# How can I become a network systems administrator?

Network administrators are often required to have an undergrad or graduate degree in computer science, network administration, systems engineering, or a related field of study. Upon completion of a formal education program, network administrators can further distinguish themselves and increase employment and advancement opportunities by earning networking certifications, such as CompTIA's Network+, Cisco's CCNA, and Microsoft's MCTS: Server 2008 Network Infrastructure Configuration.[\n]

Fundamental skills and courses to look for in a network administration degree program include systems administration training, LAN & WAN installation & configuration, routing & switching, and network security training. A networking degree that includes certifications will help you graduate with a distinct competitive advantage. Effective communication skills are also key, as network administrators communicate complex ideas and solutions to both technical and non-technical employees. Computer networking is a rich and vast domain, so beyond the basics, choose a degree with the courses that spark your interest, or those featuring networking skills that are hot right now, e.g., virtualization or cloud computing.