

Get paid to investigate!

FabJob Guide to
**Become a
Private
Investigator**



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1. Introduction

“My mind works like an investigator’s mind... Otherwise it would be a really good criminal mind.”

— Gary DeFinis, PI,
Philadelphia Surveillance Company

Private investigators have been the focus of countless books, movies and TV shows since the days of Allan Pinkerton, the world’s first private detective. But being a private investigator is not always like being a detective in a Raymond Chandler novel or like Magnum or Remington Steele — in fact, much of the time, detective work is focused on research and surveillance. You will learn more about different aspects of the job throughout this guide.

An investigator’s clients come from all walks of life. One might be a homemaker seeking information about whether her husband is cheating. Another might be an insurance company trying to catch someone they suspect has submitted a fraudulent claim. Yet another might be a criminal defense lawyer trying to win the case for a client. In this guide you will find descriptions of 24 of the most common types of investiga-

tions a PI is likely to work on. Chances are, you will be interested in at least one – and probably several – of these areas.

1.1 Benefits of the Career

Private investigation is a challenging, exciting career. Like all careers, it requires a certain amount of routine work, but there are also those heart-pounding, adrenaline-pumping moments.

Whether you're reuniting an adoptee with her birth parents, helping solve a crime, or keeping an innocent man out of jail, the work of a private investigator can make a big difference to many people's lives.

Although pay for a beginning private investigator can be relatively low, the potential exists for an experienced investigator to make more than \$100,000 a year.

PIs are more in demand than ever, and according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment is expected to keep growing faster than the national average through 2016. Increased demand for PIs will be generated by fear of crime, increased litigation and the need to protect confidential information and property of all kinds, as well as the increase of criminal activity on the Internet such as identity theft, harassment, and illegal downloading.

Additional private investigators will be needed by law firms to meet the needs for criminal defense and lawsuits among companies and individuals. Greater corporate financial activity worldwide will increase the demand for investigators to control internal and external financial losses, as well as to find out what competitors are doing and to prevent industrial spying.

So if this dynamic field is calling to you, now is the time to get started! Read on to find out how this guide will help you.

1.2 Inside This Guide

In the *FabJob Guide to Become a Private Investigator* we offer you practical information to help you get started and succeeding in the intriguing and exciting world of private investigation.

If you are a beginner, this guide will teach you what being a PI is like, how to learn private investigation skills, and how to find work in this competitive business.

If you are an experienced investigator who would like to branch into a specialized field or start your own agency, this guide will take you through the necessary steps of setting up a PI business.

The advice in this guide is based on interviews and consultation with successful private investigators who are working in the industry right now. These experts include published authors of PI manuals and articles, chairmen of State Private Investigation and crime-related boards, and the director of the National Association of Investigative Specialists, as well as numerous other PIs who have been recognized for their excellence in the field.

The information in this guide is presented in a step-by-step manner. Chapter 2, *Getting Ready*, covers some important preliminary steps to prepare you for becoming a private investigator, including the skills employers are looking for, training programs, how to get experience and types of investigations.

Chapter 3 focuses on *Getting Hired*. This chapter will give you information to help you find your first job. You will discover how to find out about job openings, the best ways to contact employers, how to prepare a resume and cover letter, and what employers are looking for in an interview.

If you would like to set up your own agency, you will find some excellent advice in Chapter 4. Here you will find practical information such as what equipment you will need, how to set your rates, and how to get clients. You will even find some helpful resources on such matters as choosing a business name and location.

Finally, chapter 5 has information to help you achieve success as a private investigator. It includes ideas to help you get free publicity and be recognized as an expert. You will also learn about the top 7 future trends for PIs.

When you're finished with this guide you will know what step to take next and which direction to head from there. Along the way our experts will give you tips based on their experiences to make the trip a lot easier. From that point on, with a little hard work, and by applying what you learn here, it's just a matter of time before you'll be where you want to be... in an exciting career as a Private Investigator!