

Retail



1 IN 10
PEOPLE ARE
EMPLOYED IN
RETAIL

JUST 10 RETAILERS
EMPLOY AROUND
1/3
OF ALL THOSE WHO
WORK IN RETAIL

UK RETAIL HAS AN
ANNUAL TURNOVER OF
£321
BILLION

Shopping is awesome. We as a country always have an excuse to go and spend our money and this sector provides a varied range of career choices if you fancy turning your shopping experience into your career.

You ask us...

WHAT'S THE RETAIL SECTOR ALL ABOUT?

Retail is all about selling stuff to people – the better it looks, the more cash people will spend on it. It's competitive and challenging and you can expect to be tested on a fair few levels, so make sure you have the ambition to succeed.

WHAT KIND OF SALARY CAN I EXPECT TO EARN?

You'll start off on somewhere between **£11,000** to **£16,000**, which might not sound a lot but you have to factor in staff discounts in-store and flexible working hours. You can also advance pretty quickly and managers of large stores earn over **£40,000**, plus bonuses such as company cars, holidays, travelling and all the other awesome stuff.

WHAT KIND OF ENVIRONMENT WOULD I BE WORKING IN?

There will be people everywhere, so if you have good customer services you'll be fine. If you don't, get some, because it'll be everything to the shopper's experience. You need to be adaptable as not all shoppers are happy shoppers, so learn to deal with everything thrown at you, both good and bad.

HOW DOES THIS SECTOR COMPARE TO OTHERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY?

Over **16%** of the UK companies have an active apprenticeship program and most of these employers are shops and brands you will almost certainly have heard of. There are more than **1.8 million** people employed in the retail industry so employability is very high compared to other sectors.

WHERE IS THE WORK MOST CONCENTRATED?

Right in the middle of a city or town. The number of retail outlets in the UK now exceeds **210,000**, so you won't have to look far for work. You probably walk past them every day, so do research into what the best place to work is for you.



Careers Choices

These are some of the roles you can find in this sector. Obviously what you do from day to day will vary depending on your employer, but these roles are found across the Retail sector:

RETAIL BUYING

If you can't get enough of shopping, this might be the job for you because it is essentially buying products for a living. You will be responsible for selecting what merchandise your store will sell, so you will need to keep up to date on current fashions and trends. These are the people who decide what's hot and what's not from season to season. Salaries start out between **£16,000** and **£20,000** depending on your employer and you can expect to earn more as you gain more experience.

STORE OPERATIONS

You'll be right in the action here; you'll be serving customers and helping the store run smoothly. It's down to you to make the overall shopping experience better for people so it helps to have good knowledge of what you are selling (you can't just blag it, you will get found out.). You're looking at a starting salary of **£11,000** to

£15,000 depending on your employer, but this is a sector where progression is matched by ambition and you will find yourself quickly climbing up the ladder.

VISUAL MERCHANDISING

If you have a knack for eye catching fashion displays then this will 'suit' you down to the ground (see what I did there?). You will be responsible for arranging the displays in windows so that passersby will be drawn into the store. But it doesn't stop there; the mannequins and stand layouts inside will also be arranged in your design, so that the customers are getting a good experience and therefore buying stuff. Salaries start out at between **£12,000** and **£16,000** a year.

MANAGEMENT

If you have a talent for leadership and motivation then you would make for a great

manager. It will be down to you to organise your staff so that everything runs smoothly, from the shop floor to the warehouse and deliveries. Store managers usually start out on **£16,000** to **£20,000**, while area managers or managers of huge stores can earn in excess of **£40,000** a year - this is usually accompanied with perks such as longer holidays and company cars.

Where to begin

APPRENTICESHIPS

Over 30,000 people started in Level 2 and 3 Retail Apprenticeships in 2012 and that number is expected to increase this year. In this sector in particular employers like to teach you while you learn and you'll find yourself taking in a lot very quickly. The Level 2 award will take the form of a

diploma, a BTEC or an NVQ. Some of the Apprenticeship Frameworks and associated roles you might see are:

Retail (General) • Retail Specialist

ADVANCED APPRENTICESHIPS

Just like a regular Apprenticeship, you will be learning and working at the same time. The Retail Apprenticeship continues to Level 3, again resulting in a BTEC, Diploma or NVQ. Here are some of the job roles:

Sales Professional • Visual Merchandising • Retail Management

FOUNDATION DEGREES

Foundation Degrees are a great way to get an employer respected qualification while still working in your job. They are university level qualifications and are the equivalent of the first two years of an honours degree. These

take two years to complete and if you want, you can extend your qualification to a full Honours degree when you finish.

A-LEVELS

A-levels are a good pathway to university, but they are also qualifications that employers like to see. There aren't any A-levels that are directly linked to retail, but some that might help you are listed below.

Business Studies • Maths • IT • English

EMPLOYER FUNDED STUDY

A lot of the bigger chains such as **Sainsbury's**, **B&Q**, **Tesco** and **Marks and Spencer** have special training schemes for their employees. These more often than not have an option for management so you know there's the opportunity to go far! Entry levels vary, so it's best to check the brands website for more information.

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