

FREE QA GUIDE

# The Software Testing Job Search Checklist

Your 30-Day Action Plan to Land Your First Software Testing Role

By Phillip Bailey · 30-year QA veteran (startups to Fortune 500)

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## Introduction

You want to break into software testing, but the job search feels overwhelming. Where do you start? What do employers actually look for? How do you compete when you lack QA experience?

I've spent over 30 years in Quality Assurance and have hired hundreds of testers—many of them career changers just like you. I know exactly what gets resumes noticed, what impresses hiring managers, and what separates candidates who land offers from those who don't.

This checklist gives you a clear 30-day action plan to position yourself for QA success. Follow these steps systematically, and you'll dramatically increase your chances of landing interviews and offers.

Your software testing career starts today.

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# Week 1: Build Your Foundation

## Day 1-2: Learn QA Fundamentals

- Learn what a software tester actually does and what separates a "tester" from a Quality Assurance professional
- Understand key testing concepts: functional testing, regression testing, test cases, bug reports, software development lifecycle
- Familiarize yourself with common QA terminology so you can speak the language confidently

**Why this matters:** You need basic knowledge to discuss testing intelligently in interviews and understand job descriptions.

## Day 3-4: Practice Testing

- Choose 2-3 websites or mobile apps you use regularly
- Test them systematically: try to break them, find bugs, explore edge cases
- Learn how to write a bug. Document at least 3 bugs you find with detailed steps to reproduce, actual vs. expected results, and screenshots
- Learn what a test case looks like and write 5 test cases for a simple feature (like a login page or search function)

**Why this matters:** Hands-on practice builds real skills and creates portfolio material to discuss in interviews.

## Day 5-7: Build Your Online Presence

- Create or update your LinkedIn profile with a professional photo and QA-focused headline
- Write a LinkedIn summary explaining your career transition to QA and highlighting relevant skills
- Update your profile with skills relevant to QA: attention to detail, analytical thinking, problem-solving, communication, etc.
- Join 3-5 QA groups on LinkedIn and follow QA thought leaders - actually read what they have to say
- Set your profile to "Open to Work" and specify you're seeking QA roles

**Why this matters:** Recruiters search LinkedIn for candidates. An optimized profile makes you discoverable and positions you professionally.

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## Week 2: Create Application Materials

### Day 8-10: Craft Your Resume

- Write a strong summary statement that positions you as a career changer with relevant skills (not a generic objective)
- Create a skills section emphasizing QA-relevant abilities: attention to detail, analytical thinking, problem-solving, communication
- Reframe your work experience to highlight testing-relevant activities (problem-solving, documentation, quality focus, user advocacy)

- Include a "Projects" or "Relevant Experience" section showcasing any testing practice, courses completed, or self-directed learning
- Optimize for applicant tracking software: use standard section headings, include keywords from job descriptions, avoid complex formatting
- Keep your resume to one page with clean, simple formatting

**Why this matters:** Your resume must get past automated systems AND impress human hiring managers. Strategic positioning overcomes the experience gap.

## **Day 11-12: Write Your Cover Letter Template**

- Research 2-3 companies you'd like to work for (understand their products, services, values)
- Write a cover letter template that focuses on THEM (what value you bring) not YOU (what you want)
- Include a brief story demonstrating your problem-solving ability or attention to detail
- Explain why you are transitioning to QA and what excites you about testing
- Keep it to 3-4 short paragraphs (hiring managers won't read lengthy letters)
- Proofread meticulously — typos in a QA application suggest lack of attention to detail

**Why this matters:** Most cover letters are boring and generic. A compelling, company-specific letter differentiates you.

## Day 13-14: Build Your Portfolio

- Create a simple portfolio document (Google Doc, GitHub repository, or personal website) showcasing your testing work
- Include the bug reports you wrote earlier with professional formatting
- Include the test cases you created
- Write a brief article about something you learned about testing or a bug you found
- Make sure everything looks polished and professional
- Add a link to your portfolio on your resume and LinkedIn profile

**Why this matters:** Tangible evidence of your abilities overcomes lack of professional experience.

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## Week 3: Launch Your Job Search

### Day 15-17: Set Up Your Job Search System

- Create accounts on Indeed, LinkedIn Jobs, Glassdoor, and Dice
- Set up job alerts for "QA tester," "software tester," "quality assurance," and "manual tester" in your target locations or "remote"
- Create a spreadsheet to track applications (company, position, date applied, contact info, follow-up dates)
- Research 10-15 companies you'd like to work for and bookmark their career pages

- Identify 5-10 staffing agencies that specialize in QA placements and submit your resume

**Why this matters:** Organized, systematic job searching produces better results than random applications.

## **Day 18-21: Apply Strategically**

- Apply to at least 5 positions per day (35+ total this week)
- Customize your resume for each application by incorporating keywords from the job description
- Write company-specific cover letters (use your template but personalize for each company)
- Apply early in the week (Monday-Wednesday) and within 24-48 hours of postings appearing
- Follow up one week after applying with a brief, polite email reiterating your interest
- Track every application in your spreadsheet

**Why this matters:** Volume matters when you lack experience. More applications = more interview opportunities.

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# Week 4: Network and Prepare

## Day 22-24: Network Actively

- Connect with 10-15 QA professionals on LinkedIn with personalized connection requests
- Reach out to 3-5 QA professionals requesting brief informational interviews (15-20 minutes to learn about their career path)
- Join online QA communities (Ministry of Testing, Software Testing subreddit, QA Slack/Discord groups)
- Search Meetup.com for local software testing or tech groups and attend at least one event
- Tell friends, family, and former colleagues about your career transition and ask if they know anyone in tech

**Why this matters:** Many positions are filled through networking before they're posted publicly. Relationships open doors.

