I want to start my career as a....

Firefighter

What will I do?
Firefighters respond to emergency situations, protect people from environmental hazards, and rescue people from all types of accidents.

What are the important facts?

Job Growth
In Silicon Valley there will always be a demand for firefighters, due to constant need for emergency response teams. In fact, this is a highly competitive field.

In California, Firefighters are expected to have 970 job openings from 2012 to 2022. This means there is a 6% job increase—this level of employment increase means there will be plenty of new jobs in the field.

Wage/Salary
Average hourly wage in San Jose is $35.31 with an annual salary of $73,440. In Silicon Valley, the living wage for a single person is $16.00 an hour.

Required Training
Individuals are required to attend 3 months of Fire Academy training before they are able to receive their Fire Badge and join the force. It is highly recommended individuals earn at least an Associate’s Degree in Fire Science Technology, prior to enrolling in the Cal Fire Academy.

There is one route to become a Firefighter
1. Cal Fire Academy

What are typical tasks?
• Rescue victims from burning buildings.
• Rescue victims from car accidents or any emergency situation.
• Administer first aid and CPR to victims.
• Drive and operate fire vehicles.
• Educate communities on fire safety.
• Inspect buildings to ensure they meet fire safety regulations.
• Collaborate with police to respond to accidents and disasters.

What would make this career a great fit for me?
• Able to handle fast-pace and stressful situations.
• Ability to work on a team.
• Willing to work in dangerous situations.
• Have a passion for working with people and saving lives.
• Willing to remain on duty for 24 hours.
• Able to handle physically exhausting situations.

Where can I get the training I need?
• Gavilan College
• Mission College
• Silicon Valley Career Technical Education
• South Bay Regional Public Safety Training Consortium

I want to start my career as a Firefighter

**Step 1**
Learn the skills employers say you need. Begin your education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Technical Education</th>
<th>Community College</th>
<th>CalFire Academy Apprenticeship</th>
<th>Four-Year University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of Completion in Fire Science/First Responder</td>
<td>Associates Degree in Fire Protection Technology</td>
<td>Training for 3 months. In order to become a Permanent Firefighter, it is required to pass the Cal Fire Academy</td>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree in Fire Protection or Fire Science Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silicon Valley Career Technical Education</td>
<td>Gavilan College</td>
<td>3 month CalFire Academy</td>
<td>California State University-Los Angeles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2**
Find a job that fits your level of education and training.

**Career Pathways for Firefighter**

**Entry-Level Positions:**
Seasonal Firefighter 1 Associate Degree in Fire Protection. Individuals must be 18 years of age.
**Employers:**
- Cal Fire
- San Jose Fire Department
- Lost Gatos Fire Department

**Labor Market Information:**
Average hourly wage in San Jose is $20, with an annual salary of $41,600.

**Mid-Level Positions:**
Permanent Firefighter II Certification
AS Degree in Fire Protection, plus 1 year work experience, AND the 3 month Cal Fire Academy.
**Employers:**
- Cal Fire
- San Jose Fire Department
- Santa Clara Fire Department

**Labor Market Information:**
Average hourly wage in San Jose is $35.31, with an annual salary of $73,440.

**Advanced Skills Positions:**
Fire Captain
Pass the Promotional Exam to become at Battalion Chief and individuals need at least 3 years of Permanent Firefighting experience, and it is highly recommend to have a Bachelor’s Degree.
**Employers:**
- Cal Fire
- Los Gatos Fire Department
- Santa Clara Fire Department

**Labor Market Information:**
Average hourly wage in San Jose is $57.92, with an annual salary of $120,460.

In order to advance from Entry Level to Mid-Level, it takes 2-3 years of work experience as a seasonal firefighter, plus passing the CalFire Academy.

These are not the exact career paths individuals have to follow. This is meant to be more of an example and act as a guide.
What are the Skills Employers look for in a Firefighter?

Employers are looking for someone who:

- Has passed the Firefighter Academy.
- Has 1-2 years of Firefighter I experience.
- Has passion for helping people.
- Is well trained and able to stay calm in stressful situations.
- Is able to work 24 hour shifts.
- Has a valid driver license—this is important because sometimes individuals may be responsible for driving the firetruck.
- Understands the anatomy of the human body.
- Can ensure patients or fire victims feel safe and well taken care of when a fire hits. This career takes a certain amount of bravery and commitment to helping victims struck by the disaster of fire.
- Is willing to talk in front of groups of kids regarding fire safety. This can be at school assemblies, where there are large groups of people.

Employers may also refer to me as:

- Public Safety Officer
- Fire Rescue

Moving Forward: Firefighters

Below are a few examples of how you can eventually move up in your career. These career advancements are options for when you are ready to advance from entry-level to mid-advanced level positions.

Example Career Ladder: