



## Career of the Week

# Police officer

### What does a police officer do?

Police officers investigate and prevent crime, as well as maintaining law and order. You could be based in a police station, or working as a beat officer on foot, on a bicycle, or in a patrol car. You'll need to respond to a variety of calls and situations so good communication skills are essential.

### What do I need to do to become a police officer?

The requirements to join the police vary between forces. Generally you will need to have lived in the UK for three years and be over the age of 18. You will also have to pass background and security checks. You will also have to pass physical and medical tests.

A number of colleges offer courses in uniformed public services. These are not essential but provide a good preparation for a variety of careers in the police, fire service and armed forces

### Skills you will need:

- Teamwork
- Physical fitness
- Patience
- People management
- Organization
- Communication
- Customer service
- Leadership
- Interpersonal skills

### Essential qualifications

- Be over the age of 18
- UK resident for three years or more
- Pass security and background checks
- Pass medical and fitness tests

### Routes to becoming a police officer: vocational vs academic

From January 2020, new police constable recruits will have three ways of entering policing and learning to carry out their role:

- Degree apprenticeship
- Degree in any subject
- Professional Policing degree

### Salary:

The starting **salary** for **police** constables in **England**, Wales and Northern Ireland is between £20,880 and £24,177, rising to £40,128 at the top of the scale - achievable after about seven years.

