



Where to Find Job Openings: Build a Search That Works

Finding work begins with knowing where to look—and making good use of what you find. Searching one website repeatedly can miss opportunities, while browsing dozens without a plan can consume your day.

A useful job search combines employer websites, selected job boards, public employment resources, and personal connections. The best mix depends on your occupation, location, experience, and working needs.

Start With a Clear Direction

Identify a few types of work that match your qualifications. Consider your preferred location, acceptable commute, schedule, and whether you need full-time, part-time, temporary, or remote employment.

List several related job titles. Employers may use different names for similar work, so searching only your previous title can unnecessarily limit your results.

If you are uncertain about your direction, begin with our companion article, **“How to Use the Bureau of Labor Statistics Before Choosing Your Next Job.”** It explains how to research duties, preparation, wages, and employment outlook. That research can help you choose suitable occupations; current job listings will show which employers are recruiting.

Check Employers' Career Pages

Make a list of organizations that employ people with your skills. Include smaller businesses and local institutions alongside familiar national companies.

Visit their official websites and look for sections labeled “Careers,” “Employment,” or “Join Our Team.” Read the requirements and application instructions carefully.

When you discover a vacancy on another website, check whether it also appears on the employer’s career page. This can help confirm the details and show whether the position is still listed. Some employers recruit through an agency or another platform, so follow the verified instructions for that opening.

Keep promising employers on your list even when they have no suitable vacancy today.

Use Broad Job Boards Selectively

Large services such as Indeed and LinkedIn can help you discover employers and compare openings. Use a small number consistently rather than creating accounts everywhere.

Search with related job titles and relevant skills. Adjust filters for location, work arrangement, experience level, and posting date. Read the full announcement: a position labeled “remote” may still require residence in a particular state or occasional travel.

Set focused alerts where available, then refine them when the results are too broad or repetitive. Avoid submitting multiple applications for the same vacancy simply because it appears on several sites.

[CareerOneStop’s job-search resources](#) provide another starting point for finding job banks and planning your search.

Explore Sources Specific to Your Field

Professional associations, trade groups, industry publications, and specialized job boards may carry openings that are easier to overlook on general sites.

Students and recent graduates should check school career centers, internship services, and alumni resources. Experienced workers can also investigate whether their former school offers alumni career assistance.

Before paying for access to a specialized service, inspect what it offers. Consider whether the listings are current, relevant, and available elsewhere without charge.

Look for Government and Public-Institution Jobs

Use [USAJOBS](#) to explore federal employment. Read each announcement's eligibility requirements, qualifications, required documents, and closing date. Not every vacancy is open to every applicant.

USAJOBS also lets you create [job alerts](#) based on selected search criteria.

For state and local opportunities, visit official government employment pages. Check counties, municipalities, public school systems, public universities, and other public institutions separately. Their hiring processes and application systems may differ.

Use Local Employment Assistance

American Job Centers provide free employment assistance, including help with searches and other career needs. Available services vary by location, but may include workshops, computer access, hiring events, and connections with employers.

Use the [American Job Center Finder](#) to locate a nearby center and ask what support is available.

Libraries, community colleges, and community organizations may also host employment events or provide practical assistance. These resources can be especially useful when you need help identifying local employers or navigating online applications.

Add Conversations to Your Search

Let trusted contacts know what kind of work you are seeking. Be specific enough that they can recognize a useful lead.

For example:

"I'm looking for an administrative position involving scheduling, records, or customer support. Do you know organizations I should research?"

Former colleagues, classmates, instructors, and community contacts may suggest employers, explain how hiring works, or introduce you to someone in the field.

Ask for information respectfully, and obtain permission before using someone's name. A referral can help establish a connection, but you should still follow the employer's application process.

Consider Recruiters and Apprenticeships

Employment agencies and recruiters can be useful when they specialize in the work you want. Ask what positions they handle, how they submit candidates, and what to expect next. Continue your own search while working with them.

If you need a route into a new occupation, explore paid training opportunities through [Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov). Review each program's entry requirements, application process, and training arrangements.

Later articles in this series will examine recruiters, public employment services, apprenticeships, and networking in more detail.

Keep a Simple Search Record

A notebook or spreadsheet can prevent missed deadlines and duplicated effort. Record:

- 1 Employer, job title, and announcement link.
- 2 Closing date and application date.
- 3 Résumé or cover-letter version submitted.
- 4 Contact person, response, and next action.

Save a copy of announcements for positions you apply to. Listings may disappear before an interview.

Build a manageable weekly routine: check alerts, research selected employers, prepare relevant applications, contact a few people, and review outstanding follow-ups. Adjust the routine to your circumstances rather than measuring success only by the number of applications sent.

Verify Opportunities Before Proceeding

Check unfamiliar employers and recruiters through independently located contact information. Be cautious about requests to pay for placement, transfer money, or purchase equipment through a supposed employer's designated vendor.

The [Federal Trade Commission's job-scam guidance](#) explains common warning signs and verification steps.

Your search should become more focused as you learn which sources produce suitable openings. Use career research to choose a direction, several complementary sources to find opportunities, and an organized process to follow through.