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Cybersecurity
Career Hacks
for **newcomers**

No work experience? No problem.

Inside

Get more helpful tips in **The Ultimate Guide to the Certified in Cybersecurity Certification**.

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Cybersecurity is hot!

Cybersecurity is hot and constantly turning up the heat as new opportunities open up in the expanding global market. The ongoing threat of data breaches and cyberattacks in our increasingly connected world mean organizations everywhere need professionals to protect their data and critical assets.

Demand for cybersecurity talent is red-hot. Research shows the cybersecurity workforce needs an influx of 2.7 million professionals to meet global demand.[1] The numbers tell the story. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports **the information security industry is projected to grow by 33% through 2030** — that's 25% higher than the 7.7% growth rate across all industries.[2]

So how do you get your start in cybersecurity? It depends where you are in your career, what you want to do and where you see your future. If you thrive on solving problems, are driven to help people and are stoked at the prospect of working in a constantly evolving field, you already have a lot in common with today's cybersecurity workforce.

Whether you're a student, just starting your professional career or ready to work in a different field, the tried-and-tested career hacks in this ebook will help you get started.
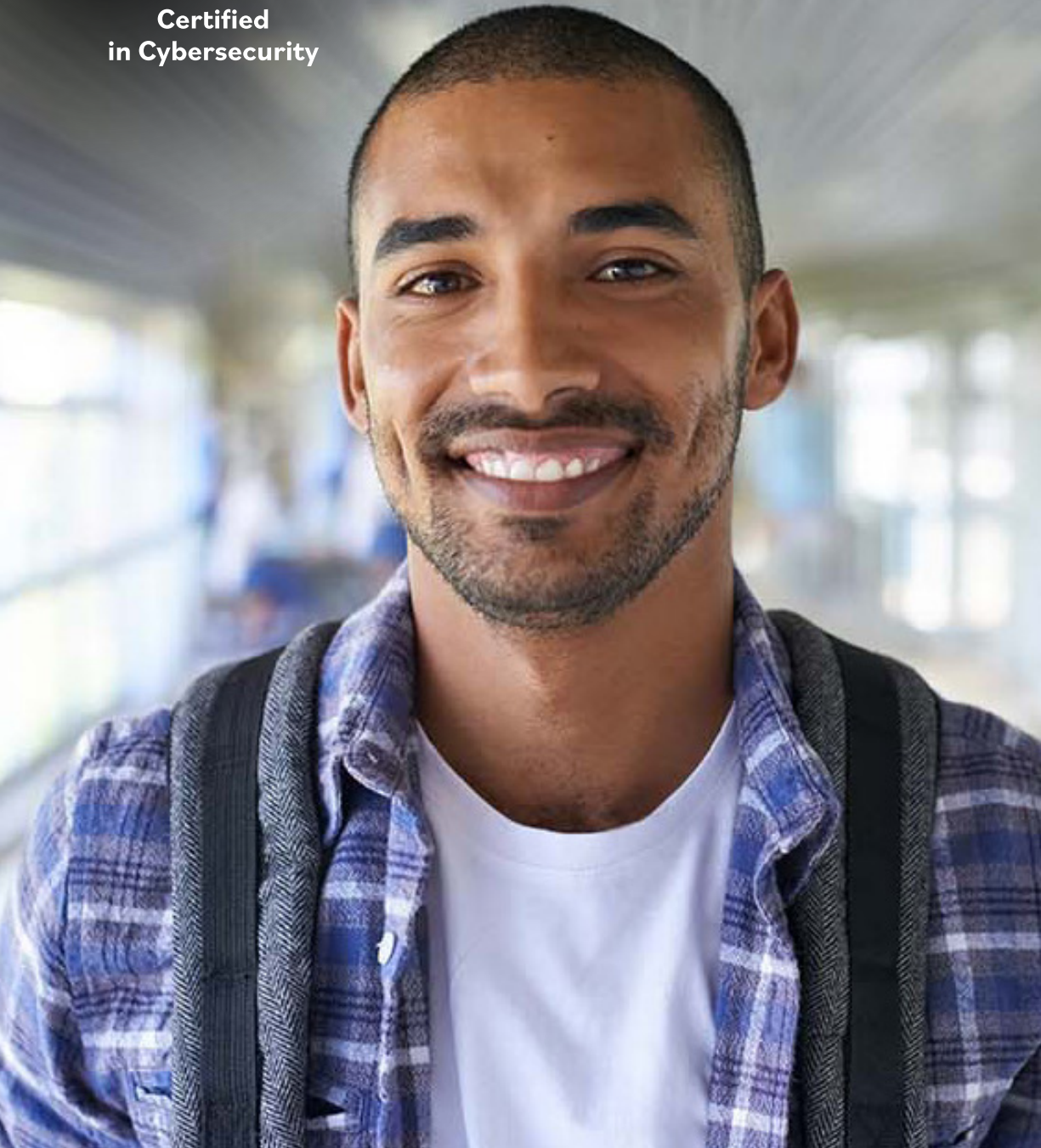
[1] 2021 Cybersecurity Workforce Study
[2] Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook

