

Career of the Week



Telecoms Engineer

Telecoms engineers install broadband, mobile and landline phone networks and work on satellite, digital TV and fibre optic systems.

Average salary (a year): £24,000 (starter) to £40,000 (experienced)

Typical hours (a week): 39 to 41 week (on call, at short notice)

You can get into this job through:

College

You could do a college course, which would teach you some of the skills needed for the job and might help you find a trainee position with a telecoms company.

Relevant courses include:

- Level 2 Award in Communications Cabling
- Level 3 Diploma in Professional Competence for IT and Telecoms Professionals
- T Level in Maintenance, Installation and Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing
- T Level in Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control

Entry requirements

You may need:

- 2 or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 3 (A* to D), or equivalent, for a level 2 course
- 5 GCSEs at grades 9-4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English, maths and science
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9-4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths for a T level

Apprenticeship

You could do a:

- Telecoms Field Operative Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship
- Network Cable Installer Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship
- Radio Network Technician Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship
- Cellular Network Field Engineer Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- some GCSEs, usually including English and maths, or equivalent, for an intermediate apprenticeship

- 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths, for an advanced apprenticeship
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C) and A levels, or equivalent, for a higher or degree apprenticeship

Skills and knowledge

You'll need:

- broadcasting and telecommunications knowledge
- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- the ability to use your initiative
- maths knowledge
- knowledge of computer operating systems, hardware and software
- the ability to work well with your hands
- analytical thinking skills
- customer service skills
- to be able to use a computer and the main software packages competently

Restrictions and Requirements

You might need a full driving licence to travel between jobs.

Day-to-day tasks

As a telecoms engineer, you could:

- set up mobile, fixed communications and data networks
- repair lines and equipment on mobile masts and antennae
- lay and test underground and underfloor cabling
- find and fix faults, including using software remotely
- design, build and test components and equipment
- communicate with customers in person, on the phone or online

Working environment

- You could work at a client's home or at a client's business.
- Your working environment may be at height, cramped, outdoors in all weathers and you'll travel often.
- You may need to wear safety clothing and use safety equipment.

Career progression

With training and experience, you could move into:

- supervisory roles
- network design
- electronic engineering
- You could also set up your own installation and repair business.