



JOB of the Week



Job name: Web designer

Job description: Web designers combine creativity with technical know-how to produce websites that meet their clients' requirements. As a web designer, you'll plan, create and code web pages, using both technical and non-technical skills to produce websites that fit your customers' requirements. Being involved in the technical and graphical aspects of pages, you'll determine not only the look of the website but how it works as well. You may also be responsible for the maintenance of an existing site. **The term web developer is sometimes used interchangeably with web designer, but this is misguided. Web developing is a more specialist role, focusing on the back-end development of a website and will incorporate, among other things, the creation of highly complex search functions.**

Tasks you will undertake in the job: As a web designer, you'll need to:

- meet clients to identify their needs and liaise regularly with them
- draw up detailed website specifications
- design sample page layouts including text size and colours
- design graphics, animations and manipulate digital photographs
- register web domain names and organise the hosting of the website
- present initial design ideas to clients
- carry out coding using a variety of software
- work with different content management systems
- search engine optimisation (SEO)
- meet relevant legal requirements such as accessibility standards, freedom of information and privacy
- design the website's visual imagery and ensure it's in line with company branding policy or the requirements of the client
- proofread content and make changes where necessary
- edit content, debug code and re-design web pages
- work with other web specialists, including web developers and graphic designers
- liaise with outside agencies
- test the website to ensure it's working
- hand the completed website over to the client
- provide post-sales technical support
- train the clients' staff
- research current design trends
- undertake continuing professional development (CPD) activities to keep up to date with new software developments.

Skills required for this job (core competencies):

Communication	Resilience	Organisation	Teamwork
Problem Solving	Initiative	Creativity	Digital literacy

Sectors in which Web designers would normally work: The variety of industries that might employ web designers is potentially very large, as any organisation that has a website may recruit a web designer to work in-house or as a freelancer. Some employers will have their own in-house web design team or they may use external web design agencies, freelancers or a combination of all of these. Web design agencies are a good source of vacancies. Other sources of work include: public sector organisations - such as universities or the police force; private sector organisations - like design agencies, banks, supermarkets, online retailers and law firms; third sector organisations - large and well-known charities.

Career path and progression within the industry:

As web design is a multi-faceted role, the first few years of your career will be spent developing the variety of skills required to do the job. This may take four or five years, at which point you could be promoted to senior designer. Once you've identified your strengths and which aspects of the work you like the most, you could move into other roles with responsibility for large-value projects, managing high-profile clients, leading project teams, usability, consulting or even become a director of the company. If you feel that you would rather concentrate on the creative aspect of web design, you could specialise in areas such as: graphics; user interface design; interactive design; front-end development; information architecture.

Alternatively, you may decide that you prefer a more technical role and so you could specialise in the more technical aspects of coding and develop a speciality in that area. Another option is to obtain a teaching qualification and teach web design at a further or higher education institution. You could also work as a private tutor, teaching individuals or small groups.



Salary: Starting salaries vary and can range from £18,000 to £24,000. With four to six years' experience and more, salaries can increase to between £24,000 and £40,000. Those in senior roles can earn upwards of £40,000. Salaries tend to be higher in London and the South East, depending on the size of the company and its location. A way to increase your salary is to be the first to specialise in emerging technologies.

Working hours: You'll generally work 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, but you might be required to work extra hours in the evenings or on weekends to meet deadlines. Some jobs may involve being on-call to deal with unexpected problems that need solving at any time, day or night. As the equipment required to be a web designer is simply a computer, software and high-speed internet, you can work from almost any location. This lends itself very well to freelance work, being self-employed and working from home.

Essential skills you need to show: You will need to show employers evidence of soft and technical skills. Soft skills include: attention to detail; creativity; analysis; teamwork; team leading; problem solving; delivering presentations; ability to teach yourself new technical skills; communication skills.

Technical skills include:

Coding - HTML, CSS, Javascript, jQuery, Dreamweaver

Programming - .net, XML/XSLT, ASP, PHP, Python, Django

Design and graphics - InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, Flash

Content management system (CMS) - Wordpress, Adobe Business Catalyst, Drupal, Joomla, Ektron, Zope.

It's best to show a combination of technical skills from each of the categories.

This job in the future: The workforce is projected to grow by 5.1%, creating 3 800 jobs; in the same period, 39.9% of the workforce is likely to retire, creating 30 000 job opportunities.

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www.successatschool.org

www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk

www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors

www.ucas.com/careers-advice

www.kudos/casaid.co.uk/#/ (you all have a log on for this service)

www.careersbox.co.uk (careers videos)

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Helpful sites for careers information
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<http://airhead.io/public/launchpads/XqbuOMJgb0OfqvMPCykzA>

