



INTRODUCTION

Penetration testing legally identifies weaknesses before attackers can exploit them. It requires technical skill, ethical judgment, methodology, communication, and a clear understanding of legal boundaries.



STRONG JOB OUTLOOK

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics* projects employment for information security analysts to grow

29%

from 2024 to 2034, much faster than the average for all occupations.



~16,000 OPENINGS PER YEAR

Projected average annual openings in this field over the next decade.*



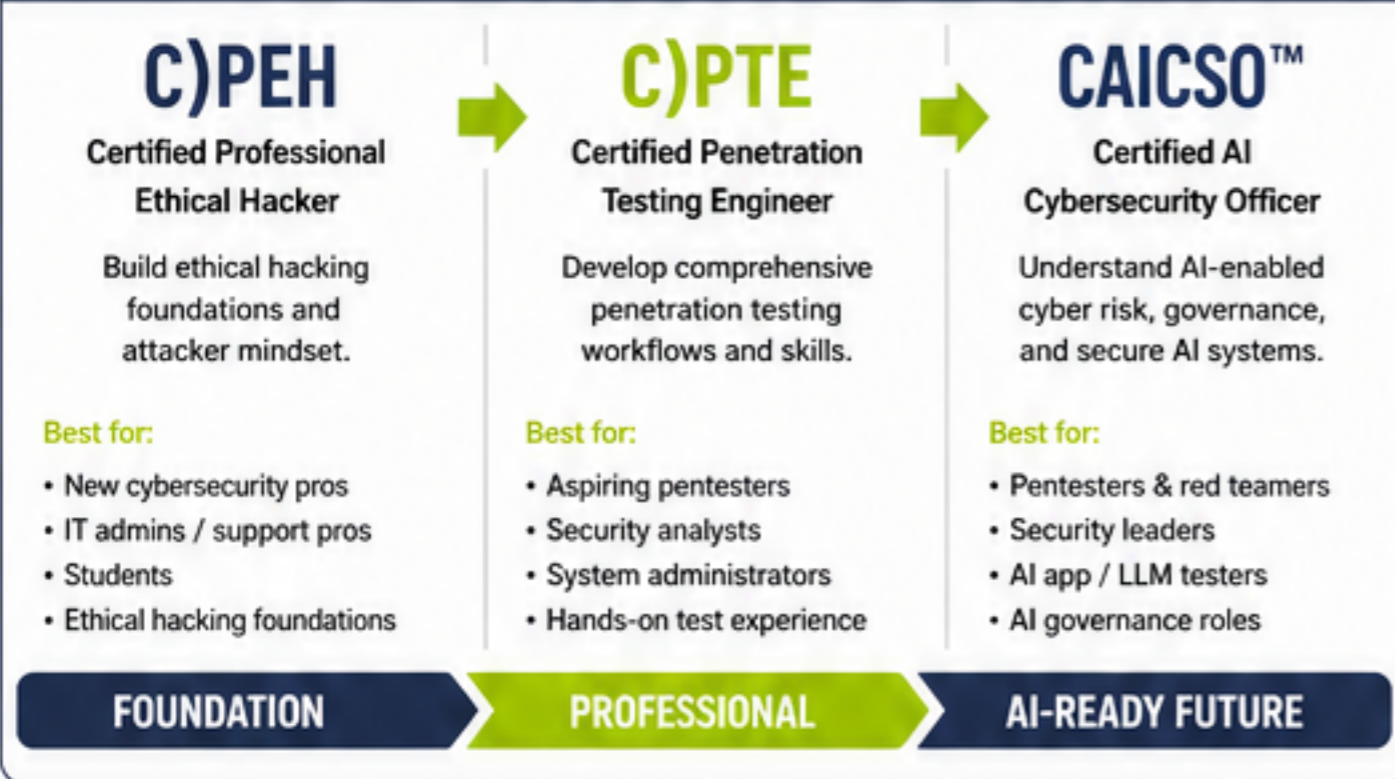
PENTESTER'S MISSION

Think like an attacker. Act ethically. Find real risk. Provide actionable recommendations. Help organizations improve their security posture.

10 STEPS TO BECOME A PENETRATION TESTER



RECOMMENDED CERTIFICATION PATH (MILE2®)



OTHER INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS TO CONSIDER



COMMON ENTRY-LEVEL ROLES

- Security Analyst
- SOC Analyst
- Network Administrator
- System Administrator
- Cloud Support Engineer
- Vulnerability Management Analyst
- Application Security Analyst
- IT Support Specialist (with security responsibilities)
- Cybersecurity Consultant

NICE FRAMEWORK



The NICE Framework® provides a common language for cybersecurity workforce roles, tasks, knowledge, and skills helping employers, educators, and learners describe cybersecurity work more consistently.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

- 6 - 12 MONTHS** For IT professionals with focused study, labs, and certifications to reach junior pentest roles.
- 12 - 24 MONTHS** For beginners starting from zero to build core IT and security skills.
- 24+ MONTHS** For advanced pentesting, red teaming, cloud & AI exploitation, and continuous development.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT PENTESTER?

- Technical Depth
- Ethical Mindset
- Methodical Approach
- Clear Communication
- Business Awareness
- Lifelong Learner

LEGAL & ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Always obtain written authorization
- Respect scope and rules of engagement
- Protect data and sensitive information
- Document responsibly
- Stop when you should stop

IMPORTANT REMINDER

- Unauthorized testing is illegal. Practice only in environments you own or have explicit written permission to assess.

REFERENCES

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- SANS Institute. (2026). SEC560: Enterprise Penetration Testing.
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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CAREERS IN CYBERSECURITY.

