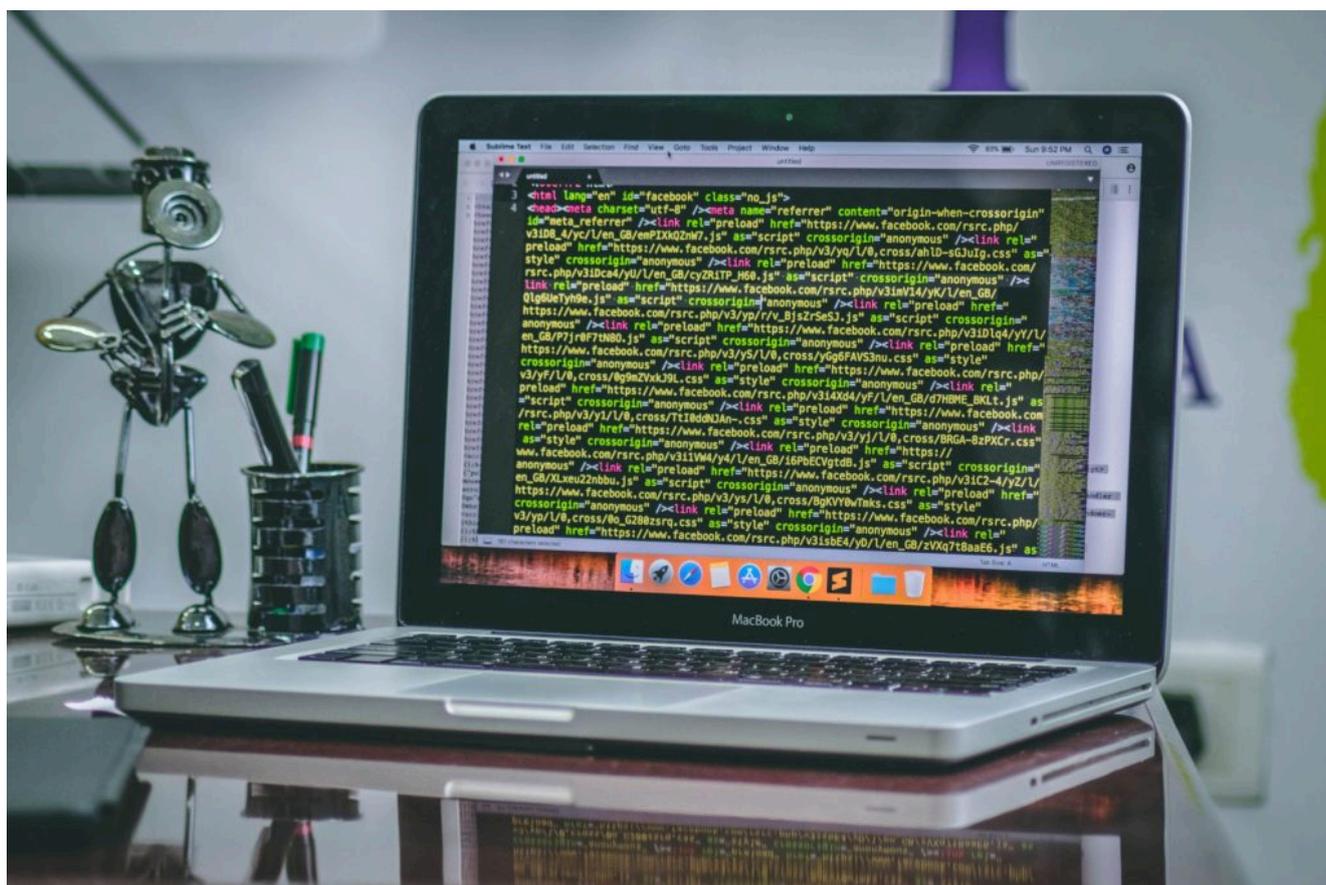


# The 24 highest paying developer roles in 2021

Some developer jobs command higher salaries than others. Aiming high? See what you can expect to earn in these 24 roles.

Before the pandemic upended everything, software developer salaries were continuing their inexorable rise. General software engineering roles, as defined by the tech hiring platform Hired, saw average salaries across the US rise to \$146,000 in 2019 from \$139,000 in 2018.



Now, in a jobs market [where tens of millions of Americans have filed unemployment claims](#) during the pandemic, salaries

may start to level off. With a downturn looming, many CIOs will be looking to retain their talent at the same salary going into 2021, as finance teams pump the brakes on budgets.

Here are the highest-paying software developer roles in the US according to [Robert Half's 2021 Salary Guide](#), which is based on research conducted during the summer of 2020. These figures represent the national average salary range for the 50th and 75th percentile of applicants.

## Architects

The highest paying non-C-suite role in 2020 is the cloud architect, with the top five percentile of candidates earning more than \$200,000 a year. Organizations are looking for talented individuals to guide their digital transformation efforts and appear to be prepared to pay a premium for architects who can display expertise in building artificial intelligence systems.

Cloud/network architect: \$146,000-174,500

AI architect: \$148,000-166,000

Data architect: \$145,500-168,500

Applications architect: \$144,500-174,250

## Managers

Developer team managers can range in their scope, with most working their way up to developer lead or manager level. Once there, development managers often find themselves as the go-between that aligns business leadership and the developer team, setting priorities, managing headcount and budgets, and eliminating toil where possible.

Drilling down, the product manager is typically responsible for delivering new digital products by working with a cross-functional team, while a project manager typically takes a set of client demands and translates them into a set of requirements for the developer team to fulfil.

Software development manager: \$139,000-162,000

Network/cloud manager: \$123,500-146,000

Product manager: \$127,500-151,750

Project manager: \$114,750-137,750

## Software developers and engineers

Software developer job titles have proliferated in recent years and there is a clear need for mobile and applications developers, who get paid on average far better than their colleagues in web development.

Mobile applications developer: \$135,750-161,750

Lead applications developer: \$130,750-156,750

Senior web developer: \$124,750-146,000

Software engineer: \$123,250-145,750

Database developer: \$119,000-139,000

Software developer: \$118,250-138,000

Network/cloud engineer: \$115,250-138,500

Web developer: \$106,250-126,500

Front-end web developer: \$88,000-102,000

## Devops

[The rise of the site reliability engineer \(SRE\)](#) has seen average salaries for that role spike, with candidates able to display these skills earning more on average than their colleagues in the devops function. The line between these functions is a gray one, but there is some demonstrable extra incentive for anyone that can subtly pivot from devops to SRE.

Site reliability engineer: \$123,250-150,250

Devops engineer: \$120,000-143,000

Scrum master: \$99,250-116,250

## QA and testing

Testing and quality assurance functions remain among the lowest paid developer roles, according to Robert Half. These people are responsible for ensuring code releases are stable and free of bugs.

QA/Testing manager: \$103,750-121,000

QA engineer (automated): \$89,000-105,750

QA engineer (manual): \$76,500-87,000

## Full-stack developer

Finally, one of the more controversial developer roles today is the so-called [full-stack developer](#), a Jack-of-all-trades who can handle both the front-end and back-end coding required to build and run web applications.

Robert Half doesn't list salary data for that job title but according to [HackerRank's 2020 Developer Skills Report](#), hiring managers at companies of all sizes "agree that full-

stack developers are top priority,” with 38% of them saying it is the number one role for them to fill in 2020.

[Payscale data](#) on full-stack developers shows an average salary of \$78,251, topping out at \$114,000.