

Career Spotlight: Computer Systems Analyst

Job Description: Computer systems analysts help all organizations to use technology effectively and to incorporate rapidly changing technologies into their existing systems. They help solve computer problems and use computer technology to meet the needs of an organization. Most systems analysts work with specific types of computer systems—for example, business, accounting, or financial systems. To begin an assignment, systems analysts consult managers and users to define the goals of the system. Analysts then design a system to meet those goals.

Education: Employers usually prefer applicants who have at least a bachelor's degree. For specified fields, especially those in the science or technology disciplines, it is recommended that the applicant has a bachelor's degree in a technical field, such as computer science, applied mathematics, and engineering. Despite the preference for technical degrees, however, people who have degrees in other majors may find employment as systems analysts if they also have technical skills. Courses in computer science or related subjects combined with practical experience can qualify people for some jobs in the occupation.

Work Conditions: Computer systems analysts work in offices or laboratories in comfortable surroundings. They usually work about 40 hours a week—about the same as many other professional or office workers. Evening or weekend work may be necessary, however, to meet deadlines or solve specific problems. Many analysts telecommute, using computers to work from remote locations. Like other workers who spend long periods typing on a computer, computer systems analysts are susceptible to eyestrain, back discomfort, and hand and wrist problems such as carpal tunnel syndrome or cumulative trauma disorder.

Salary: Median wage earnings of computer systems analysts are \$69,760 with the highest ten percent earning more than \$106,820. Starting salaries are about \$50,000, depending on the specialty.

Job Outlook: Employment opportunities are expected to grow by 29% between 2006 and 2016 for computer systems analysts. Demand for these workers will increase as organizations adopt more sophisticated technology.

Source: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos287.htm#outlook>