

What Can I Do With A Major In... History?

This is a list of job titles and job descriptions of entry-level positions for which graduates with a B.A. in history might be hired.

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DIRECT Career Options

The skills required for the jobs listed here are so similar to the skills acquired in studying history that a degree in the field will usually serve as a credential for getting the job.

ARCHIVIST/HISTORIAN

Acquires and organizes records and documents; verifies authenticity and significance of historical material. Conducts tours, gives lectures on historical topics. Works for libraries, historical museums, historical sites.

ART HISTORIAN/EDUCATOR

Researches and curates exhibitions, and educates special populations and the general public regarding the history, values and varieties of the visual arts. Works primarily in museums and in educational settings. Requires familiarity with art history.

GENEALOGICAL SERVICES SPECIALIST

Researches genealogies, family and community histories. Writes, edits, publishes. Markets genealogical services. Works for private genealogical services firms.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Organizational administration; analyzes, preserves, displays, and interprets historical material; publicizes programs; researches and produces presentations and exhibits. Works for museums of history and for historical exhibition projects.

HISTORICAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR

May perform diverse duties: editing, preservation, research, writing, media presentations. Often manages projects, prepares budgets, administers grants. Employers include universities, historical societies, foundations, government agencies.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Does historical analysis; studies policy issues; prepares analytical reports, coordinates interdisciplinary studies. Works for "think tanks", universities, public research agencies.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Assists in management of historical resources and personnel, provides services and information to the public and to scholars; promotes interest in history; edits publications; provides a forum for historical meetings and activities. Works for private historical societies, professional associations, and government historical commissions.

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER/HISTORIAN

Writes institutional and policy histories; researches, reports on current issues, long-range trends; edits records; manages archives. Works for executive, legislative, and judicial agencies, international institutions, military services, cultural agencies, planning agencies, public archives and libraries, private corporations.

PARK RANGER

Manages facilities and programs at federal, state, and local parks and historic sites. Typically works for a government parks department. Summer jobs are readily available to students interested in the field of (historical) parks management.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION ASSISTANT

Conducts architectural, art, and urban historical research; applies technological and artistic conservation skills; researches related laws and tax issues. Works for specialized preservation services firms.

PUBLICATIONS RESEARCHER

Researches story and script ideas; maintains research files on topics and people; checks stories for accuracy. Works for newspaper, magazine, or book publishers.

RADIO/TELEVISION RESEARCHER

Researches story and script ideas for broadcast media. Maintains research files on topics and people; checks stories for accuracy. Works for radio and television producers.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Assists researchers in collecting and analyzing data, observing and interviewing people, surveying appropriate literature, and writing reports in order to advise or inform a client. Works for research and consulting firms.

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Instructs high school and junior high school students in specialized subject areas. Most secondary school teachers teach several courses in a single subject area. Public schools generally require certification; private schools typically do not.

LESS DIRECT Career Options

The fit between the academic training in history and the job skills is still very close. However, knowledge of history may be less pertinent to these positions, and a degree in history itself may or may not serve as a credential for employment.

CONSULTING OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR

Furnishes support services for consultants. Coordinates travel arrangements, proofreads and edits reports, develops charts and graphs to illustrate findings, maintains and operates audiovisual equipment for presentations, organizes resource libraries, etc. Works for consulting firms.

CORRESPONDENT/STRINGER

Writes freelance reports for one or more publications. Usually has special knowledge of the subject or geographic area covered. Works as an independent contractor.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

Creates new educational methods and materials; assesses the effectiveness of existing methods and materials. Employers include school districts, private schools, manufacturers of educational equipment, educational publishers, and national testing organizations.

ENERGY RESEARCHER

Researches issues involved in working with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar and "alternatives" such as wind, tide and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCHER

Researches, develops and presents information regarding environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine, and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizen's groups, research laboratories, scientific associations and private industry.

