

Desktop / IT Support Technician – What the Job Really Looks Like

1. Core Mission

You are the **first line of defence** when an employee's technology misbehaves. Your job is to get the user productive again—whether that means fixing the issue yourself, walking them through a workaround, or escalating to another team. In most organisations you'll be measured on *speed, accuracy and customer-satisfaction feedback (CSAT)*.

2. Day-to-Day Responsibilities

Typical Task	What it Means in Practice
Incident intake & triage	Pick up tickets, calls or chat requests; gather basic info; assign a priority.
Hardware break-fix	Replace a laptop keyboard, swap an SSD, reseal RAM, order parts.
Software/OS troubleshooting	Resolve Windows or macOS boot errors; reinstall apps; clear profile or registry problems.
User management	Create, disable or unlock accounts in Active Directory / Azure AD or Google Workspace.
Network basics	Diagnose DHCP/DNS issues, reset Wi-Fi profiles or VPN clients.
Imaging & deployment	Use SCCM/Intune/Autopilot (Windows) or JAMF (Mac) to build new devices.
Documentation & closure	Record root cause, steps taken, and preventive advice in the ticket.

These duties mirror almost every current Canadian job post for Desktop Support Specialists and IT Support Technicians. ([Indeed Canada](#), [Indeed Canada](#), [Himalayas](#))

3. Tools You Touch Every Week

- **Ticketing / ITSM:** ServiceNow, Jira Service Management, Freshservice
- **Remote assistance:** Microsoft Quick Assist, TeamViewer, BeyondTrust
- **Endpoint suites:** Microsoft Intune / SCCM, JAMF, PDQ Deploy

- **Core admin consoles:** Active Directory Users & Computers, Azure AD, Exchange Admin, Print Management
- **Diagnostic utilities:** Event Viewer, Device Manager, ipconfig/ping/tracert, PSWindowsUpdate

4. Working Environment & Schedule

- **Industries:** Everywhere—banks, colleges, MSPs, municipal government, manufacturing plants. ([Job Bank](#))
- **Shifts:** 8 × 5 business hours in smaller firms; 24 × 7 coverage rosters in banks and MSPs.
- **Ticket volume:** 8–35 tickets per tech per day depending on complexity.
- **On-site vs. hybrid:** Post-pandemic, roughly half of GTA postings are 2–3 days on-site, the rest remote or full on-site for hardware-heavy roles.

5. Skills & Credentials Employers List First

Competency	Why It Matters
CompTIA A+	Industry “baseline” proving hardware, OS and network basics.
Customer-service soft skills	You spend most of the day translating tech jargon for non-tech users.
Windows 10/11 & macOS	>80 % of corporate endpoints in Canada run one of these.
Basic networking (DHCP/DNS/VPN)	Many “slow internet” tickets trace back to these layers.
Ticketing literacy / ITIL foundations	Shows you can follow queue policies and escalation paths.

6. Performance Metrics (How You’re Judged)

- **First-contact resolution (FCR) rate** – % of tickets solved without escalation.
- **Mean time to resolution (MTTR)** – average minutes/hours from open to close.
- **SLA compliance** – how often you beat the promised fix window for each priority.

- **Customer-satisfaction (CSAT) score** – 1–5 rating users give after ticket closed.

7. Pay & Market Demand (Ontario, May 2025)

Level	Hourly	Annual	Sources
Entry / Junior Tech	\$23–\$27	\$48 k–\$56 k	Indeed salary tracker (Indeed Canada)
Average across Canada	n/a	\$71 k (all levels)	Talent.com (Talent.com)
Active postings (Ontario)	—	90 + jobs today	Indeed job count (Indeed Canada)

8. Career Progression

1. **Tier 2 / Deskside Support** – owns complex hardware builds, exec support.
2. **NOC Technician** – monitors networks, routers, connectivity; adds Network+ / CCNA.
3. **Endpoint or M365 Administrator** – focuses on Intune, Autopilot, share drives.
4. **SOC Tier 1 (security)** – pivots into log monitoring after adding Security+ or SC-200.
5. **Systems Administrator / Engineer** – designs and automates infrastructure.

9. What Makes Someone Excel

- **Relentless documentation:** every solved ticket becomes a knowledge-base article.
- **Automation mindset:** simple PowerShell/Bash scripts to reset printers, map drives, harvest logs.
- **Empathy under pressure:** staying calm with an executive’s laptop crash during a board call.
- **Active networking:** knowing who in networking, apps or security can unblock a tricky issue—relationships trim MTTR.

In short: a Desktop / IT Support Technician is part troubleshooter, part customer-service specialist, and part process enforcer. You keep business users productive while learning the real-world guts of operating systems, networks and corporate tooling—knowledge that becomes the launchpad to higher-tier infrastructure or security roles within 12–24 months.

