CYBER START

Challenges and games to inspire the next generation of cyber security professionals

What is CyberStart?

CyberStart: a suite of challenges, tools and games designed to introduce young people to the field of cyber security.

We are facing a significant shortage of trained, skilled cyber security professionals. This is due, in part, to the lack of young people taking an interest in IT and computer security, both as a hobby and as a potential career path.

In response to this challenge, SANS Institute has created CyberStart. This exciting and innovative project offers a suite of challenges, tools and games aimed at introducing young people to the field of cyber security, developing their interest and helping them to pursue careers in the sector.

SANS is the world's most trusted cyber security training provider. Through CyberStart, SANS is looking to change the face of cyber security for today's young people, presenting it as an exciting, engaging and accessible employment option, whilst also helping government organisations to develop their national cyber security capabilities.

As online technologies continue to evolve and cyber criminals become more sophisticated in their methods and approaches, cyber security is rapidly becoming a top global priority. It is crucial that governments and businesses have access to a pool of skilled cyber security professionals in order to keep themselves, their employees and their clients safe.

SANS CyberStart introduces young people to:

✓ Linux
✓ Programming
✓ Web Attacks
✓ Binary Attacks
✓ Cryptography
✓ Forensics

TOP SECRET

"SANS is looking to change the face of cyber security for today's young people"
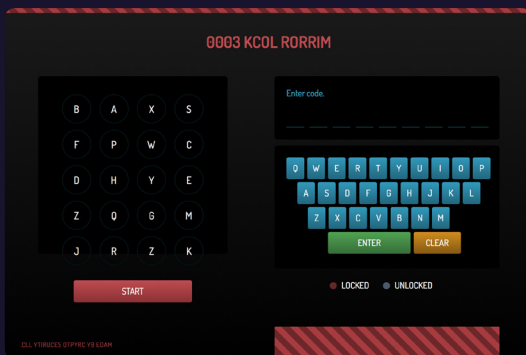
CyberStart is unique

In order to captivate and inspire young people, you need to think differently. SANS has therefore applied gamification principles and game-design techniques in developing CyberStart. The challenges are accessible to those without any pre-existing cyber security knowledge and span various age, difficulty and skill levels.

As the candidates move through the challenge levels, they are driven forward by engaging narratives, focused on encouragement and praise. The challenges provide context of the day-to-day activities of the modern cyber security professional, tackling everything from Linux to cryptography and programming to forensics.

Attempts to simply repackage adult learning techniques for young people can cause alienation and loss of interest. CyberStart uses language and ideas that young people identify with; challenging concepts requiring common sense and analytical skills, but that also promote enjoyment and genuine interest in the subject matter.

"Everything from Linux to cryptography and programming to forensics"

How to get involved

Players log in from home or school or wherever they have Internet access to play CyberStart. Accessing over 300 hours of content, players drive and measure their progress as they work through challenges by themselves. As players continue to succeed and progress, they will naturally drive themselves through the training content.

Some young adults will discover cyber security essentials and become more aware of security; others will find they are an elite talent with tremendous potential to join the future cyber security workforce. CyberStart has something for everyone.

Praise for other SANS programs:

"Exceptional. There's no other word for it."

"We were able to completely immerse ourselves in the learning and I think that's one of the strongest points."

"The industry is looking at response as much as prevention... we all now feel confident contributing to organisations looking to fill their cyber skills gap."

"The greatest opportunity I've ever had in my life."

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