OSCP CERTIFICATION ROADMAP

January 6 - August 1, 2026

Total Hours	Spring Commitment	Summer Commitment	Target Score
800 OSCP + 15 Python	15-25 hrs/week	45-60 hrs/week	70+ points

Spring 2026 Courses: COMP 5830 (Online) • COMP 5700 (Online) • COMP 4200 (MWF 2:00 PM) • COMP 5120 (MWF 12:00 PM) • MATH 2660 (TTh 12:30 PM)

Daily Schedule:

Day	Schedule
Mon/Wed/Fri	5 AM gym • 7-9 AM OSCP • 9-12 prep • 12:50-3:50 classes • 6-8 PM OSCP
Tuesday	5 AM gym • 7-9 AM OSCP • 9-12 study • 12:50-2 PM MATH • 2-3 PM online • 3-5 PM OSCP
Thursday	7-9 AM OSCP • 9-1 PM MATH • 1-4 PM online • 4-6 PM OSCP
Saturday	8 AM-1 PM OSCP intensive (5 hrs) • 2-5 PM labs
Sunday	Planning & review • 1-3 PM study • 3-5:30 PM OSCP

PRE-PHASE PREPARATION (Dec 15 - Jan 5)

BEFORE YOU START: Learn Python Basics (15 hours)

Timeline	Activity	Hours	Focus
Dec 15-21	Python fundamentals course	5 hrs	Variables, control flow, functions, modules
Dec 22-28	Follow along with tutorials	5 hrs	Network sockets, binary operations, file I/O
Dec 29-Jan 5	Write 2-3 simple scripts	5 hrs	Practice concepts, build confidence

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES (Choose ONE):

Resource	Type	Time	Cost	Best For
Violent Python	Book	10-15 hrs	$25-35	Exploitation-focused
HackTheBox Python	Video	8-12 hrs	Free	Interactive, hands-on
TryHackMe Python	Interactive	6-8 hrs	Free	Gamified learning
NetworkChuck Python	YouTube	10-12 hrs	Free	Beginner-friendly
Python.org Sockets	Reference	5-8 hrs	Free	Technical deep dive

WHAT TO LEARN (In Order):

1. **Variables & Data Types** — strings, integers, lists, dictionaries
2. **Control Flow** — if/else, loops (for/while), functions
3. **Modules & Imports** — using libraries, socket module
4. **File I/O** — reading/writing files, parsing data
5. **Network Sockets** — connecting to services, sending/receiving data
6. **Binary Operations** — struct.pack(), binary payloads (buffer overflow foundation)
7. **String Manipulation** — encoding, decoding, hex operations

Goal by Jan 6: Understand Python basics + confident writing simple scripts. You'll master exploitation-specific Python during Phase 1-2.

7-PHASE TIMELINE

Phase	Dates	Hours	Focus
1: Foundation	Jan 6 - Feb 2	80 hrs	Linux, nmap, web basics, 5-8 HTB Easy
2: PWK Content	Feb 3 - Mar 2	80 hrs	PWK mod 1-5, buffer overflow, privesc, 6-10 HTB Medium
3: Labs 1-50	Mar 3 - Apr 6	110 hrs	Exploit 40-50 PWK machines, custom exploits
4: Labs 50-100+	Apr 7 - May 4	100 hrs	Advanced labs, 70-80 total machines
SPRING TOTAL	**Jan 6 - May 4**	**370 hrs**	**Foundation + lab work with coursework**
5: Lab Finishing	May 5 - Jun 1	170 hrs	Complete 90+ machines (43 hrs/week)
6: Summer Sprint	Jun 2 - Jul 6	260 hrs	Proving Grounds, AD, mock exams (52 hrs/week)
7: Final + Exam	Jul 7 - Aug 1	200 hrs	Final review, official exam (48 hrs/week)
SUMMER TOTAL	**May 5 - Aug 1**	**630 hrs**	**Full-time intensive prep**

■■ **May 1:** Finals week - light OSCP workload, focus on exams

DETAILED FOCUS BY PHASE

PHASE 1: FOUNDATION (60 hrs)	
Topics	Linux CLI, bash scripting, nmap, TCP/IP, OWASP Top 10, SQLi, XSS, command injection
Labs	3+ TryHackMe rooms, 5-8 HackTheBox Easy machines
Techniques	Enumeration, basic web attacks, Linux fundamentals
Deliverables	Linux mastery, enumeration methodology, web attack notes

PHASE 2: PWK CONTENT (60 hrs)	
Topics	PWK modules 1-5, buffer overflow exploitation, local privilege escalation, credential harvesting
Labs	6-10 HackTheBox Medium machines, PWK course videos
Techniques	Custom buffer overflow exploits, privesc techniques, advanced attacks
Deliverables	PWK mod 1-5 complete, custom exploits, detailed writeups

