

How Do You Become a

Salesforce Developer?



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1. How Do You Become a Salesforce Developer?

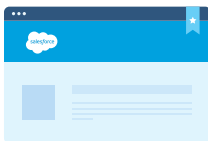
Did you know that being a Salesforce developer is the highest paid tech specialization and that Salesforce developers can command a 20% premium according to a 2016 survey by [Stack Overflow](http://stackoverflow.com/research/developer-survey-2016#technology-top-paying-tech)?¹

Salesforce is growing rapidly worldwide, and so is the need for developers that can build custom Salesforce applications, extend Salesforce, and customize the experience. This strong demand for Salesforce skills results in strong opportunities for Salesforce developers around the globe.

So what's the best way to become a Salesforce developer? The answer depends on how much experience you bring with you and exactly what kind of developer you want to be. But wherever you start, and wherever you're going, this guide will help lay out a path for you to follow! As you prepare for your journey, let's take a quick look at the first steps every Salesforce developer should take:



Get Your Free Developer Edition – The first thing you need to do is sign up for a free [Developer Edition](#), a fully-featured copy with everything you need to get started developing Salesforce apps. There are limits on user licenses and data, but you can use the Developer Edition to learn, build, and share everything you can imagine on the platform.



Bookmark the Salesforce Developers Website – This website is the best place to discover events and webinars, find developer documentation, read blog posts and articles, and find other important resources on a daily basis.



Learn with Trailhead – This fun, hands-on training program will get you started with Salesforce and let you advance at your own pace, earning badges as you go.

2. What Kind of Developer Will You Be?

Salesforce pioneered a new technology model with its cloud platform. This vision has fueled Salesforce's incredible growth, making it the global leader in Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and defined the era of enterprise cloud computing.

It has also fueled the growth of an incredible ecosystem of more than 2.8 million developers and created an incredible opportunity for you and your career. There are two broad categories in this ecosystem: in-house developers and Independent Software Vendors (ISVs).



Build In-house Apps and Customize Salesforce

When customers start using Salesforce applications, they immediately gain access to a huge amount of pre-built functionality. Some customers have unique business requirements that warrant changes to the out-of-the-box experience. In-house developers take the standard Salesforce features and customize them to fit unique business requirements, sometimes building entirely new apps with App Cloud. In-house developers often work directly for a Salesforce customer or for a System Integrator, a company that works on projects for many Salesforce customers. Sometimes an experienced developer might decide to break out on their own and do freelance work on projects for customers.



Build Apps for Other Developers and Customers

ISVs create software for the world to use. Developers at these companies have a common entrepreneurial spirit, but may have different goals. They may want to distribute an app for free to help the Salesforce ecosystem, monetize their app to build a lifestyle business, or dominate a market and build a large enterprise. In all of these instances, the ISV developer will have the opportunity to list on the Salesforce AppExchange. If they plan to monetize their app, the Salesforce Partner Program for ISV Partners will help them to build, market, sell, and grow.

3. Learn the Basics

Whether you're an experienced programmer or brand new to development, the best way to start building apps with Salesforce is to learn what you can do with our point-and-click, declarative development capabilities.

Developing with point-and-click capabilities whenever possible is not only faster, but much easier to maintain, even for experienced developers! There are several ways you can learn the basics including: accessing online training, exploring self-guided resources, following instructor-led training, and interacting with our community of over 2.8 million developers.

3.1 Self-Guided Training

Salesforce's awesome documentation team has put together award-winning books, tutorials, and online help information to get you started on your journey. You can also earn badges with Trailhead to show off your achievements.



Learn with Trailhead – Trailhead is the fun way to learn Salesforce and guides you through everything from beginner to advanced topics. Earn points and badges as you go and share your achievements on LinkedIn.

- [The Beginner Developer's Trail](#) – This gets you free access to two days of self-paced material that will walk you through everything you need to start building apps on Salesforce in 12 fun bite-sized modules.
- [Build a Suggestion Box App](#) – In this Trailhead project you'll learn how to build a simple suggestion management app – no coding is required. Along the way, you'll learn how to customize the data model, modify the user experience, add business logic, create reports, and run the app on a mobile device.