ISC2 CC℠

**Certified
in Cybersecurity**

Don't have an IT background? Don't let that stop you. You don't need an IT degree to work in cybersecurity. In fact, more than half of cybersecurity professionals got their start outside of IT, transitioning from unrelated careers, getting their start with cybersecurity education and exploring cybersecurity concepts on their own.[3]

Working cybersecurity professionals agree, what will help you move forward is certification. They say certifications are the most important way for career pursuers like you to enter the field.[4]

Certifications can help you get your foot in the door, but there are so many of them — which one should you pursue? ISC2 is making the decision easier with the **Certified in Cybersecurity** certification. It's a foundational cybersecurity certification that creates a pathway to successful careers in cybersecurity.

No work experience? No problem. You don't need work experience to earn the Certified in Cybersecurity certification — just a passion and the drive to enter a challenging and rewarding field, one that protects the world from cyber threats and bad actors.

[3] 2021 Cybersecurity Workforce Study
[4] 2021 Cybersecurity Career Pursuers Study

Where entry-level lands you

As you start your career in cybersecurity, you'll see it's not a homogeneous field limited to a handful of roles. Cybersecurity covers a broad list of functions and responsibilities, and depends on teams with diverse skills, experiences and ideas.

Sample entry-level cybersecurity job roles

- Security analyst
- Industrial Controls Analyst
- Risk Analyst
- Incident Responder
- Forensic specialist/analyst
- Junior penetration tester
- Security engineer
- IT auditor
- Systems administrator

Earning the **ISC2 Certified in Cybersecurity Certification,** combined with the right strategy to market your skills, demonstrate an understanding of the job and convey a willingness to learn and grow, will help you land your first job in field. Now let's look at smart cybersecurity career hacks from three different entry points: students, incoming professionals and career changers.

Cybersecurity Career Hacks
for **students**

It's a classic dilemma: you need a job to get experience, but you need experience to get a job. Wherever you start, all cybersecurity careers begin with some technical knowledge.

The big security issues organizations are wrestling with right now – online harassment, misuse of personal data and international privacy, for example – demand technical knowledge. Students should think of ways to apply the technical knowledge and skills they learned at school to cybersecurity.

Know the technical basics

Not everyone in cybersecurity comes from a deep technical background, but it's important to know the basics. Some industry experts advise starting on a more general technical path and then focusing on security later, once the basics are mastered. Whatever path you choose, you will need a general understanding of systems, coding, networking, and how applications are run and maintained.

Get certified

ISC2 Certified in Cybersecurity certification breaks down traditional barriers to entry, enabling students to build confidence and start their first cybersecurity role prepared for what's next. Certification demonstrates that you have the key technical foundational concepts in cybersecurity.

Learn more in the ultimate guide to the Certifed in Cybersecurity Certification.

Get more helpful tips in **The Ultimate Guide to the Certified in Cybersecurity Certification**.

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Consider training in general IT

Finding an internship, apprenticeship or entry-level job in IT is a great launch pad. Consider data entry, help desk or any other ground-level technical position to learn IT fundamentals. You'll get a hands-on sense of technical processes and real-world business scenarios that will serve you well in cybersecurity.

Focus your area of interest

What does your ideal cybersecurity career look like? Your path in the short term will springboard your future. Roles that pave the way include systems administrator, web administrator, web developer, network administrator, IT technician, network engineer and software engineer.

Learn independently

There are many ways to learn the technical skills used in cybersecurity, including books, self-directed learning (teaching yourself how to code, for example), online courses and guided training. Whichever you choose, these fundamentals will be essential as you get deeper into security work.

Cybersecurity Career Hacks for
incoming professionals

For incoming professionals just starting in cybersecurity, persistence is key. Don't give up if your first few attempts to get in front of a hiring manager fall flat. Keep in mind, many recruiters are focused on processing applications and candidates across an entire organization. Your goal is to reach the hiring manager. Here are some ways to connect with people in the field to get there.[5]

Online Communities - There are many active forums on social media, including Reddit, LinkedIn and more, where you can connect, research your questions and learn from other cybersecurity professionals' experiences and opinions.