FILM RESEARCHER/COPYWRITER

Reviews scripts, checks for factual and technical accuracy, rewrites copy, assists in creating storyboard representations of scenes. Relevant course work or prior experience preferred. Works for entertainment, documentary, educational, and industrial film producers.

FINANCIAL RESEARCHER

Compiles statistical reviews and forecasts. Maintains and reviews financial literature and records regarding departments, industries, and possible transactions. Works for corporations, financial institutions. Usually requires relevant course work.

FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Works in foreign service posts to represent and assist in Canadian embassies and various foreign service program and overseas historical sites. Required testing and possibly security clearance

FREELANCE WRITER

Writes for publications on an assignment basis for a negotiated fee, usually after submittal of a query letter proposing ideas for articles or stories. Typically works as an independent contractor.

LEGISLATIVE AIDE

Performs research writing and liaison functions for provincial or federal representatives or for municipal officeholder

LIBRARY AIDE

Administers school or corporate library facilities. Jobs in two areas: technical and user services. Technical services deal with acquiring and preparing materials. User services deal directly with library users.

LOBBYING RESEARCHER

Identifies information that can be used to support the positions and the efforts of lobbyists. Involves library research, attendance at conferences and committee meetings, and writing of reports. Employers include a diversity of special and public interest groups as well as professional lobbyists.

MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Undertakes the preliminary research for a market study, gathering data concerning competitors' products, organizing existing sales records, etc. Also assists in writing final project reports. Works for market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

POLITICAL CAMPAIGN WORKER

Assists in planning, fund raising, research, writing issue statements, canvassing, and assessing voter attitudes. Works for candidates or interest groups during political election campaigns. Frequently leads to permanent positions with political organizations or officeholders.

SURVEY ASSISTANT

Assists in the design of survey interviews and questionnaires, interviewing of subjects, management of interviewers, collection and analysis of data, and documentation and representation of findings. Works for government agencies and private surveying and market research organizations.

URBAN PLANNING RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Under the supervision of a city or regional planner, conducts research into the economic, environmental, and social consequences of development in order to support strategies for appropriate growth and renovation of rural, suburban, or urban areas. Typically works for a government agency. May work for a consulting or architectural firm.

INDIRECT Career Options

At first glance, the jobs listed may not appear to have much to do with the study of history. Yet there is a connection. The primary skills required in these jobs overlap substantially with some of the skills a history

major normally acquires. For instance, a trade show coordinator presents commercial exhibits, just as historians present historical exhibits. Or consider the many jobs that call for research skills. Historians are trained researchers.

ACADEMIC ADVISOR/COLLEGE COUNSELOR

Advises students at all levels on selection of courses and majors. Sometimes involves career counseling. Sometimes requires certification.

ACTUARY

Assembles and analyzes statistics, calculates risk probabilities, and determines premium rates for policies and pension plans within the three basic areas of insurance: life, health, and property and casualty. Works for insurance companies and their regulators.

ADVERTISING MEDIA PLANNER

Determines the most cost-effective means of reaching a target market via print and broadcast media. Researches demographics of different media outlets, and analyzes demographic and budgetary aspects of advertising proposals.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REPRESENTATIVE

Researches, analyzes, and monitors staffing policies in order to achieve affirmative action goals. Conducts outreach activities in order to identify and attract qualified women and minority applicants for company openings. Employers in all fields.

ALUMNI AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Produces educational programs, social events, and special tours for alumni; writes alumni publications; coordinates fund raising and reunion activities. Works for college and university alumni affairs offices.

ARCHITECTURAL DRAFTER/TECHNICIAN

Under supervision of an architect, assists in preparation and review of plans and detailed drawings for building projects. Works for architectural and construction firms.

BANK RESEARCH ANALYST

Researches, analyzes, and assesses prospective banking projects. Typically works for the bank involved.

BIOMEDICAL/MEDICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Follows detailed instructions and prescribed procedures to assist in laboratory research. Keeps records, writes reports, often conducts library research. Works in hospitals, clinics, colleges and universities, research institutes, and private industry.

CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT COUNSELOR

Assists individuals in setting and implementing career and job-search goals, teaches decision-making and job-search skills, networks among employers for interviewing opportunities and internships, develops related library resources. Employers include private firms and universities and colleges.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Recruits and selects prospective students, creates promotional materials, makes presentations on and off campus, sets admissions criteria, reviews applications, and communicates with applicants.

COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Creates and implements programs to raise funds for a college or university through corporate and alumni contributions.

COMPENSATION/BENEFITS COORDINATOR

Assists Compensation/Benefits Analyst to examine compensation packages, including wages, salaries, and benefits, and to compare them with those in the same field to determine competitiveness and fairness. Employers in many diverse fields, including compensation consulting firms.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER

Writes instructional and tutorial manuals and course materials for internal and customer training. Works for manufacturers of computer hardware and software. May require course work or experience in teaching, as well as some technical background.

CONSTRUCTION SURVEYOR TRAINEE

Uses specialized tools to locate official land boundaries, mark off site boundaries, research deeds, and identify information for use in developing construction plans. Works for the government and for construction contractors. On-the-job training occasionally available.

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Writes press releases, speeches, annual reports, and other material to promote a corporation and its image. Works for corporations in all fields.

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

Handles customer relations, usually through direct contact with customers or clients. Researches and responds to complaints and informational inquiries, seeking both to meet the customers' needs and promote the image and reputation of the employer. Works for manufacturers, retailers, service industries, and social service organizations.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Evaluates manuscripts; reviews and edits copy; coordinates photography, illustrations, and graphics; secures copyrights and permissions to quote copyrighted material. Works for book publishers.

EDUCATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Sells books, audiovisual materials, special equipment, and computer hardware and software. May sell directly to teachers, administrators, and coaches or indirectly to purchasing offices or distributors. Works for schools and for manufacturers and distributors of educational materials.

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Writes for and edits an employee newsletter. Works for employers in all fields. Requires skills in graphic design and layout.

ENERGY ADMINISTRATOR

Manages and plans operations or oversight of work with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal hydroelectric, nuclear, solar and "alternatives" such as wind, tide and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

ENERGY COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Handles community relations and liaison re: work with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar, and "alternatives" such as wind, tide, and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADMINISTRATOR

Manages, plans, supports, or monitors work involving environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine, and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizens' groups, research laboratories, scientific associations, and industry.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Conducts community relations and liaison regarding environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine, and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizens' groups, research laboratories, scientific associations, and industry.

FILM PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Under supervision of directors and producers, arranges and coordinates rehearsals and filming. Arranges for props and sets, books rehearsal space, schedules travel, edits and distributes scripts, etc. Relevant course work or prior experience preferred. Works for entertainment, documentary, educational, and industrial film producers.

GRAPHIC ARTS ILLUSTRATOR

Works as a specialist (e.g., medical illustrator) or as a generalist to create visual images to appear in advertisements, brochures, and books, on textiles, and on other items that project visual style. May work on a freelance basis, project by project, or as an employee of an ad agency, retailer, book publisher, magazine, newspaper, or printer.

GRAPHIC ARTS PHOTOGRAPHER

Creates photographic images to appear in advertisements, brochures, books, and on items that project visual style. Unusual opportunities with police departments and scientific research laboratories. A portfolio is essential.

HOUSING AND STUDENT LIFE COORDINATOR

Administers housing services and produces special programs to promote positive interaction on campus. Works for universities and colleges.

HUMAN RESOURCES RECRUITER

Interviews applicants on college campuses, at employment fairs, at trade and professional meetings, and in the office. Promotes effective relations with colleges, universities, and other institutions that supply prospective employees. Positions exist in many settings, including search firms.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONSULTANT

Develops recommendations regarding acquisition and use of computer hardware in a variety of organizational and functional settings. Researches related questions such as maintenance, staffing, and cost-effectiveness. Works for large corporations or consulting firms.

