

Journalist

Find out what happened, check it, and tell everyone. A shrinking industry that still decides what the country argues about.

TYPICAL PAY

\$62,200

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$36k to \$144k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

3 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Newsrooms, radio and television stations, digital outlets, freelance...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Write for the school paper or run its site. Cover a real school board meeting. That is a clip, and clips are the currency.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
Journalism, English, political science, economics or a science. Editors like reporters who know a subject as well as how to write.
- 3 Student newsroom and internships** During the degree
Work on the campus paper, station or site every semester, and take at least one summer internship at a real outlet.
- 4 First job in a small market** 1 to 3 years
A local paper, a regional station or a niche trade publication. Long hours, low pay, enormous learning.
- 5 Move up or specialize** Ongoing
A bigger market, a beat you own, or investigative and data work. Both routes are built on published stories.

Pros and cons

- + You learn how power actually works, up close
- + No two weeks are the same and you are paid to be curious
- + Your work is public and permanent, with your name on it
- Employment in this occupation is projected to keep declining
- Starting pay is low and the first job is usually far from home
- Deadlines every day, and hostility from people who dislike the story

Good to know

The job is shrinking and worth knowing that

Federal projections expect employment of news analysts, reporters and journalists to decline over the next decade. People still do it, and some do very well, but go in knowing the industry is smaller every ye...

The ethics code is older than broadcast news

The Society of Professional Journalists was founded in 1909 and its Code of Ethics has guided reporters for over a century. It is not law. No court enforces it, and following it is a choice each newsroom mak...

Optional boosts

Data journalism. Video and audio production. A technical beat. Public records work.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: News Analysts, Reporters, and Journalists (27-3023.00)
Society of Professional Journalists
Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications
Missouri School of Journalism

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/journalist>



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