

DevOps Engineer

Build the pipes and servers other programmers ship on. Nobody starts here, everybody arrives here.

TYPICAL PAY

\$135,980

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$82k to \$215k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 8 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Tech companies, banks, hospitals, government contractors, remote

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 9 to 12
 Math, and any computing class you can get. Install Linux on an old laptop and break it a few times.
- 2 Learn to program** 0 to 4 years
 A computer science degree is the common route. A community college associate degree, a bootcamp or teaching yourself all work too, but they make the first job harder to land.
- 3 First job in technology** 1 to 2 years
 Junior developer, help desk, or systems administrator. This is where you learn how real systems fail.
- 4 Move toward infrastructure** 2 to 4 years
 Volunteer for the build pipeline, the deployment scripts, the monitoring nobody wants to own. That work is how you get the title.
- 5 Certify and specialize** Ongoing
 Cloud and Kubernetes certifications, then a lane: security, reliability, data platforms, or cost control.

Pros and cons

- + Among the best paid jobs you can reach without a graduate degree
- + No license, no board, no exam gate
- + Remote work is normal, not a favor
- On-call means your phone can wake you at 3am, and it will
- You are blamed when systems fail and invisible when they work
- The tools change constantly, so the learning never stops

Optional boosts

Amazon Web Services Certified DevOps Engineer, Professional. Certified Kubernetes Administrator. Terraform or equivalent infrastructure certification. A cloud security certification.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Software Developers (15-1252.00)
 Amazon Web Services: Certified DevOps Engineer, Professional
 Linux Foundation: Certified Kubernetes Administrator
 Western Governors University: tuition and technology degrees

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/devops-engineer>

Good to know

The name came from a conference talk

The word was coined around 2009 by people arguing that the developers who write software and the operations staff who run it should stop being separate teams that blame each other. The job titl...

The outlook is listed as bright

The United States Department of Labor career profile for software developers marks the occupation bright, meaning new openings are very likely and growth is rapid. It is one of the few large, well paid occ...



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