

# Information Technology Certifications from Cisco

If you're pursuing a career in information technology, obtaining one or more certifications is an excellent way to prove your expertise and make sure you stand out. Employers trust IT certifications as endorsements of your skills and knowledge by trustworthy organizations. In this article, you'll learn how to obtain a Cisco Certification.

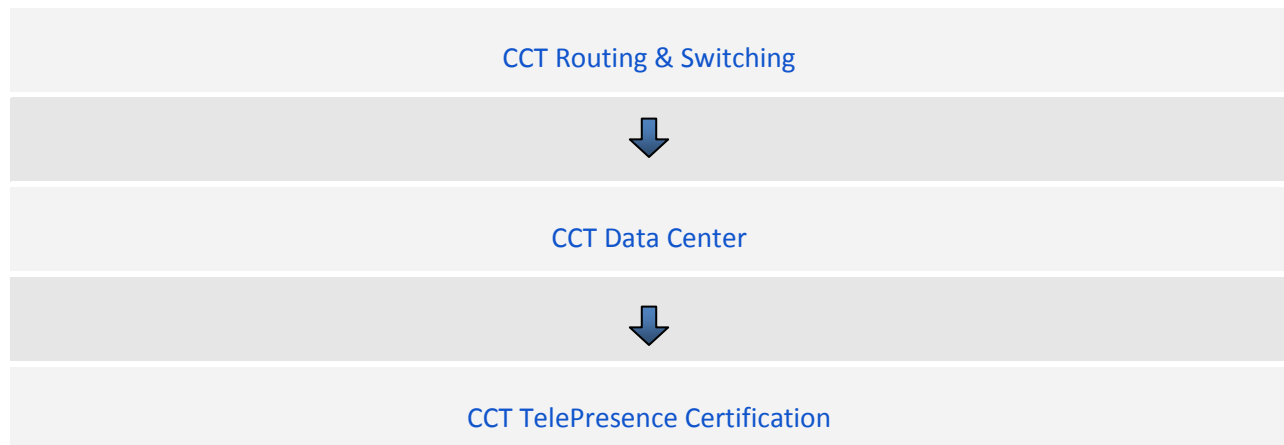
Cisco Systems is a multinational corporation specializing in the design and manufacture of network equipment. Cisco's products include routers, network security devices, wireless devices, telephony devices, Ethernet switches, VPN systems devices, data management software, and other devices you may not even recognize.

In the Cisco Certification system, exams are classified into four categories:

- [Technician Certifications](#)
- [Specialist Certifications](#)
- [Career Certifications](#)
- [Architect Certification](#)

## Technician Certifications

Technician Certifications are offered for people who are interested in obtaining a professional certification for their practical knowledge and hands-on skills in the three subjects listed below. The exams are more focused on technical support at customer sites, such as diagnosing, restoring, repairing, and replacing Cisco devices for customers. Click on each subject to find out more about test-specific requirements and explanations.



Note that throughout this post, arrows indicate prerequisites. To take the CCTDC test, you must first pass the CCTR&S test. Likewise, to take the CCTTPC test, you must first pass the CCTDC test.

For more details, go to the [Technical Certifications section of Cisco's IT Certification page](#).

