

Product Manager

Decide what a software product should do next and get engineers, designers and the business to agree. Well paid, rarely a first job.

TYPICAL PAY

\$125,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$76k to \$233k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

5 to 8 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Tech companies, banks, startups, telecoms, remote

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Math, English, computer science, business. Build or sell something, even a small thing.
- 2 University degree** 4 years
 Computer science, engineering, business (Ivey, Rotman Commerce, Sauder, McGill Desautels) or anything with co-op. Co-op at a software company is the single most useful thing you can do.
- 3 First career** 2 to 4 years
 Software developer, UX (user experience) designer, business analyst, consultant, data analyst or customer support at a tech company. Learn how products actually get built and sold.
- 4 Move into product** 6 to 18 months of trying
 Volunteer for product tasks in your current job, or apply for associate product manager roles. A referral from someone on a product team matters more than any course.
- 5 Climb** 3 to 8 years
 Product manager, senior, group or director. Each step means bigger products and more people relying on your judgment.

Pros and cons

- + Among the best-paid jobs on this site that do not require a licence
- + You shape what millions of people use
- + A generalist role: business, design and technology in one job
- Almost never a first job; expect a few years getting there
- Job Bank rates the outlook very limited in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and BC
- Responsibility without authority: you own results but manage nobody

Optional boosts

Technical depth. A shipped product people use. Data skills. Domain knowledge.

Good to know

Nobody reports to you

Despite the title, most product managers manage no people. Engineers report to engineering managers and designers to design leads. The product manager leads by writing, evidence and persuasio...

Canada's biggest tech company grew up in Ottawa

Shopify started as a snowboard shop's online store in Ottawa in the mid-2000s and became one of the world's largest commerce platforms. It is one of the biggest employers of product managers in...

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Product manager (NOC 60010), wages (updated Nov 2025)
 Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto
 Ivey Business School, Western University
 Product School: product management training

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/product-manager>



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