

What do Security Guards do?

Security officers, or security guards, make sure that buildings, valuables or people are safe and secure. They help prevent theft and damage, and deal with emergencies.

As a security officer, you could work for a range of organisations and your role could vary depending on the industry you work in. Your duties could include:

- patrolling, securing and monitoring premises, sometimes using closed circuit television (CCTV)
- working in a Gate House or Reception area
- working in a shopping centre or on a building site
- airport security, which involves searching aircraft, passengers and luggage, and guarding the airport boundaries.

You would keep accurate records and write short reports, which may be used by the police or courts. Your duties could also involve customer care, signing-in visitors, giving directions and working with guard dogs (see the Dog Handler profile for details).

What qualifications and experience will employers look for?

Employers will carry out checks on your personal and work history for up to ten years, and you will need to declare any criminal convictions.

You may need to hold a Security Industry Authority (SIA) licence. This currently depends on whether you are an employee or a contractor.

If you are a security officer employed by an agency (or contractor) to work for a customer, you need an SIA front-line licence.

The Level 2 Security Guard course takes 30 hours, and can be studied on a part-time basis over a few evenings or weekends, or as an intensive four-day full-time course. During the course you will cover two main sections:

- the role and responsibilities of a Security Guard
- communication skills and conflict management.

You will take an exam on each section and when you have passed the course, you will be issued with a Security Guard licence some 6 -8 weeks later – provided you meet the SIA criteria.

What further training and development can I do?

As a new security officer or guard, you will receive on-the-job training and supervision from your employer

Additional training

You could also work towards qualifications such as:

- First Aid at Work
- Fire Awareness
- Physical Intervention Skills
- NVQ Level 2 in Providing Security Services
- NVQ Level 2 in Customer Services
- NVQ Level 2 in Spectator Safety