

A career in cyber security?

2019: there has never been a better time to get into cyber security, with growing demand for experts providing growing job opportunities. Here are some useful tips if you think this might be a possible career you, or someone you know:

How much experience do you need?

Technically, you don't need cyber security experience to get started. Many people entering the field come from jobs that have similar skill-sets, such as systems administration or information analysis.

If you can demonstrate the relevance of your existing experience – what recruiters call 'transferable skills' – there's no reason why you can't get a foothold on the cyber security career ladder. There are also plenty of *entry-level positions* available. Account executives and junior penetration testers, for example, tend to have little work experience, and can learn while on the job.

Prior experience is a considerable advantage, despite the skills gap. Try to take an internship or volunteer, but this isn't always possible. Alternatively, offer to help your employer or academic institution's IT department in your spare time.

Where can you learn about the cyber security industry?

Read as much as you can about a subject to find out what you're getting yourself into. There are plenty of blogs dedicated to the practicalities of the cyber security industry; two good ones to start with are [Troy Hunt's](#) and [Daniel Miessler's](#). You should also consider following industry professionals on Twitter, as many provide useful tips, engage in debates and answer questions.

Do you need industry connections?

Meeting people and making connections is a great way to get your foot in the door. Networking websites such as Linked-In can be helpful, but face-to-face contact is always better.

Conferences can be an excellent starting point. There are plenty of events where you can listen to keynote presentations, take part in roundtables and workshops, and network.

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Get to know the cyber security professionals in your organisation if you are already working. A few well-timed questions could lead to useful advice. More to the point, simply getting to know them on a personal level could give you an advantage when a job opens up in their department.

How can you stand out?

The best way to get advantage is to become qualified. Qualifications you need will depend on your career path, but the most common and versatile are associated with **ISO 27001**, the international standard that describes best practice for an ISMS (information security management system).

Some useful web-links for those thinking of entering the field:

<https://www.cybersecuritychallenge.org.uk/careers>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/information-technology/cyber-security-training>