

Digital Imaging Specialist

Digital imaging specialists scan, manipulate and correct digital images, retouching, altering and enhancing them.

The Work

You could be:

- agreeing the format and finish of the image with the client
- using a computer to scan images of prints, or transparencies or film negatives
- using specialist software such as Photoshop to make changes to photos
- changing photographs by resizing, cropping or correcting exposure and colour
- removing unwanted features or combining elements of different photographs
- designing the layout of images
- preparing the images for output as print or digital files
- regularly checking the accuracy of digital and printing equipment
- restoring old photographs digitally, such as removing creases or stains or adding colour.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Salaries may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting salaries for digital imaging specialists in the UK tend to be in the range of £14,000 to £18,000 a year. With more experience, salaries can rise to £20,000 to £25,000 a year. Skilled specialists can earn around £35,000 a year.

Conditions

- You would be based either in a studio or photo laboratory.
- You would normally work as part of a team of digital specialists or artworkers.
- You have to spend long periods sitting at a computer.
- Shift work is common.
- You may have to work overtime to meet deadlines.

Getting In

- For direct entry to employment, you do not always need formal qualifications. Some employers may prefer English, Maths and a science subject at National 4 or 5.
- Some may start out working as film processing or photographic technicians (see job profile [Photographic Technician](#)).
- Another route is to do a full time course in a subject such as photography or digital media. There are courses at a variety of levels – National Certificate (NC), National Qualification (NQ), Higher National

Certificate (HNC), Higher National Diploma (HND) and degree.

- For entry to an NC or NQ you may not need formal qualifications. Some colleges may ask for up to 4 subjects at National 4 or 5. HNCs or HNDs require 1-3 Highers or an NC or NQ. For degree courses you need a minimum of 3 Highers.
- You need a high level of skill in Photoshop.
- For design and layout work you need skills in desktop publishing software such as Illustrator and InDesign.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a strong interest in photography
- creative and artistic skills
- excellent IT skills
- an eye for detail, colour and layout
- the ability to accurately follow instructions
- practical skills to calibrate (set up) printing machines
- a careful, patient and methodical approach
- the ability to work under pressure.

Training

- Training is usually on the job.
- You might attend short courses run by equipment suppliers.

Getting On

- You might become a laboratory manager.
- You may be able to move into new product development.
- With experience you might set up your own business.

Contacts

British Association of Picture Libraries and Agencies (BAPLA)

Tel: 020 8297 1198

Email: enquiries@bapla.org.uk

Website: www.bapla.org.uk

X: @baplaUK

ScreenSkills

Tel: 020 7713 9800

Email: info@screenskills.com

Website: www.screenskills.com

X: @UKScreenSkills

Facebook: www.facebook.com/UKScreenSkills

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.