



# ASTRONOMY




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Using information from the University of Maryland graduation survey, we have compiled information about Astronomy majors, such as where they work or go to graduate school post-graduation. Check out the topics below to learn more about planning for your career! For more information, follow the link to the University Career Center at CMNS (UCC@CMNS): [go.umd.edu/uccatcmns](http://go.umd.edu/uccatcmns)

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## Industries and Career Paths

**Astronomy** majors are employed by governmental, industrial and academic organizations and non-academic settings. According to the American Astronomical Society, astronomy is a relatively small field, with about 6,000 professional astronomers in North America. Most undergraduates who major in Astronomy go into fields and hold job titles that do not contain astronomer/astronomy in them but do put their science skills to use in fields such as communication, policy, K-12 education as well as research and analysis.

## Organizations

The following list showcases employers of UMD Astronomy undergraduates:

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
- Center for Research and Exploration in Space Science and Technology II (CRESST II) at NASA Goddard
- Northrop Grumman
- Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)
- The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
- United States Navy
- University of Maryland
- National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO)
- American Institute of Physics
- Maryland Solar Solutions, Inc
- American Institutes for Research
- U.S. Department of Defense
- Planetary Data System
- Capital One
- Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs)
- Archdiocese of Cincinnati (Teacher)
- Crisis Text Line (Data Scientist)

## Job Titles

The sample job titles below exemplify positions Astronomy majors are qualified for upon graduation. This is not an exhaustive list, but a starting point for exploration.

- Faculty Assistant/Researcher
- Education Programs Intern
- Solar Consultant
- Math Test Development Specialist
- Mechanical Design Engineer
- Naval Flight Officer
- Information Systems Analyst
- Quality Assurance Analyst
- Research Analyst
- Research Assistant
- Software Engineer/Programmer
- Scientist
- Environmentalist
- Physicist



## Graduate Schools

The following is a list of schools where graduates are pursuing graduate degrees:

- California Institute of Technology
- Columbia University
- Johns Hopkins University
- New Mexico State University
- Princeton University
- The Ohio State University
- University of California
- University of Colorado
- University of Delaware
- University of Maryland
- University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC)
- University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- University of Michigan
- University of Texas (Austin)

## Skills Developed as an Astronomy Major

The University of Maryland will prepare each student with many different skills to take into the workplace. These skills will come from academic coursework as well as experiential learning experiences students can choose to participate in while a student. For insight into what employers are looking for, review the skills inventory list ([go.umd.edu/skillslist](http://go.umd.edu/skillslist)) to examine ways to include technical and cross-disciplinary skills on a resume, in interviews and on LinkedIn. The following link highlights “must have” career readiness competencies, according to employers: ([go.umd.edu/fourcompetencies](http://go.umd.edu/fourcompetencies)).

This major will prepare you with the following technical and cross-disciplinary skills to:

1. define a research question and design an experiment to answer it in a meaningful and scientific way
2. gather and analyze data, to see relationships among different factors affecting the data, and to draw meaningful conclusions from these data
3. apply appropriate mathematical calculations and modeling to scientific problems
4. communicate via research proposals, journal papers, and oral presentations
5. collaborate efficiently and productively with other researchers
6. master computers and other technology, such as telescopes, CCDs, and spectrographs

## Astronomy Major Resources

The following resources will help you explore relevant career paths, as well as job postings:

- The American Astronomical Society: [aas.org/careers](http://aas.org/careers)
- The American Physical Society: [aps.org](http://aps.org)
- Vault - Employer/Industry insights, rankings and reviews: [vault.com](http://vault.com)
- [vault.com/industries-professions/professions/a/astronomers](http://vault.com/industries-professions/professions/a/astronomers)
- [vault.com/industries-professions/professions/a/astrophysicists](http://vault.com/industries-professions/professions/a/astrophysicists)