Salesforce Developer Documentation – Check out the developer documentation on developer.salesforce.com to find developer guides, workbooks, Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) reference materials, and more. This is a resource that all Salesforce developers should bookmark.

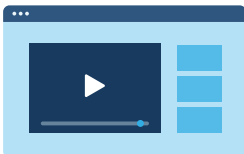
3.2 Instructor-Led Training

Salesforce University teaches many excellent classes for both coders and non-coders. This option is ideal when time can be taken away from work for a concentrated learning experience as classes are typically 4-5 days long. Some of the classes you might consider include:



- **DEV-401** – Foundational Elements of the Platform and How to Build Apps
 - **DEV-450** – Coding with Apex and Visualforce
 - **DEV-502** – Survey of Integration Topics
 - **DEV-601** – Programming Lightning Components
 - **ADM-201** – Learn How CRM Features are Configured
- Learn more at salesforce.com/training.

3.3 Third-Party Training



Pluralsight – For a small monthly fee, [Pluralsight](https://pluralsight.com) offers more than a dozen courses in Salesforce development, catering primarily to intermediate developers. However, their excellent introductory course, [Force.com Platform - The Big Picture](https://pluralsight.com/courses/salesforce-platform-the-big-picture) is a great starting point for everyone.



Udacity – [Udacity.com](https://udacity.com) has a free course, called [Intro to Point & Click App Development](https://udacity.com/course/intro-to-point-and-click-app-development), that teaches you how to create a fun app for web browsers and mobile devices. If you've never developed on Salesforce before, this is a great place to start.

4. Join the Community

One of the best resources for new developers is the supportive and thriving community of more than 2.8 million Salesforce developers. You'll find people just like you facing similar problems, as well as experienced developers who have the answers you seek.

Here are some of the best ways you can join the community:

Official Salesforce Developer Forums – One of your most important resources are the [Salesforce Developers discussion forums](#). Don't be surprised when a Salesforce employee answers one of your questions. It's not uncommon for project managers, developers, and other R&D staff to contribute!

Local Salesforce Developer Groups – For person-to-person interaction, join a [local developer group](#). There are more than 160 developer groups around the world and more are springing up all the time.

Salesforce Success Community – Another great resource for all Salesforce users is the [Salesforce Success Community](#). Engage with and get answers from a passionate community of customers, partners and Salesforce experts. Find and follow interesting people, join discussion groups and share files publicly or privately.

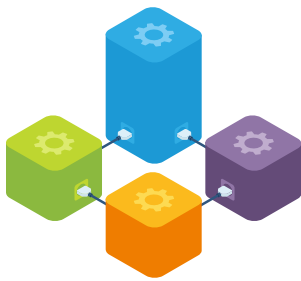
Salesforce StackExchange – If you have questions and are looking for help, head over to the [Salesforce StackExchange](#) and get expert guidance from an active developer community featuring some of the most prominent developers from across the globe.

In-Person Events – Salesforce developers don't just sit behind their computers all day rolling out code and apps – they run dozens of conferences, workshops and events every month, all around the world. Keep an eye out for [Salesforce Developer events](#) in a city near you, and don't forget to book your Dreamforce ticket early!

#AskForce on Twitter – Using the [#AskForce](#) hashtag immediately connects you to hundreds of Salesforce administrators and developers. The answer to your 140-character question is sometimes only a few seconds away!

5. Specialize

Most people specialize in a particular area of development. While there are many areas of specialization, the following roles typify the kinds of things Salesforce developers do, and can get you started down your own learning path.



5.1 Integration Developer

Established businesses generally have a variety of apps deployed across their organization when they begin using Salesforce – these may be legacy apps that might get migrated to Salesforce, or apps that are here to stay. Whatever the case, integrating Salesforce with other systems is a common scenario. This requires that data is sent and often synchronized between systems regularly. Integration developers need to know APIs including REST and SOAP. This developer knows how to load and export data, and can query and search for records. The [Integration landing page](#) has a learning path and additional resources for you to explore.

5.2 Web and UI Developer



Salesforce includes standard user interfaces for web and mobile which are easily customizable, but you can also create custom user interfaces using Lightning and Visualforce. This developer knows HTML and CSS. In addition, Apex and JavaScript are important skills for building more advanced user interfaces, such as for applications built with Lightning Components.