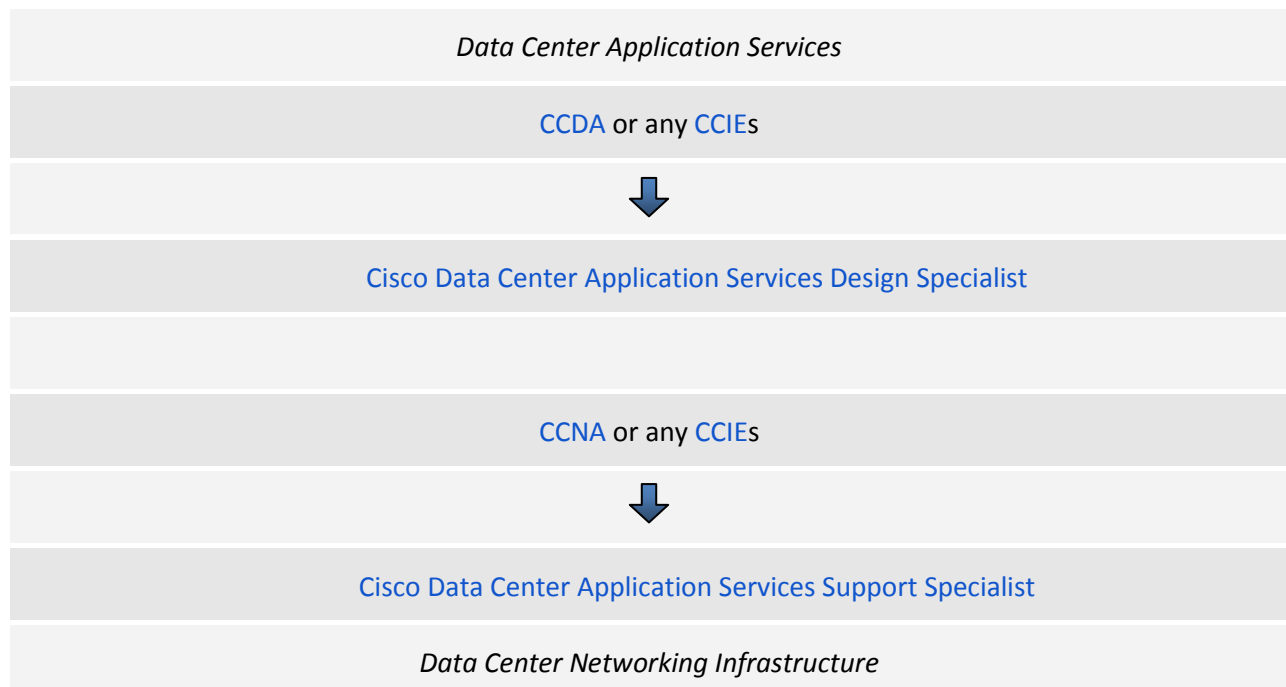
## Specialist Certifications

Specialist Certification tests target members of the [Cisco Partner Program](#), including people who are not necessarily involved in technical work. These certifications focus on specific technology and are generally targeted at members of the Cisco Partner Program, including the selling, designing, and supporting teams that are involved in Cisco products and services. The test material is focused on the practical aspects of the subject, rather than the theoretical aspects; the content includes a lot of solution-seeking methods and troubleshooting techniques.

## Collaboration Certifications



## Data Center Certifications



CCDA or any CCIEs



Cisco Data Center Networking Infrastructure Design Specialist

CCNP or any CCIEs



Cisco Data Center Networking Infrastructure Support Specialist

*Data Center Storage Networking*

Cisco Data Center Storage Networking Design Specialist

Cisco Data Center Storage Networking Support Specialist

*Data Center Unified Computing*

*Special prerequisite*



Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Design Specialist

*Special prerequisite*



Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Support Specialist

## Operating System Software

Cisco IOS XR Specialist

## Security Certifications

CCNA Security



Cisco ASA Specialist



### Video Certifications



Again, click on the exam you're interested in to find out about its requirement details. For a complete table, go to the [Specialist Certifications section](#).

### Career Certifications

Career Certifications, as the name indicates, is the standard certification path that most IT beginners pursue. This category offers four levels of certification exams on nine subjects.

