 2025)

Cisco: CCNA certification

CompTIA: Network+ certification

BCIT: Computer Systems Technology 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/network-administrator>



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