Librarian

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Period 8

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Career Title and Description

LIBRARIAN

* Administer libraries and perform related library services.
* Work in a variety of settings, including public libraries, schools, colleges and universities, museums, corporations, government agencies, law firms, non-profit organizations, and healthcare providers.
* Tasks may include selecting, acquiring, cataloguing, classifying, circulating, and maintaining library materials; and furnishing reference, bibliographical, and readers' advisory services.
* May perform in-depth, strategic research, and synthesize, analyze, edit, and filter information.
* May set up or work with databases and information systems to catalogue and access information.



Interests and Abilities

Interests - Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow. Must be interested in books as well as technology. Also must have an interest in people.

Abilities –

**Reading Comprehension** - Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.

**Active Listening** - Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.

**Active Learning** - Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.

**Learning Strategies** - Selecting and using training/instructional methods and procedures appropriate for the situation when learning or teaching new things.

**Instructing** - Teaching others how to do something.

**Speaking** - Talking to others to convey information effectively.

**Service Orientation** - Actively looking for ways to help people.



Duties & Responsibilities

1. Search standard reference materials, including online sources and the Internet, to answer patrons' reference questions.

**2**. Analyze patrons' requests to determine needed information, and assist in furnishing or locating that information.

**3**. Teach library patrons to search for information using databases.

**4**. Keep records of circulation and materials.

**5**. Supervise budgeting, planning, and personnel activities.

**6**. Check books in and out of the library.

**7**. Explain use of library facilities, resources, equipment, and services, and provide information about library policies.

**8**. Review and evaluate resource material, such as book reviews and catalogs, in order to select and order print, audiovisual, and electronic resources.

**9**. Code, classify, and catalog books, publications, films, audiovisual aids, and other library materials based on subject matter or standard library classification systems.

10. Locate unusual or unique information in response to specific requests.

11. Direct and train library staff in duties such as receiving, shelving, researching, cataloging, and equipment use.



High School Subjects

The knowledge needed for this career include:

**English Language** - Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar. *So English classes are needed*

**Administration and Management** - Knowledge of business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources. *So some business courses may be helpful.*

**Computers and Electronics** - Knowledge of circuit boards, processors, chips, electronic equipment, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming. *So technology courses are a must.*



Education and Training

Entry into a library science graduate program requires a bachelor's degree, but any undergraduate major is acceptable. Many colleges and universities offer library science programs, but employers often prefer graduates of the 49 schools in the United States accredited by the American Library Association. Most programs take 1 year to complete; some take 2. A typical graduate program includes courses in the foundations of library and information science, such as the history of books and printing, intellectual freedom and censorship, and the role of libraries and information in society. Other basic courses cover the selection and processing of materials, the organization of information, research methods and strategies, and user services. Prospective librarians also study online reference systems, Internet search methods, and automated circulation systems. Elective course options include resources for children or young adults; classification, cataloguing, indexing, and abstracting; and library administration. Computer-related course work is an increasingly important part of an MLS degree. Some programs offer interdisciplinary degrees combining technical courses in information science with traditional training in library science.

The MLS degree provides general preparation for library work, but some individuals specialize in a particular area, such as reference, technical services, or children's services. A Ph.D. in library and information science is advantageous for a college teaching position or a top administrative job in a college or university library or large public library system.

Licensure. States generally have certification requirements for librarians in public schools and local libraries, though there are wide variations among States. School librarians in 20 States need a master's degree, either an MLS or a master's in education with a specialization in library media. In addition, over half of all States require that school librarians hold teacher certifications, although not all require teaching experience. Some States may also require librarians to pass a comprehensive assessment. Most States also have developed certification standards for local public libraries, although in some States these guidelines are voluntary.