#### Levels

- Entry
- Associate
- Professional
- Expert

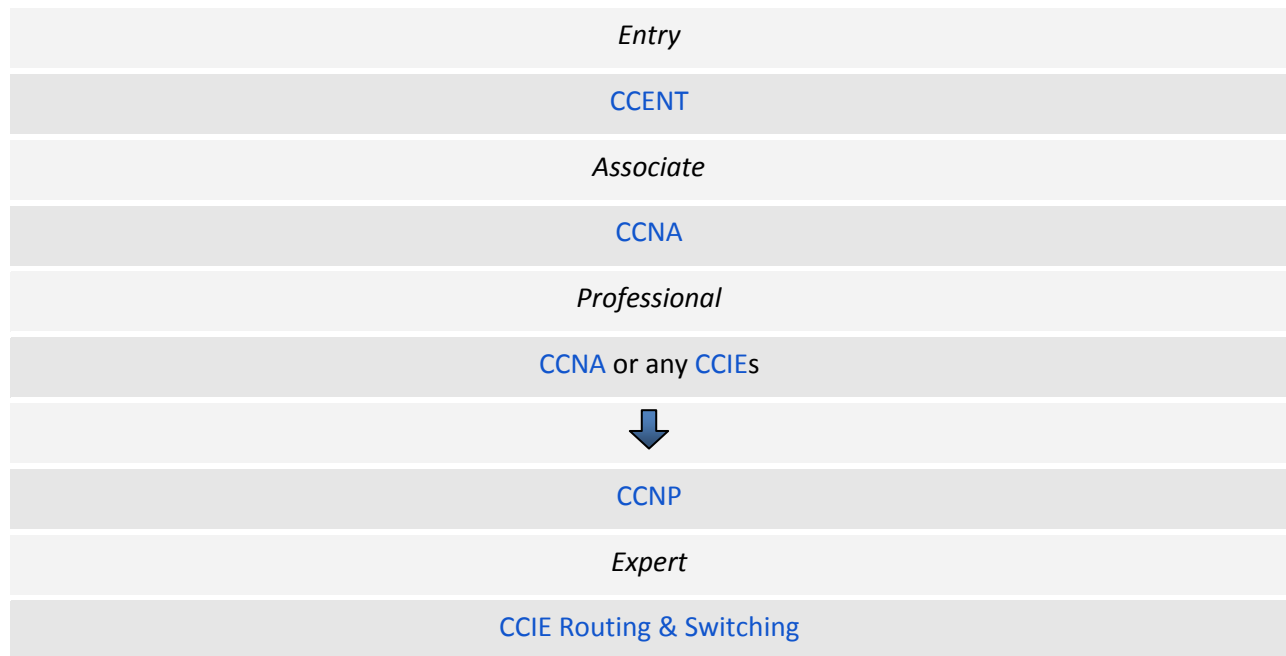
#### Subjects

- [Routing & Switching](#)
- [Design](#)
- [Network Security](#)

- [Wireless](#)
- [Voice](#)
- [Data Center](#)
- [Storage Networking](#)
- [Service Provider](#)
- [Service Provider Operations](#)

The entry-level exam [CCENT](#) is the starting point for all subjects except for Data Center and Service Provider, where there are no entry-level exams offered. For a complete table: [here](#)

