

How to Start a Career in Cybersecurity: Real-World Advice from an Early-Career Consultant

If you're early in your cybersecurity career and looking for a practical starting point, here's a great starting point. You don't need to complete everything at once; just start checking off the boxes as you go.

1. Skill & Certification Strategy

COMPLETE

Research which skills are highly valued and underserved in your field.

Earn an entry-level certification in a skill that genuinely interests you.

If your school offers certification-aligned courses for credit, prioritize them.

2. Internship & Opportunity Selection

COMPLETE

Research internships and rank them by skill value and long-term marketability.

Choose roles that provide exposure to real tools, environments, and responsibility.

3. Interview Preparation

COMPLETE

Treat interviews like exams by creating a structured study guide.

Prepare flexible answers for culture-fit and behavioral questions.

Review the job description and brush up on required and adjacent skills.

Research the company's values, initiatives, and your interviewer's background.

4. On-the-Job Growth Habits

COMPLETE

Take detailed notes and actively research any knowledge gaps.

Maintain a positive attitude and remain eager to learn.

Offer help whenever possible and seek feedback.

5. Career Tracking & Long-Term Growth

COMPLETE

Keep a running document of certifications, projects, and accomplishments.

Share this document with your manager when appropriate.

Continue pursuing certifications that are both interesting and in demand.

Create and stick to a structured study schedule (especially on hard days).