

I'm not a bot



Game tester income

Why shoot for the moon when Reach and Pandora await you? When I was a kid, everybody dreamed of growing up to be an astronaut or firefighter, a ballerina or doctor. Things have really changed! Ask a modern kid what they want to become. Even the old standbys of “rock star” and “pro athlete” have been bumped off the wish list, replaced by something that once seemed out of reach: a job as a video game tester. By now, most grown-ups know that getting a job as a video game tester doesn’t mean you sit around and play games. But it’s still a great way to break into the game industry. In fact, I’m the poster boy for starting as a tester. I began my career in quality assurance (another name for testing, or QA). Later I went on to become a designer and an engineer, and eventually a director in charge of multiple departments. I did go to school to learn programming, but only after I’d started my QA job. After you’ve done your research on what a video game tester actually does, you may wonder about a more practical matter: What is an average video game tester salary? Search for Game Tester Jobs There are many testing jobs available, but they have different names depending on the state, country and game company. Try searching for job titles like “game qa tester,” “game tester,” or “game quality assurance.” Another common approach is to start as a tester in a non-game software company, and then move to games once you have experience on your resume. Video Game Tester Salary: Overview Not all game tester jobs are created equal. Unfortunately, many studios treat their QA department as second-class citizens – and pay them accordingly. At others, the testing and QA groups are treated better. They’re viewed as key partners in developing video games that are stable, bug free, and fun. What I’ve observed is this: Studios that treat testers as a core part of the development team, also tend to have better pay. The studios that treat the testing group as a separate “service” group tend to pay less. They also use more contract and temporary testers. The turnover in their QA departments is higher as a result. If you just want the high-level overview, here it is: Video game tester salaries start around USD \$18,000 and top out around \$55,000 annually for experienced lead testers. But it’s important to keep in mind that testing jobs at many companies are temporary positions. That means the company might not pay for the tester’s health insurance, applicable employment taxes and other benefits that are offered to permanent workers. Game Tester Salary: Factors Like most jobs, a video game tester’s salary will increase based on years of experience. That’s because experienced testers are faster at finding and reporting bugs, at a higher accuracy. They also develop strong instincts about game systems, engines and platforms. They can zero in on issues more effectively than testers that are just starting out. One thing that’s important to keep in mind: Many studios consider game testing to be a “non-exempt” position. That means the testers aren’t on a salary like other members of the game development team. Instead, testers are paid hourly, and must be paid overtime as needed. It sounds great at first, because you could make a lot of extra money working overtime during crunches. But all overtime must be pre-approved by a manager. And since projects are usually on a tight budget, overtime is often denied. Instead, you work extra hard in your normal forty hours with no overtime. Not fun! See also: Want to make games? What’s stopping you?Another important factor is whether the position is full-time (“FTE”) or full-time temporary (“FTT”) employment. FTT workers generally aren’t given as many benefits as FTE positions. And they may not be allowed to participate in team bonus plans, and other valuable perks. When you’re comparing testing jobs at different companies, be sure you’re comparing apples to apples. Find out whether each is FTT or FTE. If you’re not sure, you can ask the studio’s recruiter or human resources person for a “total compensation statement.” To learn exactly how to test games and get a job as a Game Tester, read my book Land a Job as a Video Game Tester. You’ll learn the basics of game testing, and walk through the process of applying, interviewing, and accepting game tester job offers. It has everything you need to get a job testing games. read it Game Tester Salary: Details Okay, let’s take a look at the numbers. These figures are drawn from three sources: GlassDoor.com, Game Developer Magazine’s annual salary survey, and my observations based on testers I’ve worked with over the years (plus my own experience as a tester). Since many game testing jobs are paid hourly, let’s compare the wage vs. salary data. Pay Type Low High Hourly \$8.00 per hour \$14.00 per hour \$16,000 per year \$35,000 per year Note that salaried positions seem to pay more per year than hourly jobs. Another way to look at the numbers is by average salary per job role. These numbers from GDMag’s annual survey appear to be much higher than the wages posted on GlassDoor. < 3 Years 3 to 6 Years 6+ Years Game Tester \$38,000 \$41,000 [No data] QA Lead (Lead Tester) [N/A] \$50,000 \$58,000 Note that game testers generally don’t become Lead Testers until they have a few years of experience. GDMag did not list an average salary for Testers with 6+ years’ experience. Other Factors That Affect Video Game Tester Salary The numbers above are averages from many hundreds of video game tester salaries, so they’re very generalized. In fact, several other factors can help testers rise above the averages. Company or studio size. Larger companies generally have bigger project budgets. That allows them to pay their testers more. For example, GlassDoor.com shows Big Fish Games may pay their hourly testers up to \$16 per hour. That’s much higher than the industry average. Benefits. Some studios pay health, dental, vision and other benefits to their testers. Others don’t. These perks can add up to thousands of extra dollars each year. A “total compensation statement” will itemize the dollar value of any perks above and beyond base salary. Bonus pay. Some studios choose to include game testers in the company’s team or project bonus plans. When they do, a commercially-successful product could bonus as high as 40-50% extra income to a tester’s base pay. Demand for Video Game Testers The game industry is a cyclical business. Unfortunately, studios’ game testing departments are often hit the hardest during downward trends. 