INTERPRETER

Translates spoken messages from one language into one or more other languages. Usually the translation is done verbally and "on the spot". Employers include government and human services agencies, corporations, publishers, educational institutions, and independent translation agencies.

INVESTMENT BANKING ANALYST TRAINEE

Completes basic research required for investment banking transactions between institutions with long-term capital needs and major investors. Researches both broad industries and the specific financial status of particular institutions and prepares documents and reports for staff and clients.

JUDICIAL CLERK

Performs clerical duties, schedules calendars, keeps records, and does research for federal, state, and local courts and judges.

LABOR RELATIONS RESEARCHER

Assists labor relations specialists with detailed research required for contract negotiations. Prepares advisory reports on union-management agreements. Works for unions, unionized employers, and government arbitrators.

MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Assists Account Executive in liaison with clients and helps to coordinate studies. Studies include analysis of sales records, surveying attitudes and opinions, and test marketing. Positions exist in market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturing and retailing.

MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Under direction of an Account Executive, coordinates the efforts of interviewers, tabulators, and coders in conducting a market research study. Employers include market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

MARKET RESEARCH STATISTICIAN

Provides guidance in a market study, ensuring that the results obtained are valid and worthy of interpretation. Positions exist in market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

PARALEGAL

Performs preparatory work required to research a case and develops documentation required to write a brief. May interview prospective witnesses. Works for private law offices, law firms, prosecutors, and public defenders.

PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Teaches basic academic and social skills to young children. Often teaches a variety of subjects to a single class or grade level. Public schools generally require certification; private schools typically do not.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Creates, implements, and coordinates a service to a community. May involve fund raising for a charity, overseeing a scholarship fund, operating a service-oriented program or facility, etc. Employers include nonprofit corporations, social service agencies, and the public affairs sections of commercial businesses.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT RESEARCHER

Explores the real estate needs of particular communities, gathers information about available parcels of land, and explores the market feasibility of proposed projects. Works for real estate developers.

SPECIAL PROGRAM TEACHER

Instructs students enrolled in special education programs. Settings (e.g., churches, social service agencies) and topics (e.g., vocational training, preschool Head Start, drug-abuse prevention) vary widely.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES ADVISOR

Administers various activities for college students, usually extracurricular. Positions include fraternity/sorority advisor, disciplinary advisor, foreign student advisor, student publications advisor, and so forth.

TECHNICAL WRITER

Researches, writes and edits publications that communicate scientific and technical information to readers with no technical background. Employers include corporations, professional associations, and government agencies.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ANALYST

Maintains existing telecommunications systems and researches, plans, and implements new ones. Acts as a liaison between the employer, systems vendors, and consultants. Assesses an employer's telecommunications needs, analyzes system use, supervises and trains users and maintenance staff. Works for organizations with complex telecommunication needs.

TRADE SHOW COORDINATOR

Directs the display of exhibits in trade shows, promoting specialized sales within an industry. Employers include trade show service companies and high-tech manufacturers.

TRAVEL AGENT

Counsels clients regarding travel plans and activities. Makes hotel, airline, train, car, and other arrangements for those traveling for business or pleasure. Typically works for an agency. Paid under commission agreements with airlines, hotels, etc.

TRAVEL CONSULTANT

Provides travel advice and information to people planning trips. Helps travelers to resolve questions and problems that come up on a trip. Works for travel clubs, state and local tourist bureaus, resorts, travel associations, credit card companies, and tour groups.

UNDERWRITER TRAINEE

Assists in determining whether an insurance company will take on a particular risk. Analyzes actuarial studies and other pertinent information, prices policies in an attempt to balance risk and the need for profit,

and answers inquiries from agents and clients. Works for insurance companies and reinsurance companies (which underwrite other insurance companies in cases of very high risk).

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