

Cybersecurity Analyst

Watch a network for attacks and shut them down. Certifications count as much as a degree here.

TYPICAL PAY

\$129,180

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$75k to \$200k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 5 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Security operations centers, banks, hospitals, government agencies, r...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Computer science if your school offers it, plus math. Start breaking and fixing things at home now.
- 2 Degree or first technical job** 0 to 4 years
 A four year degree in computer science, information systems or cybersecurity is the common route. The other is a help desk or support job straight out of high school while you certify.
- 3 Learn the ground floor** 1 to 2 years
 Networking, operating systems and scripting. You cannot defend a network you do not understand. This is where most self-taught people stall.
- 4 Get certified** 3 to 6 months of study
 Security+ is the usual first one. Its exam is up to 90 questions in 90 minutes with a pass mark of 750 on a 100 to 900 scale, and two years of systems or security work is the recommended background.
- 5 First security role** Ongoing
 A security operations center analyst, triaging alerts on shift. From there: incident response, threat hunting, security engineering or cloud security.

Pros and cons

- + Six figure pay without a graduate degree or a license
- + Remote and hybrid work is normal
- + Demand is growing fast and the federal outlook is strongly positive
- Very few true entry level jobs. Most people do a year or two of support work first
- On-call rotations and incidents that arrive at night
- Alert fatigue and burnout are common and openly discussed in the field

Optional boosts

Security+. Certified Information Systems Security Professional. Certified in Cybersecurity. Cloud security certifications.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Information Security Analysts

CompTIA: the Security+ certification

ISC2: the Certified Information Systems Security Professional credential

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency: training and exercises

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/cybersecurity-analyst>

Good to know

Most breaches start with a person, not a machine

A convincing email, a reused password or a phone call to a help desk opens the door far more often than an exotic software flaw. That is why security teams spend so much time on training and on password...

The biggest credential needs five years first

The Certified Information Systems Security Professional credential requires five years of paid security work before it is awarded. You can pass the exam earlier and hold associate status while you build the e...



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