

# COMPUTER OPETARTOR

## Overview

---

A **computer operator** is a role in [IT](#) which oversees the running of computer systems, ensuring that the machines, and computers are running properly.<sup>[1]</sup> The job of a computer operator as defined by the [United States Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) is to "monitor and control ... and respond to ... enter commands ... set controls on computer and peripheral devices. This Excludes Data Entry."

## Job role description

---

The computer operator normally works in a [server room](#) or a [data center](#), but can also work [remotely](#) so that they can operate systems across multiple sites. Most of their duties are taught on the job, as their job description will vary according to the systems they help to manage.

Responsibilities of a computer operator may include:

- Monitor and control electronic computer and peripheral electronic data processing equipment to process business, scientific, engineering, and other data according to operating instructions.
- Monitor and respond to operating and error messages.
- May enter commands at a computer terminal and set controls on computer and peripheral devices.
- Excludes "[Computer Occupations](#)" (15-1100) and "[Data Entry Keyers](#)" (43-9021).

The role also includes maintaining records and logging events, listing each backup that is run, each machine malfunction and program abnormal termination. Operators assist [system administrators](#) and [programmers](#) in testing and debugging of new systems and programs prior to their becoming production environments. Tasks may include managing the [backup systems](#), cycling [tapes or other media](#), filling and maintaining [printers](#). Overall the operator fills in as a lower level system administrator or operations analyst. Most operations departments work [24x7](#).

A computer operator also has knowledge of [disaster recovery](#) and [business continuity](#) procedures. Formerly, this would have meant sending physical data tapes offsite, but now the data is more than likely transmitted over computer networks.

## Specializations

---

### **Console operator**

A **console operator** interacts with a multi-user system's console

- entering [commands](#) via a keyboard<sup>[3]</sup>
- replying to requests for information<sup>[4]</sup>
- taking actions such as mounting computer tapes that were "pulled" by a [tape librarian](#)
- supervising a tape operator, especially when there is a [a non-specific mount request](#).<sup>[5]</sup>

These individuals would be trained to use specialized equipment related to their duties.

### **Peripherals operator**

A **peripherals operator** uses dedicated [peripheral](#) equipment connected to computer(s) such as printers, scanners, or storage devices for data transfer to and/or from computers.

### **Tape operator:**

Historically, **tape operators** were in charge of swapping out reels of [paper tape](#), [reels](#) of [magnetic tape](#) or magnetic tape [cartridges](#) that stored computer data or instructions.

### **Card Reader operator**

### **Print Operator**

### **Tab operator**