Roadmap

12-Month “Desk-to-Pay-cheque” Roadmap

(starting June 2025, ending May 2026)

Month	What to do	Proof / Deliverable	Resources
1 (Jun)	Begin CompTIA A+ study (30 min / day). Spin up one Windows 11 & one Ubuntu VM in VirtualBox; take daily snapshots so you can “break & fix.”	Quiz scores $\geq 80\%$ on Professor Messer chapter tests.	Professor Messer free playlist
2 (Jul)	Continue A+. Open a free ServiceNow Personal Developer Instance (PDI) and a Jira Service Management Free site (3-agent limit). Log five mock tickets on your own VMs.	Screenshot album of ticket lifecycle.	ServiceNow PDI (ServiceNow Developers) ; Jira free tier (Atlassian)
3 (Aug)	Sit both A+ exams (Core 1 & 2). Buy a discount voucher to save \approx USD 40.	A+ certificate number on LinkedIn.	GetCertified4Less vouchers (Get Certified 4 Less)
4 (Sep)	Start volunteer tech-desk shift (Sat mornings) at Mississauga Library or similar NFP; aim for 4 tickets/shift.	Reference letter from volunteer coordinator.	Mississauga Library volunteer page (City of Mississauga)
5 (Oct)	Apply for evening/weekend Junior IT Support roles at GTA MSPs; keep alert on Indeed. Post one weekly LinkedIn “lab recap” to build digital footprint.	First part-time pay-stub or offer email.	--
6 (Nov)	Take Cisco “Networking Basics” (free) and complete Packet Tracer labs. Create “Ticket	Diary reaches 50 real tickets.	Cisco Networking Basics course (Cisco Networking Academy)

Month	What to do	Proof / Deliverable	Resources
	Diary” in Notion; tag root cause for every issue.		
7 (Dec)	Learn PowerShell fundamentals (Microsoft Learn). Write a script that gathers system logs & uploads to ticket. Publish on GitHub + LinkedIn.	GitHub repo link in résumé.	--
8 (Jan 2026)	Begin Microsoft MD-102 study (Endpoint Admin). Do two Intune labs per week in free Microsoft 365 dev tenant.	First Intune lab blog-post.	MD-102 cert guide (Microsoft Learn)
9 (Feb)	Launch full-time job sprint: 20 tailored applications/week. Show employers the federal TECHNATION Career Ready wage subsidy (50 – 70 % pay rebate).	4–6 interviews/week.	TECHNATION Career Ready (TECHNATION)
10 (Mar)	Accept full-time IT Support / Desktop Tech offer (target ≥ CAD 55 k). Negotiate using hourly median \$23 – 31 figure for Ontario.	Signed offer letter.	Salary data (ZipRecruiter)
11 (Apr)	Onboard & exceed KPIs: use 90-second rule; apply ticket templates; keep diary alive. Identify one repetitive task to automate with PowerShell.	Automation script saves 1 hr/week → cite in next review.	--
12 (May)	Sit MD-102 exam (or schedule for June). Meet with manager about path to Tier-2/NOC. Update résumé with 200+ resolved tickets & automation win.	MD-102 certificate, new growth plan.	--

Networking Checklist (do these every quarter)

Action	Why	How to maximise
Attend ServiceNow Toronto Dev Meetup	Recruiters & hiring managers mingle there.	Volunteer to demo your ticket workflow for 5 min.
Hit a Tech in Motion Toronto mixer	Casual environment = easy rapport.	Show up early and help scan badges—organisers introduce you.
Join LinkedIn “Toronto IT Support Professionals”	Daily job leads + peer advice.	Post a short “ticket of the day” lesson weekly.
Follow up (3-for-1 rule)	Converts handshakes to relationships.	Send three personalised LinkedIn notes the morning after each event.

Everyday Tips & Tricks

- **90-second rule:** if a fix isn’t found in 90 s, document & escalate—keeps ticket times green.
 - **Shortcut drills:** practise Win + X → PowerShell and Win + Ctrl + Shift + B twice daily until muscle-memory.
 - **Ticket templates:** pre-write closure comments for printer, VPN, and account-lockout calls; paste-modify-send.
 - **Weekly retro:** tag each ticket in diary as *repeatable* or *unique*—feed repeatables into future automation scripts.
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What Success Looks Like after 12 Months

- **Certs:** CompTIA A+ + (optionally) MD-102 in hand.
- **Experience:** ≥ 200 real tickets, 50 % of them closed solo.
- **Portfolio:** GitHub repo + Loom demo + public ticket diary excerpts.
- **Network:** 300 relevant LinkedIn connections; at least one mentor who can vouch for you.

- **Compensation: full-time role at CAD 55 k–65 k with clear runway to Tier-2 or NOC inside year 2.**

Stick to the calendar, log evidence of everything you learn, and treat networking as helping others rather than collecting business cards. Do that, and you should be cashing your first full-time IT-Support pay-cheque before next summer. Good luck—reach out if you need help on any milestone!