Cybersecurity Chapters - Local chapters around the world focus on creating in-person and online networking opportunities for cybersecurity professionals. Many first-timers find professionals who are willing and eager to share their experiences and advice.

Industry Events - Cybersecurity conferences provide networking opportunities to get in front of the right people, including recruiters, hiring managers and cybersecurity team members who can help open doors into their organizations.

[5] How to Get a Cybersecurity Job

Get more helpful tips in **The Ultimate Guide to the Certified in Cybersecurity Certification**.

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During the interview

Incoming professionals should also absorb as much information as possible about the roles and responsibilities associated with the job titles that intrigue them most. That way, once you get in front of a recruiter or hiring manager, you're ready to:

- Ask questions and share opinions that demonstrate knowledge of the profession, as well as the current threat landscape.
- Emphasize an understanding of the skills required to mitigate risk, such as problem solving, communication and critical thinking.
- Show a willingness to learn as much as possible about cybersecurity through training, mentoring, on-the-job learning, webinars and self-guided online courses.

How DEI applies

Keep in mind, forward-thinking organizations recognize that diversity in culture, experiences, languages and backgrounds adds fresh thinking and creativity in solving problems. Do you understand the mindset and motivation of threat actors from specific countries or regions? Are you familiar with the ways different cultures and age groups learn so you can help bolster user awareness trainings? Think broadly and creatively about how your background can be applied as an asset for your future team.

Cybersecurity Career Hacks for **career changers**

As a career-changer looking to land a position in cybersecurity, you need to explain to the hiring manager how your professional background relates to the job. In your previous roles, you've probably had to overcome challenges by uncovering and correcting root causes to issues. Don't discount your experience outside cybersecurity — you have acquired skills that are transferrable.

Examples of complementary fields

- **Law enforcement -** Experience in forensics and criminal investigations applies to investigating and solving cybercrimes and identifying patterns and common targets.
- **Human resources -** A background in crisis management is helpful when cybersecurity teams respond to attacks. Experience in policy writing and communicating sensitive information can be applied to train users on cybersecurity practices.
- **Accounting, finance and insurance -** Experience in risk analysis and sorting large volumes of data can be applied to assessing cyber risks and working with machine learning models that screen data for anomalies.
- **Military -** Intelligence-gathering and structured, methodical approaches to challenges are key to identifying threats, their origins and their likely targets.
- **Legal -** Knowledge of compliance requirements for regulations in privacy, data sovereignty and cybersecurity is extremely valuable for setting policies and ensuring compliance with relevant laws.
- **Marketing -** Digital marketers must understand the flow of data, sound governance of data, adherence to a wide array of privacy regulations, systems architecture and more.

Get more helpful tips in **The Ultimate Guide to the Certified in Cybersecurity Certification**.

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Walk the talk

Make sure prospective employers see you're serious about a career in cybersecurity. Part of that is learning about the industry and the language used by cybersecurity professionals. Like any other profession, there's a lexicon and in-the-know vernacular you need in order to walk the talk.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the threat landscape by keeping up with news of evolving attack methods.
- Articulate the important nuances between threats, threat actors, attacks, breaches and the concepts of risk and risk management.
- Keep current with new and existing technologies, tools and practices used to mitigate risk.
- Demonstrate knowledge of industry priorities like cloud security and top threats like ransomware.
- Get certified. **ISC2 Certified in Cybersecurity Certification** demonstrates to employers that you have the key foundational concepts in information security, determined by experts and practitioners working in the field.

Get more helpful tips in **The Ultimate Guide to the Certified in Cybersecurity Certification**.

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How to get certified

Compare the CC certification training options and choose the one that's right for you.

SELF-PACED + EXAM
U.S. $0

Train at your own pace through an engaging online learning experience.

Exam included. $50 Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF) due upon certification.

SELF-PACED + EXAM + EXTRAS
U.S. $199

Train at your own pace through an engaging online learning experience.

Exam included.

+ Bundle Extras:

- Two opportunities to pass the exam
- $50 AMF waived for first year
- Access to course content for 180-days

LIVE ONLINE + EXAM + EXTRAS
U.S. $804

Participate in live sessions led by an ISC2 Authorized Instructor and work on your own through an engagingself-paced experience. **Exam included.**

+ Bundle Extras:

- Two opportunities to pass the exam
- $50 AMF waived for first year
- Access to course content for 180-days
- Learn in a live virtual classroom led by an ISC2 Authorized Instructor
- Interactive peer discussions

Learn More and Register at
isc2.org/cc-bundles

Next step: get your Ultimate Guide

Take the next step toward a career in cybersecurity with The Ultimate Guide to Certified in Cybersecurity Certification.

