

# Finding Employment as a (New) Programmer

There's a lot to think about as you start looking for your first programming-related job. This checklist can help you think more clearly about all of the individual steps you'll need to take, and the process as a whole.

## Background knowledge and projects

- ☐ Learn the fundamentals of programming: variables, lists, dictionaries, loops, conditional statements, functions, classes, working with files, and testing your code
- ☐ Complete several larger-scale projects from a book or other learning resource
- ☐ Build a meaningful project of your own, or add a significant set of features to a project you started in a tutorial
- ☐ Learn about some intermediate concepts such as generators, async, recursion, regular expressions, algorithms, data structures, and more
- ☐ Become familiar with the official Python documentation
- ☐ Become familiar with the documentation of other libraries you use
- ☐ Build a professional portfolio
- ☐ Learn to use some of the advanced features of your editor or IDE
- ☐ Use a version control system such as Git to manage your projects

## Searching for jobs

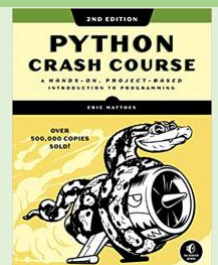
- ☐ Decide what kinds of jobs you're most interested in
- ☐ Research companies and organizations you might want to work for
- ☐ Find a job board with relevant listings, and follow it for new opportunities
- ☐ Attend a meetup or conference, or find an online programming-related community to join
- ☐ Build your professional network

## Applying for jobs

- ☐ Write a base resume that's mostly for you
- ☐ Adapt your resume to at least one specific kind of job you're looking for
- ☐ Write a cover letter for each job you're interested in applying to
- ☐ Submit an application for at least one open position (It can be tempting to keep putting off this important step!)
- ☐ Practice interviewing with a friend or colleague
- ☐ Go through an interview, and make written notes about the process
- ☐ Use your experiences so far to focus what you're currently learning, and what you're currently building
- ☐ Continue to build your personal and professional networks
- ☐ Continue reading and learning about the job-searching process
- ☐ Be prepared to negotiate a market-rate salary that's fair to your level of experience and knowledge

## After you land your first job

- ☐ Ask the questions you need in order to perform well in your job
- ☐ Stay long enough to complete meaningful projects and make specific contributions
- ☐ Keep an eye out for the right time to change jobs, as you gain experience
- ☐ Develop expertise in one area of programming, without letting yourself get stuck
- ☐ Continue to learn on your own time, while maintaining a healthy work-life balance
- ☐ Find ways to help those who are just starting out on their professional journey



Python Crash Course has worked well for hundreds of thousands of people new to programming, or new to Python. Find it on [Amazon](#), [Barnes and Noble](#), or direct from [No Starch Press](#). More at [https://ehmatthes.github.io/pcc\\_2e/finding\\_employment/](https://ehmatthes.github.io/pcc_2e/finding_employment/).