PHASE 3: LABS 1-50 (90 hrs)	
Focus	Exploit 40-50 PWK machines with detailed writeups • Custom exploit development
Challenge	Post-exploitation, lateral movement basics, complex scenarios
■ MOCK #1	Saturday, April 5, 2026 (7 AM - 7 AM Sunday) • After 40-50 PWK machines

PHASE 4: LABS 50-100+ (80 hrs)	
Focus	Advanced lab machines • PWK modules 8-9 • Advanced privesc & pivoting
Target	70-80 total machines by May 4 • Master complex exploitation scenarios
■ MOCK #2	Saturday, April 26, 2026 (7 AM - 7 AM Sunday) • After 70-80 PWK machines

SUMMER PHASES (630 HOURS)

PHASE 5: LAB FINISHING (160 hrs, 40 hrs/week)	
When	May 5 - June 1 (post-finals intensive)
Goal	Complete 90+ PWK machines • Master all techniques • Polish all writeups
Focus	Lab completion, technique optimization, deep mastery

PHASE 6: SUMMER INTENSIVE (250 hrs, 50 hrs/week)	
When	June 2 - July 6
Platforms	Proving Grounds Hard/Insane machines • Active Directory deep dive • Mock exams
Focus	Speed, efficiency, AD mastery, exam conditions practice
■ MOCK #3	Saturday, June 27, 2026 (7 AM - 7 AM Sunday) • Before final push

PHASE 7: FINAL + EXAM (240 hrs, 60 hrs/week)	
When	July 7 - August 1
Activities	Final technique review • Full mock exam • Official OSCP exam
Target	70+ points for OSCP certification

Critical Techniques to Master:

Nmap enumeration • SQL injection • Buffer overflow • Privilege escalation • Lateral movement • Active Directory exploitation • Custom exploit development • Post-exploitation & persistence

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Key Factor	Why It Matters
7-9 AM Sacred Block	This is your OSCP foundation time every day (12 hrs/week). Protect it absolutely.
Saturday 8 AM-1 PM	Your largest continuous focus time (5 hours). Use for hardest machines.
Gym 5x/Week	Physical fitness drives mental clarity and breakthrough moments. Non-negotiable.
Sleep 8+ Hours	Cognitive performance collapses without sleep. This is your #1 optimization.
Sunday Consolidation	Process what you learned, document writeups, plan next week. Prevents burnout.
Detailed Writeups	Document every machine. Forces deep understanding and creates knowledge base.
Weekly Progress Tracking	Log machines pwned, techniques learned, hours completed. Celebrate wins.
Course Flexibility	COMP 5830/5700 are flexible. Schedule around fixed OSCP blocks.

START CHECKLIST:

- ■ Print this roadmap and pin it visible (desk, wall)
- ■ Set phone alarm: 5 AM gym (daily)
- ■ Set phone alarm: 7 AM OSCP study (daily)
- ■ Block calendar: 7-9 AM OSCP (recurring, every day)
- ■ Block calendar: Saturday 8 AM-1 PM (recurring, every Saturday)
- ■ Install HackTheBox VIP ($14/mo)
- ■ Install TryHackMe Premium ($10/mo)
- ■ Set up Kali Linux VM and Burp Suite
- ■ Create writeup repository (GitHub/GitLab)
- ■ **March 1:** Enroll in PEN-200 ($1,649)
- ■ **April 5 (Saturday):** 24-HR MOCK EXAM #1 (7 AM - 7 AM Sunday)
- ■ **April 26 (Saturday):** 24-HR MOCK EXAM #2 (7 AM - 7 AM Sunday)
- ■ **June 27 (Saturday):** 24-HR MOCK EXAM #3 (7 AM - 7 AM Sunday)
- ■ **July 20-Aug 1:** Official OSCP exam

YOU WILL SUCCEED

This roadmap is ambitious but completely achievable. You're committing to 800 OSCP hours (815 total with Python prep) over 6 months.

Spring Strategy (Jan-May): Build a solid foundation while balancing 15-credit coursework. Your 15-25 OSCP hours/week fits perfectly around classes. This isn't sacrificing school—it's smart time management.

Summer Strategy (May-Aug): No classes. No competing deadlines. 45-60 OSCP hours/week. This is when you master every difficult technique and take the exam with maximum preparation.

The only variable is consistent daily execution. Wake up 5 AM. Gym. 7-9 AM OSCP every single day. Protect Saturday morning. Sleep 8+ hours. Follow the schedule. When you do, every milestone will be on time.

By August 1, 2026, you will be OSCP-certified. This opens doors to penetration testing roles, significantly increases your market value, and validates your cybersecurity expertise professionally.

Print this. Pin it. Execute it.

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