What is O*NET?
O*NET is an online database of job descriptions and related information, published and maintained by the Department of Labor. Since it would be impossible to keep track of every possible job title, jobs are grouped by occupation rather than listed as specific single jobs. Listings also include specific knowledge, skills, abilities, work environment, training needed, and other related information. It’s a great site to learn more about a specific career or explore your options.

Where can I find O*NET?
Go to online.onetcenter.org. The website publicly available and doesn’t require a login ID or password.

How do I get started?
There are a number of ways to search O*NET, depending on what you’re looking for. To search through occupations related to your major, click Browse in the Find Occupations box on the home page. Type in the job title or a keyword related to that career, then click Go. A list of matching occupations will appear; click the job title for a detailed description.

What if I don’t know the exact job title I’m looking for?
O*NET lists a number of alternate job titles for each occupation. For example, “Medical Assistant” also lists the job titles Certified Medical Assistant, Doctor’s Assistant, Medical Office Assistant, Clinical Assistant, and so on. Typing in the keyword “Network” brings up a list of options including Network and Computer System Administrators, Network Designers, Database Administrators, and others; each of these job titles will have additional alternate job titles listed.

I don’t know what jobs are available in my field. How do I find more information?
You can search O*NET for job titles by Career Cluster, Industry, and other criteria. For example, if you know you want to work in health care but aren’t sure what your options are, select “Health Care and Social Assistance” from the Industry drop-down menu. You’ll get a list of occupations in the health care field with the projected growth and number of job openings for each. Click the job titles for more information.

I’m changing careers but want to use the skills from my former/current job.
The Advanced Search area of O*NET that can help you identify careers that can make good use of the skills and knowledge you already have. Select Advanced Search from the home page, then select the criteria you would like to search on from the Browse by O*NET Data menu. The Interest section is based on a short assessment that identifies your Holland type; see Career Services for more information about this assessment.

What information does O*NET provide about particular careers?
The O*NET profile of a job gives a lot of information, from a general description of typical tasks and alternate job titles, to wage and salary information and projected growth of job openings in that field. You’ll learn about tools typically used to perform the job, the kind of training and education required to get started, the skills that will make you successful in the field, related jobs, and more. Some jobs include short videos that show a typical work day or interviews with people working in those fields.

O*NET is a great resource for anyone who wants to explore their career options. This information is especially helpful when you’re writing a resume or cover letter, decoding a job description, or practicing for an interview, where your knowledge and understanding of the job will give you an advantage with potential employers.