Inside you'll find:

Your questions answered!

- Why pursue a career in cybersecurity?
- What's covered in the exam?
- What are my exam prep options?
- What are the benefits of certification?
- Plus, real-world testimonials

GET YOUR GUIDE

Certified
in Cybersecurity

CC℠

ISC2 Certification

The Ultimate Guide to **CERTIFIED in CYBERSECURITY**

The entry-level credential for tomorrow's cybersecurity leaders
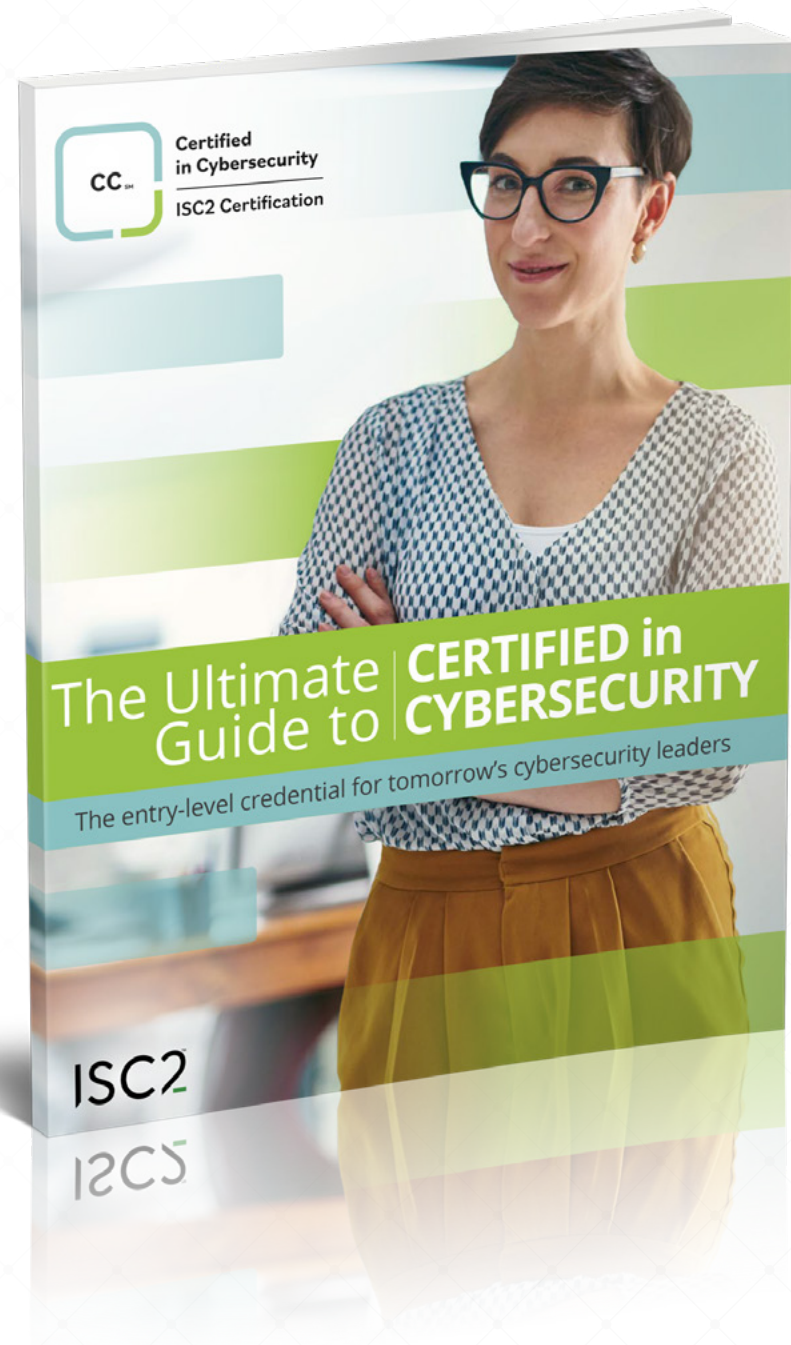
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About ISC2

ISC2 is an international nonprofit membership association focused on inspiring a safe and secure cyber world. Best known for the acclaimed Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP®) certification, ISC2 offers a portfolio of credentials that are part of a holistic, pragmatic approach to security. Our association of candidates, associates and members, more than 500,000 strong, is made up of certified cyber, information, software and infrastructure security professionals who are making a difference and helping to advance the industry. Our vision is supported by our commitment to educate and reach the general public through our charitable foundation – The Center for Cyber Safety and Education™.

Learn more at isc2.org or follow us on X or connect with us on Facebook, Linkedin and YouTube.