

Networking Career Cards

NAME _____

DATE _____

PERIOD _____

Use these cards as the complete comparison route. Hats & Ladders may add exploration, and Xello may provide a localized salary when the exact occupation, geography, measure, and date are visible. Neither platform is required to complete the career comparison. Preparation descriptions are typical pathways, not promises or requirements for every employer.

Network Administrator

Keeps a network running day to day. Common tasks include managing accounts and permissions, monitoring traffic, troubleshooting connections, installing updates, and documenting changes.

Typical preparation: Postsecondary certificate, associate degree, bachelor's degree, industry certification, or a mix of education and experience.

Technical focus: Networks, accounts, devices, monitoring, troubleshooting.

Network Architect

Plans and designs data communication networks. Common tasks include choosing equipment, planning capacity and security, documenting the design, and explaining costs and tradeoffs.

Typical preparation: Bachelor's degree plus related work experience is common.

Technical focus: Network design, capacity, security, hardware, cloud connections.

Database Administrator

Organizes, protects, backs up, and maintains data systems. Common tasks include controlling access, testing backups, monitoring performance, and helping users retrieve reliable data.

Typical preparation: Bachelor's degree is common; some roles accept related education, certifications, and experience.

Technical focus: Databases, access control, backups, performance, data reliability.

Systems Analyst

Studies how an organization works and recommends technology changes. Common tasks include interviewing users, mapping needs, comparing solutions, testing systems, and translating between technical and nontechnical teams.

Typical preparation: Bachelor's degree is common, though employers may accept other combinations of technical and business experience.

Technical focus: Requirements, systems, testing, process improvement, communication.

Compare the roles

NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR

One technical task: _____

One transferable skill and why it matters:

NETWORK ARCHITECT

One technical task: _____

One transferable skill and why it matters:

DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR

One technical task: _____

One transferable skill and why it matters:

SYSTEMS ANALYST

One technical task: _____

One transferable skill and why it matters:

Sources

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, accessed August 9, 2026:

- Network and Computer Systems Administrators: [bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/network-and-computer-systems-administrators.htm](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/network-and-computer-systems-administrators.htm)
- Computer Network Architects: [bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/computer-network-architects.htm](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/computer-network-architects.htm)
- Database Administrators and Architects: [bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/database-administrators.htm](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/database-administrators.htm)
- Computer Systems Analysts: [bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/computer-systems-analysts.htm](https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/computer-systems-analysts.htm)