**Beginner's Guide to Starting a Career in Cybersecurity**  
**By Rood J. Murat (@roodmurat)**

If you’re **completely new to cybersecurity** and want to know how to get started, here’s a **complete step-by-step guide**with no fluff. This guide covers the essential skills, courses, projects, and tips to get you on the right path toward a career in cybersecurity.

**1. General Foundational Skills**

Before diving into cybersecurity, you need to build general foundational IT skills.

**Cisco** offers a **free training program** with 8 courses to help you get started in IT. This is perfect for individuals with no technical background or those who need a refresher.

* **Link**: [Cisco Free IT Training](https://bit.ly/4cyed0j)

**2. First Cybersecurity-Focused Course**

Once you’ve built your foundational skills, it’s time to start your **first cybersecurity-focused course**. There are several options, each with its pros and cons.

* **Security+**:  
  The most recognized but also the most expensive. It covers a lot but lacks hands-on practice.  
  **Preparation Material**: [Security+ Prep](https://bit.ly/3xWQurm)
* **Google Cybersecurity Certificate**:  
  Affordable, with hands-on labs in Linux, MySQL, and Python. Prepares you for the Security+ exam with a 30% discount.  
  **Link**: [Google Cybersecurity Certificate](https://bit.ly/4a3WU5a)
* **Microsoft Cybersecurity Analyst**:  
  Similar to Google’s course and affordable, this program prepares you for SC-900 certification.  
  **Link**: [Microsoft Cybersecurity Analyst](https://bit.ly/4bA599F)
* **ISC2**:  
  Completely free and a good general introduction to cybersecurity.  
  **Link**: [ISC2 Intro to Cybersecurity](https://bit.ly/3xRDVxE)

**Recommendation**: Combine the **Security+** with the **Google Cybersecurity Certificate** for well-rounded knowledge.

**3. Choosing Your Path in Cybersecurity**

After completing the initial courses, you’ll start to get a better idea of which specific area of cybersecurity interests you, such as:

* Cloud Security
* Penetration Testing (Pentesting)
* Cybersecurity Analyst roles

With a clearer path in mind, you can start gathering more specialized materials and **work on your resume**.

**4. Projects for Your Cybersecurity Portfolio**

Building a strong portfolio is crucial in cybersecurity. Here are some projects you can complete to showcase your skills:

* **Build a Network**: [Network Project](https://bit.ly/3S0hSM3)
* **Build a SIEM**: [SIEM Project](https://bit.ly/3y0mr21)
* **Build a Honeypot**: [Honeypot Project](https://bit.ly/4eSy8bL)
* **Build a Malware Analysis Lab**: [Malware Lab Project](https://bit.ly/3xFzQwz)
* **Create a CTF (Capture The Flag) Challenge**: [CTF Challenge](https://bit.ly/3XVlanz)

**5. SOC Level 1 on TryHackMe**

After completing the portfolio projects, the next course will help you develop **practical skills** as a **cybersecurity analyst**.

You’ll learn how to analyze security incidents and respond to them.

* **Link**: [SOC Level 1 - TryHackMe](https://bit.ly/4bvf8NC)

**6. Complete a Virtual Internship**

Enhance your experience by completing a **virtual internship** with some of the world’s biggest companies. These internships will give you real-world insight into cybersecurity and can boost your CV.

* **Mastercard**: [Mastercard Internship](https://bit.ly/4cOeyLU)
* **JPMorgan Chase & Co.**: [JPMorgan Internship](https://bit.ly/4cTGaPW)
* **Commonwealth Bank**: [Commonwealth Bank Internship](https://bit.ly/4cQxDx9)
* **AIG**: [AIG Internship](https://bit.ly/4cvWNBb)

**7. Advanced Cybersecurity Courses**

With your portfolio and CV in good shape, it's time to advance your skills with more specialized courses. Choose one or two from the following:

* **TryHackMe SOC Level 2**: [SOC Level 2](https://bit.ly/3Wg2ayI)
* **Blue Team Level 1**: [Blue Team Level 1](https://bit.ly/464jN8g)
* **Let’s Defend SOC Analyst Path**: [Let’s Defend](https://bit.ly/3Wcop8X)
* **Cyber Defenders**: [Cyber Defenders](https://bit.ly/3LBk49n)

**8. Applying for Jobs**

As you go through each stage—completing certifications and updating your CV—make sure to **apply for jobs**continuously.

* Create a **LinkedIn profile**.
* Look for jobs in your area.
* Apply to as many opportunities as possible.

**9. Final Thoughts**

You've reached the end of this guide! If you found it useful:

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