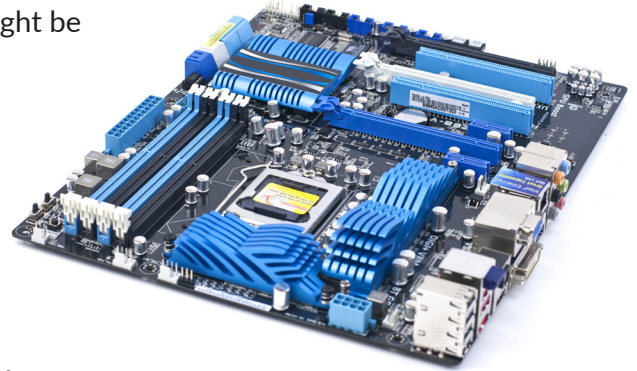


Learning About Careers: Information Technology

Top Things to Know

If you like computers, a career in information technology, or IT, might be right for you. Here are some important facts:

- IT professionals work with computers, computer systems, networks, and software. Their jobs have to do with finding, storing, and sharing data.
- People depend more and more on data and computers, for everything from sending texts to stopping pandemics. For this reason, the number of jobs in IT is growing much faster than in other industries.
- The average pay for IT jobs is more than twice as much as the average pay for all jobs.
- Many IT workers have a four-year college degree. Others have a two-year degree. Some go to college for longer than four years.



What You Can Be

Many kinds of workers are needed in the IT industry. Here are some examples:

- **Computer and information research scientists** find new ways to use information technologies. They also invent new kinds of information technologies.
- **Computer support specialists** help others use computers. They help people who work at businesses or in organizations and people who use computers in their homes. Because computer help is needed around the clock, computer support specialists may work at night or on weekends.
- **Information security analysts** help governments, businesses, and others keep data safe. Cyberattackers are criminals who use computer technology to steal information or do harm. Information security analysts try to stop cyberattacks and investigate them when they happen.
- **Software developers** make the programs that run on computers and other devices. They figure out what users need or want. Then they use their knowledge and imaginations to make programs that match those needs and wants.
- **Web developers** make websites for their customers and make sure the websites work right over time. They also may provide reports about numbers of visitors to websites.

Where You Can Work

Here are some places near you where people have jobs in IT:

- **Diversified Computer Solutions** provides IT services to businesses and home computer users. The company's staff make sure computers, computer networks, websites, and email programs work correctly. They help keep information safe too.
- **Reynolds and Reynolds** makes software for businesses that sell cars. The software makes it easier for these businesses to sell and service cars and take care of customers. The company's IT professionals develop software, design IT systems, solve computer and network problems, and help customers use the company's software.
- **Sparkbox** designs websites and makes computer programs that work on the web, like those that make it possible to shop online, for example. The company's workers include software engineers, web designers, and other IT professionals.

A Day in the Life: Information Security Analyst

Learn more about a typical day for one kind of IT professional:

Alex is an information security analyst. They work at a company that builds commercial structures like restaurants, shopping malls, and hospitals. The company stores information about its projects. Alex must protect that information. Today, Alex planned to do a test to make sure the company's data is safe from a new kind of cyberattack. Alex would pretend to be a cybercriminal trying to hack the company's computer system. But before they could start, they got a call for help from a coworker, Jason. Jason had opened an email attachment that looked strange. Because cyberattacks are unexpected and dangerous, Alex often must change plans to take care of possible threats. Like a detective, an information security analyst uses clues to find out what has happened. Alex began investigating Jason's problem by running tests on his computer. Alex discovered that the attachment contained a worm. This kind of harmful software can enter a company's computer network and steal information. Alex disconnected Jason's computer from the network and the internet. This kept the worm from spreading. Alex ran other tests to find out more about the worm. Then Alex was able to remove the worm from Jason's computer. "You're a hero!" Jason said. "Just doing my job," Alex answered with a smile. Helping Jason felt good, but Alex had much more to do during the rest of the day to continue keeping the company's information safe.



Learn More

What else do you want to know?

Now that you have read this fact sheet, what are some questions you have about working in IT?

What did you learn?

Do research online or talk to someone who works in IT to answer your questions. Then write two new things you learned from your research.