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Besides, how many jobs pay you to spend all day working with unreleased games, while you get industry experience or finish a degree? If you want to turn your love of games into a job, being a game tester is an incredibly worthwhile place to start building your career. *Salary figures are in US dollars. If you liked this article, please share it. Image: siraphat/freedigitalphotos.net Sources: Glassdoor.com | Gamasutra.com | Indeed.com Why shoot for the moon when Reach and Pandora await you? When I was a kid, everybody dreamed of growing up to be an astronaut or firefighter, a ballerina or doctor. Things have really changed! Ask a modern kid what they want to become. Even the old standbys of “rock star” and “pro athlete” have been bumped off the wish list, replaced by something that once seemed out of reach: a job as a video game tester. By now, most grown-ups know that getting a job as a video game tester doesn’t mean you sit around and play games. 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This means you get to access new video games before their release, test them for bugs and errors, and earn cash. Testing video games is a great way for gamers to earn some extra money while enjoying themselves. You get to play video games before their release, influence the final version, and build a network with fellow gamers and developers. So, if you’re looking for some extra cash, check out these 10 websites that will pay you to test video games. List of Platforms to Test Video Games This is a great website where gaming enthusiasts can play unreleased games and collaborate with the developers to make the video games even better. All you have to do is create an account on GameTester.gg, get assigned to a project, complete the game, and provide feedback. For each game you test, you will be given experience points. More points will improve your chances of getting bigger projects and GTGold points. GTGold is the platform’s currency that can be cashed out in your digital wallet or bank account. FreeCash is another great website where you can test games, and apps and complete surveys to earn money. You can earn anywhere from \$0.50 to a whopping \$120 from playing games. For testing other apps, you can expect to make up to \$75. Just choose an offer from the earn page, complete the offer, and get coins! The coins can be cashed out in either USD or cryptocurrencies. FreeCash has some of the highest payouts as compared to other apps. It also has stellar user reviews, so what are you waiting for? As the name suggests, BetaFamily lets you make money by performing beta testing on different games and apps. You can expect to make around \$5 to \$20 for each test. BetaFamily has a reward system that determines the exact amount of money that you’ll make and your overall rating. This is an algorithm that will analyze the feedback on your test report. Having a higher rating means that you will be assigned to bigger projects. GameRound is another cool website that lets gaming enthusiasts and developers collaborate to make better games and earn rewards. For each game you successfully test, you can earn G-points. They can be redeemed at the G-point store for gaming merch and other goodies. GameRound follows a criteria to determine how many points you make. If you are one of the first 500 people who download and play the game for a minimum of 30 minutes, then you’ll get 5 points. If you complete a review on top, then you’ll get 15 points and if your review gets selected by the gaming studio, then the first 30 people will get 25 points. PlayTestCloud sends over 100,000 testing invitations to its users every month. If you receive one, all you have to do is play the game and submit your feedback. You can easily earn around \$9 for a 15-minute play test and survey. The exact amount depends on the number of tasks you can do and the length of the playtest. To get paid to test video games on PlayTestCloud, just sign up and complete a qualification test so you can be considered for future playtests. Antidote is another great platform if you’re looking to earn money to test video games. As a tester, you will need to download and play the game. You will have to give feedback about the overall experience as well as any bugs. For each game you test, you will receive experience points and antidote points that you can redeem for gaming goodies such as Steam gift cards and merch. To be selected for a project, you have to meet the specified requirements and then you’re good to go! TestBirds lets you earn money by testing video games, apps, or any software. For a regular usability test, you can make £15 – £20 and for every bug you find, you’ll make extra money. What’s more, when you get invited for a test, you’ll be able to see the exact deadlines so you can choose to accept or decline the invitation at your own convenience. TestIO is a great website that will pay you to test video games. Users can expect to get around 5 play test invitations every day, sometimes more depending on their device and geographical location. Depending on the quality and quantity of the bugs you find, you can easily make up to \$50. You could also get paid more if the developers are looking for complex requirements such as a specific device, language, or location, and you get matched. TesterWork pays you to test mobile and web apps. For each test, you will be paid depending on either the number of bugs you find or the amount of time you spend. It depends on the project creator wants to offer. To start, all you have to do is sign up, take an online assessment test, and then wait for a project. The exact payment for each project is specified by the project creator and is given in the test invitation. With TestingTime, you get paid not just for testing video games but also for testing software products, gadgets, and food, and participating in studies. You will receive payment according to how much time you spent testing and how useful your feedback was. Projects that pay the most are the ones that take place in person or via video call. You will receive invitations for projects that match your interests and skills. If you accept, you will undergo a small initial assessment to make sure you’re the right fit for the project. RELATED GUIDES