

CAREER GUIDE FOR ARCHEOLOGIST

SOC Code: 19-3091.02

Pay Band(s): 3,4 and 5 ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Conduct research to reconstruct record of past human life and culture from human remains, artifacts, architectural features, and structures recovered through excavation, underwater recovery, or other means of discovery.

Archeologist positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Historical Services and Preservation Career Group](#):

[Archeologist I](#)

[Archeologist II](#)

[Archeologist III](#)

[Historian/Archeologist and Preservationist Manager](#)

While Archeologist within the Commonwealth are all located within the Historical Services and Preservation Career Group, individuals may want to pursue other opportunities within the Commonwealth depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Education Administration](#)

[Education Support Services](#)

[Environmental Services](#)

[General Administration](#)

[Training and Instruction](#)

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

Skills

Note: *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Archeologist commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems.
2. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
3. Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.
4. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
5. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
6. Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
7. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.

8. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
9. Determining the kind of tools and equipment needed to do a job.

Knowledge

Note: The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Archeologist commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

The Knowledge of:

1. Historical events and their causes, indicators, and effects on civilizations and cultures.
2. Group behavior and dynamics, societal trends and influences, human migrations, ethnicity, cultures and their history and origins.

Abilities

Note: The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Archeologist commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

The Ability to:

1. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).
2. Generate or use different sets of rules for combining or grouping things in different ways.
3. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
4. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
5. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
6. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
7. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
8. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
9. Match or detect differences between colors, including shades of color and brightness.
10. Add, subtract, multiply, or divide quickly and correctly.

Tasks

Note: The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by Archeologist. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.

1. Clean, restore, and preserve artifacts.
2. Collect artifacts made of stone, bone, metal, and other materials, placing them in bags and marking them to show where they were found.
3. Compare findings from one site with archeological data from other sites to find similarities or differences.
4. Consult site reports, existing artifacts, and topographic maps to identify archaeological sites.
5. Create a grid of each site, and draw and update maps of unit profiles, stratum surfaces, features, and findings.
6. Create artifact typologies to organize and make sense of past material cultures.

7. Describe artifacts' physical properties or attributes, such as the materials from which artifacts are made, and their size, shape, function, and decoration.
8. Develop and test theories concerning the origin and development of past cultures.
9. Record the exact locations and conditions of artifacts uncovered in diggings or surveys, using drawings and photographs as necessary.
10. Research, survey, and assess sites of past societies and cultures in search of answers to specific research questions.

INTERESTED?

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

The occupation of Archeologist has **Investigative, Realistic, Artistic** and **Conventional** characteristics as described below:

Investigative — Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

Realistic — Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.

Artistic — Artistic occupations frequently involve working with forms, designs and patterns. They often require self-expression and the work can be done without following a clear set of rules.

Conventional — Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Generally this is not required for Archeologist positions in state government.

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of Labor provides the following information:

Archaeologists recover and examine material evidence, such as ruins, tools, and pottery remaining from past human cultures, in order to determine the history, customs, and living habits of earlier civilizations.

The Ph.D. or equivalent degree is a minimum requirement for most positions in colleges and universities and is important for advancement to many top-level nonacademic research and administrative posts. Graduates with master's degrees in applied specialties usually have better opportunities outside of colleges and universities, although the situation varies by field.

Numerous local museums, historical societies, government agencies, and other organizations offer internships or volunteer research opportunities. A few archeological field schools instruct future anthropologists, archeologists, and historians in how to excavate historical sites.

The State Council of Higher Education lists the following Virginia educational institution having a historic preservation, conservation and architectural history program: Mary Washington College.

COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

The Commonwealth Competencies are:

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to:

http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm. For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The

broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example: **Archeologist**

PAY BANDS	PRACTITIONER ROLES
3	Archeologist I
4	Archeologist II
5	Archeologist III

PAY BANDS	MANAGER ROLES
5	Archeologist Manager

Sample Career Path

Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist I

The Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist I role is for archeologist that perform entry-level professional to journey-level historical work. Duties include basic historical research; receipt, inspection, cataloging, inventorying, storing, and transporting historical or archaeological items; and/or preparation, preservation, organization, and maintenance of and exhibition of art and historical items/resources in an art or natural history museum or public historical preservation site.

Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist II

The Historian/Archeologist and Preservationist II role provides a career track for archeologist that perform historical and/or cultural research, preservation and conservation responsibilities ranging from journey level to advanced level. Duties may include: archival and field research and inspections; drafting and/or editing manuscripts, technical or status reports, publications, and factual description texts of landmarks and historical properties; preparing project plans and monitoring grants and contracted work; recovering and examining artifacts and data; and, providing technical assistance in a specific area or on a wide range of programs.

Historian/Archeologist and Preservationist III

The Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist III role provides a career track for archeologist who coordinate multiple aspects of historical, architectural or archaeological preservation programs and provide information and technical advice of an advanced to expert level on one or more programs. Activities leading to or supporting identification, survey, inspection, evaluation, registration, review and monitoring, promotion, protection and conservation of historic and cultural sites may be performed or coordinated in this role.

Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist Manager

The Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist Manager role is for managers responsible for planning, directing, and administering several complex preservation programs within a geographic area and/or directing multiple statewide programs. Responsibilities may include the management of historic resources environmental review; projects and programs to identify and register historic properties; grants and proposals; technical negotiations; providing expert testimony and technical guidance; designation and/or appropriate treatment of historic resources and artifactual and archival data collections.

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*NET (Occupational Information Network)

http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page

Virginia Employment Commission

<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network

<http://www.vacrn.net/>

Archaeological Institute of America:

<http://www.archaeological.org>

Professional Organization

Society for American Archaeology:

<http://www.saa.org>