



# Cybersecurity Degree vs. Cybersecurity Certification: What Do I Need to Succeed?

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Given the number of data breaches over the last decade and especially this [past year](#), cybersecurity jobs are in high-demand. For those eager to break into the industry, the most common question is, of course, what do I need to succeed?

If you're looking online, you'll likely come across self-serving articles by colleges and universities recommending a degree and tech companies that offer certificates

recommending certifications. As a recruitment agency that's interested only in your success in IT and cybersecurity, we're neutral and are obligated to paint the big picture.

## The Pros of a Cybersecurity Degree

While a degree does demonstrate your ability in a certain field, it also demonstrates your dedication and discipline in general. Graduating with a Bachelor's Degree is no easy feat and takes four (or more) years of hard work. A degree also suggests a solid knowledge base across the technical aspects of cybersecurity as well as the legal and ethical issues, policies and plans, current trends, and more.

Of course, a degree also affords you the time you may (or may not) need to test the waters. You can attend classes and later decide that particular niche isn't for you. You can learn from classmates. You can get involved in extracurriculars. A university setting is a great place to explore your options.

Finally, there is no lifespan for a degree. Certifications generally require renewal of some kind, whether that be a reinstatement fee, continued education, or some other process.

## The Pros of a CyberSecurity Certification

Degrees come at a price and, as mentioned, they afford you time to test the waters. Not everyone has that kind of time or money. Instead of working towards a Bachelor's Degree that requires you to attend classes unrelated to your field, you could focus exclusively on cybersecurity and prove your knowledge with certifications.

Perhaps more so than a degree, certifications can help you stand out because they demonstrate specialised

skills that are relevant to a specific job. For example, someone hoping to land a job in penetration testing might benefit from a Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) certification while a Certified Information Systems Auditor certification proves your ability to manage vulnerabilities in information auditing.

Unlike degrees that tend to focus on theories, certifications help you develop practical skills. And, because you are forced to renew certifications, you're constantly learning and evolving with new products, technologies and trends.

## What Do I Need to Succeed?

Before asking yourself whether you should work towards a degree or a certification, ask yourself what success looks like. What kind of entry-level cybersecurity job are you looking for? If you hope to - one day - hold a senior-level job, you may want to earn a degree.

But, your skills and passion can't be defined by a certification or a degree and, while job listings often do list minimum requirements, your personal or prior work experience can demonstrate your value in lieu of these documents.