## Day 25-27: Prepare for Interviews

- Research common QA interview questions and prepare strong answers
- Write out 5-7 examples from your previous work demonstrating relevant skills (problem-solving, attention to detail, communication, teamwork) using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result)
- Practice explaining your career transition confidently and enthusiastically
- Prepare thoughtful questions to ask interviewers about the role, team, processes, and growth opportunities

- Practice testing common objects (pen, door, elevator) to demonstrate your testing mindset
- Research companies you've applied to so you can speak knowledgeably about their products and services

**Why this matters:** Preparation separates candidates who get offers from those who don't. Practice builds confidence.

## Day 28-30: Continue and Optimize

- Apply to at least 15 more positions
- Follow up on previous applications
- Continue networking and building relationships
- Refine your resume and cover letter based on any feedback received
- Keep learning — complete another testing course or tutorial
- Stay positive and persistent—job searching is a numbers game

**Why this matters:** Consistency and persistence win. Every action brings you closer to landing your first QA role.

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## Key Reminders

**Highlight Transferable Skills** - Your previous work experience provides valuable abilities that translate to QA. Customer service teaches user perspective. Teaching develops communication skills. Project management builds organizational abilities. Identify and emphasize these connections.

**Be Honest About Your Experience** - Don't claim QA experience you don't have, but confidently present the relevant skills you do possess and are learning. Hiring managers appreciate authenticity and eagerness to learn.

**Focus on Value, Not Need** - Frame your applications around what you can do for the company, not what you want from them. Employers hire people who solve problems.

**Persistence Pays Off** - You'll face rejections. You'll apply to positions and hear nothing back. This is normal. Every "no" brings you closer to "yes." Keep going.

**Quality AND Quantity Matter** - Apply to many positions (quantity) but customize each application (quality). Both are necessary.

**Network Actively** - Relationships open doors that applications alone cannot. Invest time in building genuine connections with people in the field.

**Stay Positive** - Your attitude matters. Approach the job search with genuine enthusiasm for QA work, not desperation for any job. Hiring managers can sense the difference.

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## **Your Next Step**

This checklist provides the roadmap. Now you need to take action. Start today with Day 1 tasks. Work through the checklist systematically. Track your progress. Stay consistent.

Thousands of career changers have successfully broken into software testing by following these exact strategies. You can too.

The software testing field needs Quality Assurance Professionals. Companies are desperate for people who think critically, communicate clearly, and care about delivering quality products. That person can be you.

**If you're serious about transforming your career and want the complete roadmap to QA success, get the full QA Transformation Guide Series.**

The complete collection includes:

- Getting Started in Software Testing (comprehensive fundamentals to start strong)
- How to Get a Job in Software Testing (detailed guide focused on your transition into QA)
- Your First 90 Days as a Software Tester (succeeding in your new role to accelerate your growth)
- The Science and Art of Software Testing (advanced concepts that open your career)
- Advanced Testing Skills for Professionals (level up your career and create opportunities for yourself)
- Master Bug Reporting and Documentation (communicate like a pro that everyone wants to work with)
- Software Testing Templates and Resources (ready-to-use materials that you can customize to your needs)

**[Click Here to Get Instant Access to the Complete Guide Series and Accelerate Your Career]**

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# To Your Success

You've got this. Take the first step today. Update your resume. Apply to five positions. Connect with one QA professional. Complete one testing tutorial.

Small consistent actions compound into major results. Your QA career starts now.

To your success,

**Phillip Bailey** · 30-year QA veteran (startups to Fortune 500)

*P.S. - Don't let this checklist sit on your hard drive. Print it out, put it on your desk, and start checking off items today. Your future self will thank you.*

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## About Eochair

This guide is free. The team behind it is building the tool QA professionals wish they'd had from day one.

Most testing tools make *you* work for *them* — you bend your process around the tool, maintain traceability by hand, and watch requirements, tests, and issues drift into separate silos until nobody remembers what the feature was even supposed to do.

*"Automating Jira is the absolute worst programming experience I've ever had."*

*"Starting to hit the limits of how we're handling traceability without everything breaking. Losing my mind basically."*

A tool should work for you, not the other way around. **Eochair** keeps your requirements, tests, and issues in one place and links them automatically — so your spec stays alive instead of evaporating the moment a story gets closed.

Built by the Eochair team, led by a 30-year QA veteran — the same person who wrote this guide.

**Eochair is launching soon. Join the waitlist → [guides.eochair.com](https://guides.eochair.com)**



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