MICROSOFT CERTIFICATION ROADMAP 2026

A practical guide to choosing a Microsoft learning path based on your career goal.

1. Choose your career path

CAREER GOAL	SUGGESTED START	NEXT STEP / ROLE-BASED PATH	GOOD FIT FOR
Azure / Cloud Administration	Azure Fundamentals — **AZ-900** (optional foundation)	Azure Administrator Associate — **AZ-104** Then consider Azure Solutions Architect Expert — **AZ-305**	Beginners, IT support, system administrators
Azure Networking	AZ-900 or networking fundamentals	Azure Network Engineer Associate — **AZ-700**	Network engineers moving into cloud networking
Cybersecurity	Security, Compliance, and Identity Fundamentals — **SC-900** (optional)	Choose a current role-based path in security operations, identity/access, information protection, or cloud security	Security analysts, SOC teams, IT administrators
Microsoft 365 / Modern Work	Review current Microsoft 365 learning content and credential availability	Consider current role-based options for endpoint administration or Microsoft 365 administration	Help desk, endpoint, and Microsoft 365 administrators
Data / Analytics	Start with data fundamentals learning content; verify current exam status	Explore current Microsoft Fabric analytics or data engineering credentials aligned to your role	Analysts, BI professionals, data practitioners
AI / App Development	Start with current Azure AI fundamentals learning content	Select a current AI developer, AI engineer, or AI business credential based on experience	Developers, app builders, AI-focused learners
DevOps	Build Azure administration and Git/CI-CD fundamentals	DevOps Engineer Expert — **AZ-400**; verify current prerequisites and exam availability	Developers, cloud admins, release and platform teams

2. Follow these four steps

1. Pick a job role Choose a target such as cloud administrator, network engineer, security analyst, data analyst, or developer.	**2. Check the official credential** Confirm the current name, exam code, prerequisites, and retirement status on Microsoft Learn.	**3. Learn and practise** Use Microsoft Learn modules and hands-on labs. Practise real tasks, not only exam questions.	**4. Prepare and book** Review the official study guide and book the exam when you are ready.

3. Important 2026 note

Microsoft updates its certification portfolio, and some older exams or credentials have retired or been replaced during 2026. Treat this document as career-path guidance, not a guarantee that every exam code remains available. Before paying for an exam, check the official Microsoft page for the latest name, prerequisites, and availability.

Official resources: Microsoft Credentials | Browse certifications | Microsoft Learn training

Prepared as a general 2026 roadmap. Certification names, prerequisites, and exam availability can change; verify details with Microsoft before registering.