Other qualifications. In addition to an MLS degree, librarians in a special library, such as a law or corporate library, usually supplement their education with knowledge of the field in which they are specializing, sometimes earning a master's, doctoral, or professional degree in the subject. Areas of specialization include medicine, law, business, engineering, and the natural and social sciences. For example, a librarian working for a law firm may hold both library science and law degrees, while medical librarians should have a strong background in the sciences. In some jobs, knowledge of a foreign language is needed.



Equipment

The traditional concept of a library is being redefined from a place to access paper records or books to one that also houses the most advanced electronic resources, including the Internet, digital libraries, and remote access to a wide range of information sources. Consequently, librarians, often called information professionals, combine traditional duties with tasks involving quickly changing technology. Therefore any form of technology may be found in the library such as: computers, Microfiche/ microfilm readers, Audio visual players and projectors.

 

Work Environment

**Librarian Work Environment:**   
Librarians spend most of their day at a desk or in front of a computer. They do walk a fair amount, shelving books and helping library patrons find information. Approximately 20% of all librarians work part-time. A librarian's job is usually not very hectic. These professionals work in pleasant surroundings. Working hours are reasonable. However, librarians may also be required to perform their job responsibilities during nights and at weekends.



Advancement

Experienced librarians can advance to administrative positions, such as department head, library director, or chief information officer.

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Salary

Salaries of librarians vary according to the individual's qualifications and the type, size, and location of the library. Librarians with primarily administrative duties often have greater earnings. Median annual wages of librarians in May 2008 were $52,530. The middle 50 percent earned between $42,240 and $65,300. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $33,190, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $81,130. Median annual wages in the industries employing the largest numbers of librarians in May 2008 were as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Junior colleges | $55,250 |
| Colleges, universities, and professional schools | 55,180 |
| Elementary and secondary schools | 54,650 |
| Other information services | 48,060 |
| Local government | 47,940 |

The average annual salary for all librarians in the Federal Government in nonsupervisory, supervisory, and managerial positions was $84,796 in March 2009.

About 30 percent librarians were members of a union in 2008 or were covered under a union contract.

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Job Outlook

Job prospects are expected to be favorable. On average, workers in this occupation tend to be older than workers in the rest of the economy. As a result, there may be more workers retiring from this occupation than other occupations. However, relatively large numbers of graduates from MLS programs may cause competition in some areas and for some jobs.

## Projections Data

| Projections data from the National Employment Matrix | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Occupational Title** | **SOC Code** | **Employment, 2008** | **Projected  Employment, 2018** | **Change, 2008-18** | | **Detailed Statistics** | |
| **Number** | **Percent** |
| **Librarians** | 25-4021 | 159,900 | 172,400 | 12,500 | 8 | [[PDF](ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/ep/ind-occ.matrix/occ_pdf/occ_25-4021.pdf)] | [[XLS](ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/ep/ind-occ.matrix/occ_xls/occ_25-4021.xls)] |
| NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on [*Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*](http://www.bls.gov/oco/oco2001.htm#projections_data). | | | | | | | |

Employment of librarians is expected to grow more slowly than the average for all occupations through 2016. Fewer people have been going into library science than in the past. Many librarians will be eligible for retirement within the next ten years. These two factors will lead to an increase in job openings. There will be fewer job openings than in years past as many resources go online and the public will be able to access those materials independently. However, librarians will still be needed to organize these materials, instruct the public in their use and do administrative work.

 

Additional Information

A Day in a Librarian's Life:

On a typical day a librarian might perform some of the following duties:

* analyse users' needs and provide the information they need;
* show users how to efficiently search for information on the Internet and in other online resources;
* select and purchase materials and prepare those materials by classifying them according to subject matter;
* supervise assistants who prepare cards, computer records, or other access tools that direct users to resources;
* collect and organize books, pamphlets, manuscripts, and other materials in a specific field, such as rare books, genealogy, or music;
* coordinate programs such as storytelling for children, and literacy skills and book talks for adults;
* conduct classes;
* publicize services;
* write grants

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Reflection

What did I like best about being a librarian?

What aspect of the career might I Dislike?

What surprised me about being a librarian?