The [Websites](#) and [User Interface](#) landing pages have learning paths and additional resources for you to explore. Also check out the [Lightning Developer Center](#) for a wealth of resources related to customizing the Lightning Experience UI and building Lightning Components.



5.3 Database and Logic

Behind everything is data, and in front of that are the rules, validation, and automated processes that make your business. Database developers need to know how to create schemas, data validation, formulas, business rules, and processes.

The [Database](#) and [App Logic](#) landing pages have learning paths and additional resources for you to explore.

5.4 Mobile Development

With Salesforce, you can deploy new applications to your users via the [Salesforce1 Mobile App](#) or our [Mobile SDK](#).



- With Salesforce1, anything you create or customize in Force.com is instantly available on your users' Android or iOS devices.
- Developers can also use the Mobile SDK to build custom mobile apps with their favorite frameworks while leveraging a rich set of libraries for user identity, access management, offline storage, data synchronization, and more.

[The Mobile Developer Center](#) on the [Salesforce Developers site](#) will help you find all the resources you need for building mobile apps with Salesforce.

6. Showcase Your Skills and Help Others

Reinvent your resume with skill-based credentials, earn Superbadges, get certified, participate in new challenges, develop a killer app, and get involved in the community.

Reinvent your resume with skill-based credentials on Trailhead by earning [Superbadges](#) such as Apex Specialist, Security Specialist and more.

Getting certified is another way to show employers that you've got the right skills. For more information on the certification process and exam, see [Force.com Developer Certification](#).

Hacks and Challenges – Make sure to check your email for our newsletter and visit the [Salesforce Developers home page](#) frequently, as we often post new challenges, hackathons, and other opportunities to highlight your skills.

Develop a Killer App – If you've got an idea for a great business app, become a [Salesforce Partner](#) and reap the rewards. Develop your app and list it on Salesforce's marketplace, [AppExchange](#). For more information, see the [App Distribution](#) landing page, which has a learning path and additional resources for you to explore.

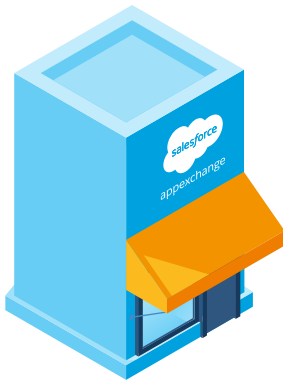
Get Involved in the Community – Blogging, helping on forums, and speaking at events will quickly establish your reputation as an expert in the field.



7. Bring Your Idea to Market

You've built your first Salesforce app or Lightning Component and it's awesome. The feedback you're getting from your friends, family, and the Salesforce community is extremely positive – it's what they've always wanted!

You are now asking yourself, “How do I get this to the masses?” Whether you want to share what you've built for free or make money and grow a business, the best way to bring your idea to the Salesforce ecosystem is by listing it on [AppExchange](#).



What is AppExchange? AppExchange is the world's leading business app marketplace and the easiest way to reach Salesforce customers. AppExchange apps and components are customized for Salesforce and extend into every department and every industry under the sun. It's an ecosystem of apps, components, and consultants, with millions of installs and thousands of customer reviews, that helps customers find the best matches for their businesses. AppExchange gives you a direct channel to Salesforce's customers, and with over 3 million app installs since its inception in 2006, it is the first place customers go to solve their business problems.



How do I get on AppExchange? If you want to list on AppExchange, your first step should be going to Trailhead to learn more about [ISV Basics](#). This module will teach you how to join the Partner Community, apply to become an SV partner, and stay up-to-date on the latest program news and best practices.

8. Stay Updated

Salesforce unrolls major releases, with dozens of new features, a few times each year. The typical Salesforce seasonal release schedule is spring, summer and winter.

Here are a few ways to stay tuned to all of these updates:



Check out our [Seasonal Release page](#) for the highlights of the latest release, including release notes, on-demand release readiness webinars and more



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[Force.com Developer MVPs](#)

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9. Conclusion

Becoming a Salesforce developer is a journey worth taking. Salesforce developers are in demand, with opportunities and pay at the top of the industry's pay scale. Become a Salesforce developer and join this passionate and thriving community!



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