

# Police Officer

Police officers keep law and order, investigate crime, and support crime prevention.

## ANNUAL SALARY

£21,000 to £41,500

Average UK salary in 2020 was £30,378  
(source Office for National Statistics)

## WORKING HOURS

37 to 40 a week

You could work: evenings / weekends / bank holidays; on shifts

**-1%**

## FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

There will be 1% fewer Police officer jobs in 2025.

In your local area



## What's it all about?

### What you'll do

#### Day to day tasks

In this role you could:

- respond to calls for help from the public
- investigate crimes and offences
- interview suspects and make arrests
- give evidence in court
- control traffic and crowds at large public events and gatherings
- advise the public on personal safety and crime prevention
- promote respect for people in relation to their race, diversity and human rights

#### Skills and knowledge

You'll need:

- legal knowledge including court procedures and government regulations
- knowledge of public safety and security
- negotiation skills for keeping people safe
- patience and the ability to remain calm in stressful situations

- sensitivity and understanding for dealing with traumatic situations
- the ability to understand people's reactions
- excellent verbal communication skills
- leadership skills
- to be able to use a computer and the main software packages competently

### **Working environment**

You may need to wear a uniform.

You could work on a patrol or at a police station.

Your working environment may be outdoors in all weathers and physically and emotionally demanding.

### **Entry requirements**

You can get into this job through:

- a college course
- an apprenticeship
- applying directly

### **College**

You could take a Level 2 or 3 Diploma in Public Services before applying to the Police, although this is not essential.

### **Entry requirements**

You'll usually need:

- 2 or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 3 (A\* to D), or equivalent, for a level 2 course
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A\* to C), or equivalent, for a level 3 course

### **Apprenticeship**

You could start by doing a police constable degree apprenticeship.

### **Entry requirements**

You'll usually need:

- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A\* to C) and A levels, or equivalent, for a degree apprenticeship

### **For more information**

- [equivalent entry requirements](#)
- [guide to apprenticeships](#)

## **Volunteering and work experience**

You can get a taste of what it's like to work with the police by volunteering as a Special Constable.

You could also get paid work as a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) before applying for Police Officer training.

## **Direct application**

You'll usually apply to one police force at a time. If your application is successful, you'll be invited to an assessment centre where you'll:

- have an interview
- take written tests

If you pass the tests at the assessment centre, you'll then:

- complete a physical fitness test
- have a medical, including an eyesight check
- go through security and background checks

You can prepare for your application by doing the Certificate in Knowledge of Policing.

If you're unsuccessful at the assessment stage, you may have to wait a minimum of 6 months before you can re-apply.

If you've got management experience you could apply for direct entry as an inspector or superintendent.

If you have an upper second class degree, you could apply for the Police Now Graduate Leadership Development Programme.

## **Requirements and restrictions**

You'll need to:

- pass enhanced background checks
- be over 18 years of age

## **More information**

### **Career tips**

If you're aged 13 to 18 you could become a Police Cadet.

### **Further information**

You'll need to contact your local police force to apply, as each force has its own recruitment rules.

You can find out more about careers in the police from the College of Policing.

## Employment by region

<b>Region</b>	<b>Jobs</b>
Yorkshire and the Humber	11,212
London	32,268
South West	8,798
South East	24,116
Wales	7,734
Scotland	21,372
West Midlands	11,950
North West	15,444
North East	7,305
East of England	13,137
Northern Ireland	6,833
East Midlands	10,698

## Career path and progression

You'll spend 2 years as a student officer before becoming a Police Constable. You can then decide whether you want to specialise in a particular type of policing, for example: Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Anti-fraud or road traffic; drugs or firearms; counter-terrorism; air support or underwater search; dog-handling or mounted policing

With experience, you may be able to apply for promotion to Sergeant, Inspector or Chief Inspector.

In the CID you'll also have the title of detective added to your rank, for example Detective Sergeant or Detective Chief Inspector.

## Other useful information

### **Further information**

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