## Routing & Switching



## Design



CCDE

## Network Security

*Entry*

CCENT

*Associate*

CCNA or any CCIEs



CCNA Security

*Professional*

CCNA Security



CCNP Security

*Expert*

CCIE Security

## Wireless

*Entry*

CCENT

*Associate*

CCNA or any CCIEs



CCNA Wireless

*Professional*

CCNA Wireless or any CCIEs



CCNP Wireless

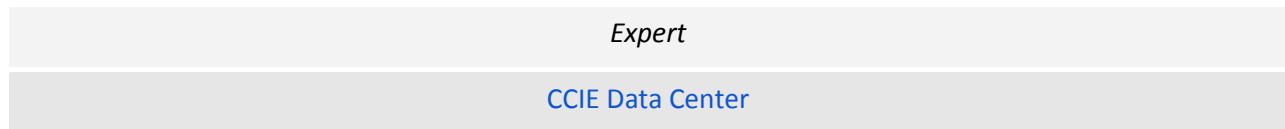
*Expert*

CCIE Wireless

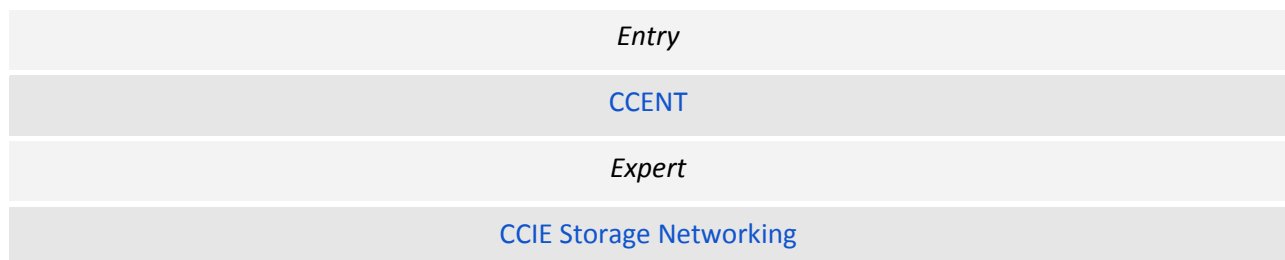
## Voice



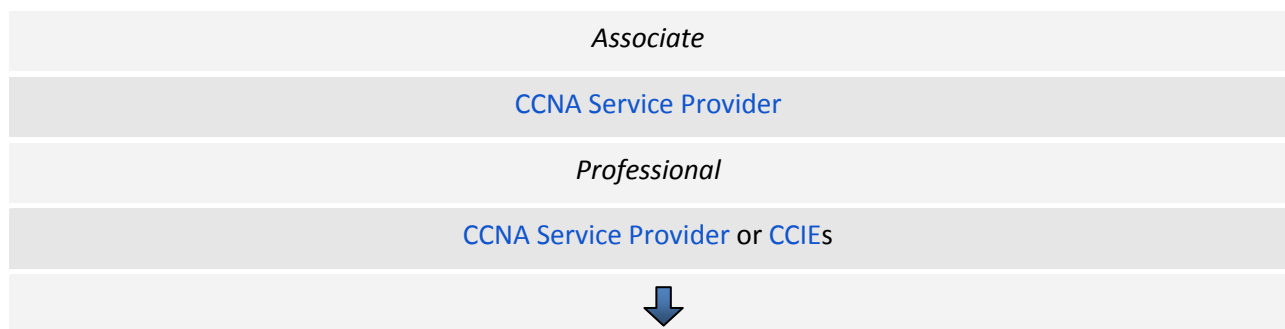
## Data Center



## Storage Networking



## Service Provider





As mentioned in the exam descriptions page linked above, none of the [CCIE](#) exams has formal prerequisites. However, they are the most challenging level in the Career Certification category and certainly require a lot of knowledge and effort to pass. Passing the exam at each level requires in-depth understanding of the topic, hands-on skills, and possibly some lab experience as well.

So don't choose an exam based on whether it requires prerequisites. Some of the exams that don't require any prerequisites are the most challenging.

## Architect Certification

The Architect Certification is the highest level of accreditation offered by the Cisco Certification program. This exam requires you to first become a Cisco Certified Design Expert of the Career Certification, which is the expert level of Career Certification in Design, another very challenging certification. The exam is placed in a category by itself because of its difficulty and unique testing procedure

### Design





## Registration/study material

As you are now aware, these certifications are very technical and require solid understanding of various IT subjects. Even if you have been in the IT field for a while and have some working experience, it could still be quite difficult to study for the exam without any guidelines.

The exam registration links are listed below, along with a series of useful study material to prepare you for these challenging exams.

## Career Certification

### Entry level

CCENT: [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

### Associate

CCNA: [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

CCDA: [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

CCNA Security: [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

CCNA Wireless: [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

CCNA Voice: [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

CCNA Service Provider

Part 1 - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

Part 2 - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

CCNA Service Provider Operations

[Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

## Professional

### CCNP

Route - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

Switch - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

TSHOOT - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

### CCDP

Route - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

Switch - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

ARCH - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

### CCNP Security

Secure - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

Firewall - [Register](#) / [Study Material](#)

[VPN - Register / Study Material](#)

[IPS - Register / Study Material](#)

### **CCNP Wireless**

[CUWSS](#)

[Register / Study Material](#)

[IUWVN - Register / Study Material](#)

[IUWMS - Register / Study Material](#)

[IAUWS - Register / Study Material](#)

### **CCNP Voice**

[CVOICE - Register / Study Material](#)

[CIPT1 - Register / Study Material](#)

[CIPT2 - Register / Study Material](#)

[TVOICE - Register / Study Material](#)

[CAPPS - Register / Study Material](#)

### **CCNP Service Provider**

[SPROUTE - Register / Study Material](#)

[SPADVROUTE - Register / Study Material](#)

[SPCORE - Register / Study Material](#)

[SPEDGE - Register / Study Material](#)

### **CCNP Service Provider Operations**

[OFCN - Register / Study Material](#)

[MSPRP - Register / Study Material](#)

[MSPVN - Register / Study Material](#)

[MSPQS - Register / Study Material](#)

## **Expert**

CCIE Routing & Switching: [Written - Register / Study Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

CCDE: [Written - Register / Study Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

CCIE Security: [Written - Register / Study Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

CCIE Wireless: [Written - Register / Study Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

CCIE Voice: [Written - Register / Study Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

CCIE Data Center: [Written - Register / Study Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

CCIE Storage Networking: [Written - Register / Student Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

CCIE Service Provider: [Written - Register / Study Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

CCIE Service Provider Operations: [Written - Register / Study Material](#)      [Lab - Register / Study Material](#)

## **Recertification**

Unfortunately, your certification does not stay current forever. You need to retake the exam every few years to keep up with the rapid change of trends in the information technology field. You could fall behind if you don't make sure yourself are up to date. For more details, see [About recertification](#).

## **Choose your Cisco qualifications to match your career needs**

While the vast number of Cisco exams may seem overwhelming, the wide variety enables different professionals to demonstrate their expertise in a branch of the IT field.

For example, if you want to become an IT designer, there are four levels of difficulty within the path for you to pursue, with the Architect Certification waiting at the end. You can certainly specialize in multiple subjects of your choice. If you have some former experiences with wireless technology and are also interested in network security, you could choose to take the following exams to blend your expertise and your interest: [CCIE Wireless](#) & [CCNA Security](#) or [CCNP Security](#). With the many combinations available, you can demonstrate your mastery of a particular specialty with an internationally recognized certification.

### **About the author**

Bunron Chen is a business development and software engineering intern at OpenSesame, the world's largest marketplace for buying and selling e-learning courses. He earned his BS degree in electrical engineering from the State University of New York at Binghamton.