

Sports Professional

Sports professionals are skilled men and women at the top of their chosen sport, in which they compete. This could be an individual sport such as athletics, golf, tennis, swimming or cycling; or a team sport such as football and rugby.

The Work

You could be:

- training for many hours each day to maintain fitness and stamina levels
- undergoing regular fitness tests and nutrition monitoring
- discussing strategy with your coach and team mates
- competing regularly on your own or as part of a team
- travelling with your club, or perhaps your national team, to away matches, possibly all over the world
- if successful, talking to the press, meeting fans and attending events
- involved in promoting the club's sponsors and their products.

Pay

Salaries range widely depending on your chosen sport, skill and success. Bonuses and sponsorships can increase earnings.

Many professionals may have a full or part time job to supplement their income at the start of their career.

Conditions

- You will need to commit to training most days.
- Training usually includes early mornings or evenings.
- You may have to train and play outdoors in all weather conditions.
- You may spend a lot of your time travelling about the UK or abroad.
- You may spend long periods of time away from home.

Getting In

- Most professionals start their sport at a young age by joining a local amateur club.
- You may progress naturally to a professional level, or in some sports you may be spotted by a talent scout.
- Some universities, including Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian, Heriot-Watt, Robert Gordon, Stirling and Strathclyde offer sports bursaries or scholarships to help with costs.
- If you make a successful start, you might be able to get funding from the Scottish Institute of Sport, which would be distributed through the national governing body.
- The [sportscotland](https://www.sportscotland.gov.uk) website has a section on possible funding options including [SportsAid Scotland](https://www.sportsaid.org.uk) which is a charity that offers awards to around 250 of Scotland's most promising young sporting stars each year. Some people also go to America to complete a scholarship.
- Some sports offer a Modern Apprenticeship to students showing promise, such as football.

- Individual sports will have their own requirements. For example, for golf you will need an excellent handicap, and to be a jockey you must be a certain weight and height.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- very talented at your chosen sport
- motivated and ambitious
- competitive
- a good team player
- able to take criticism and act on it
- committed to improving your skills
- able to deal with stress.

You should have:

- good self-control
- a high level of fitness.

Training

- Training is on the job and continues throughout your sporting career.
- You would train to improve the technical, tactical, physiological and mental aspects of your sport, as well as your lifestyle management, health and safety and communication skills.

Getting On

- As you improve, you may move to a higher level or league.
- As your career declines you may move to a lower level.
- Your career could end at any time, through injury, because your performance level falls, or just because someone better comes along.
- Many professionals finish competing or playing by the age of 35.
- You must plan for a second career, by gaining qualifications and by making contacts.
- If you want to stay in sport, your second career might be in sports management, coaching or sports journalism.

More Information

For more information please see organisations listed below:

- [Careers in Racing](#)
- [Professional Golfers Association](#) (PGA)
- [Scottish Athletics](#)
- [Scottish Cycling](#)
- [Scottish Football Association](#) (SFA)

- [Scottish Rugby](#)
- [Scottish Swimming](#)
- [Sports Academy of Scotland](#)

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.



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