

# The Naval Architecture Employment Report 2023

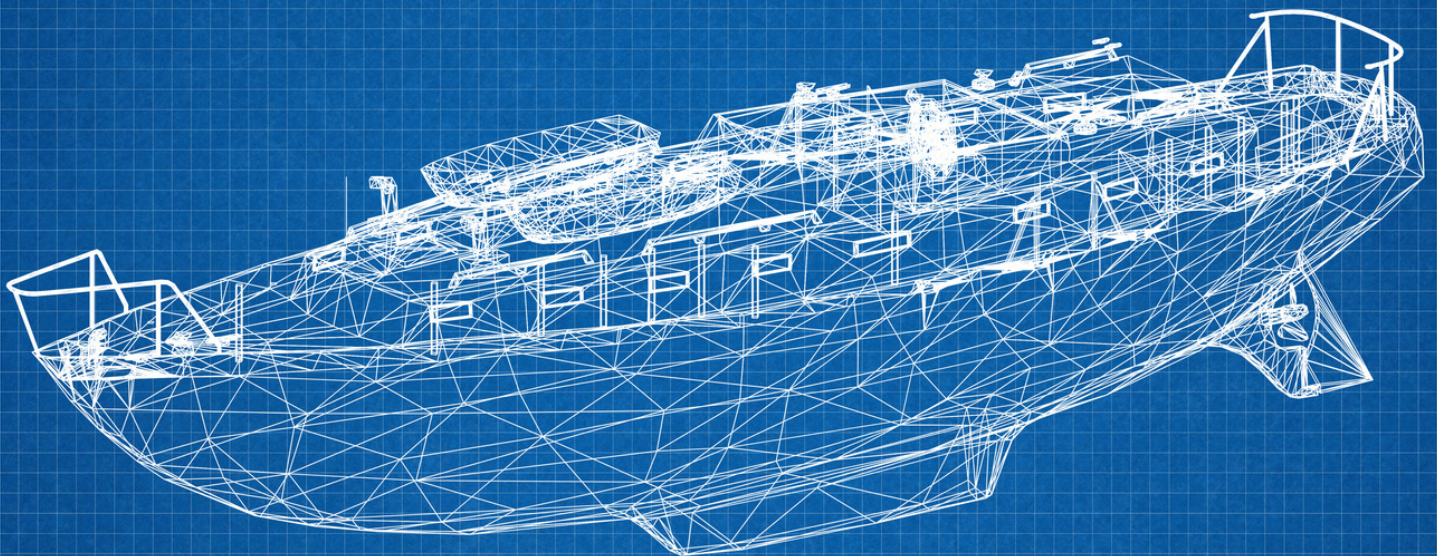
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# The Naval Architecture Employment Report

A report by Faststream Recruitment

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# The Naval Architecture Employment Report

A report by Faststream Recruitment

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Welcome from Faststream Recruitment



The Faststream Recruitment Group was established in 1999, employs over 100 people, and is a global specialist in maritime and energy recruitment.

We have a dedicated and experienced recruitment team that has a sole focus on working within the naval architecture space. We work with candidates seeking careers across naval architecture, engineering, design, surveying, performance management and more. We partner with businesses including ship owners, ship operators, shipyards, consultancies, ship registries, class societies, equipment suppliers, technology firms, engineering contractors, renewable energy firms, and yacht designers.

We operate across key maritime locations in Europe, the Middle East & Africa, Asia-Pacific, and the Americas, servicing our customers, both candidates and clients across the world.

For more details, visit [www.faststream.com](http://www.faststream.com)



# The Naval Architecture Employment Report

A report by Faststream Recruitment

## Welcome from the Authors

The surveys and report were conducted and produced by Faststream Recruitment.

### Mark Charman

*CEO & Founder of Faststream Recruitment*



Mark is the CEO and Founder of Faststream Recruitment and founded the company in 1999.

He has a wealth of knowledge and experience in recruiting for the maritime sector globally. As a Fellow of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation, he is a renowned thought leader in specialist recruitment.

Mark's involvement as a speaker, panellist and writer provides a head hunters perspective into human factors in the workplace.

### Adam Graves

*Director of Marine and Energy - Faststream Recruitment Europe, Middle East, Africa and the Americas*



Adam is the Director of Marine and Energy at Faststream Recruitment covering our Europe, Middle East, Africa, and Americas operations. Adam leads our Marine, Shipbuilding and Energy divisions. In addition to running the recruitment operations, Adam also manages Executive Search Assignments for key clients.

He joined the Faststream Recruitment business in 2008 gaining vast experience across the Maritime and Energy departments.

He is a Fellow of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (FIRP) and holds a bachelor's degree in psychology. Adam participates in key industry events such as Posidonia, Floating Offshore Wind, Offshore Europe, Gastech, and SMM.

# Executive summary

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

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This executive summary provides a comprehensive overview of key findings from the Naval Architecture Employment survey, highlighting trends, challenges, and opportunities in the sector. The report draws insights from a series of surveys conducted between 2019 and 2023, offering a clear picture of the evolving landscape in the field of naval architecture.

### Retention and job-seeking sentiments

The job market is currently candidate-led, with a substantial increase in the time it takes to hire new talent. Retention rates among naval architects have shown promising signs, with job-seeking sentiments decreasing year-on-year. However, it's crucial to note that experienced candidates, particularly those with over 15 years of post-graduate experience, are actively seeking new opportunities.

### Motivations for job-seeking

The top motivations for naval architects considering job changes are compensation and career development. The demand for promotions is evolving into a desire for "micro-markers," indicating that professionals seek incremental growth through learning opportunities, mentoring, new challenges, and increased responsibility.

### Work-life balance as a loyalty factor

Work-life balance continues to be a dominant factor in retaining naval architects. Nearly 50% of respondents cited it as their primary reason for staying with their current employer. Moreover, an overwhelming 74% of surveyed professionals prioritise work-life balance over salary. To enhance work-life balance, naval architects value flexible working hours, sufficient annual leave entitlement, remote work options, the absence of work-related interruptions during leave, and a reduced need for overtime.

### Relocation preferences

The desire for relocation among naval architects has shown a decline, marking a shift from previous years. London emerged as the most attractive maritime hub for naval architects, followed by Singapore, Oslo, and Copenhagen.

### Working styles

The working styles of naval architects have remained relatively consistent. Notably, the desire for full-time remote work has slightly decreased, while the preference for hybrid work has increased.

### Remote work and flexible hours for job acceptance

The report highlights the growing importance of access to some remote work and flexible hours in job offer acceptance. A significant percentage of naval architects would reject a job offer if it did not offer these options.

### Compensation and pay rises

Compensation remains a crucial aspect of talent management in the naval architecture field. Notably, the frequency of pay rises has increased, with 55% of naval architects receiving a pay rise in the last six months, reflecting a 19 percentile increase year-on-year. Pay rises of 10% or more have increased, demonstrating employers' willingness to provide significant compensation adjustments.

### Employee benefits and communication

Key benefits sought by naval architects include working from home, bonuses, flexi-time, private medical coverage, and enhanced pensions. Employers are increasingly providing these benefits to meet the preferences of their workforce. However, communication about benefits remains a challenge, with a substantial percentage of naval architects never receiving communication from their employers about their benefits.

### Desired benefits and employee investment

The top desired benefits identified by naval architects align with those currently received, suggesting that employers are effectively prioritising benefits that matter most to their employees.

### Career development and progression

Regular reviews, recognition, and opportunities for growth are key factors that motivate and retain employees. While there is a growing emphasis on the importance of reviews, there remains a gap between those who value reviews and those who receive them.

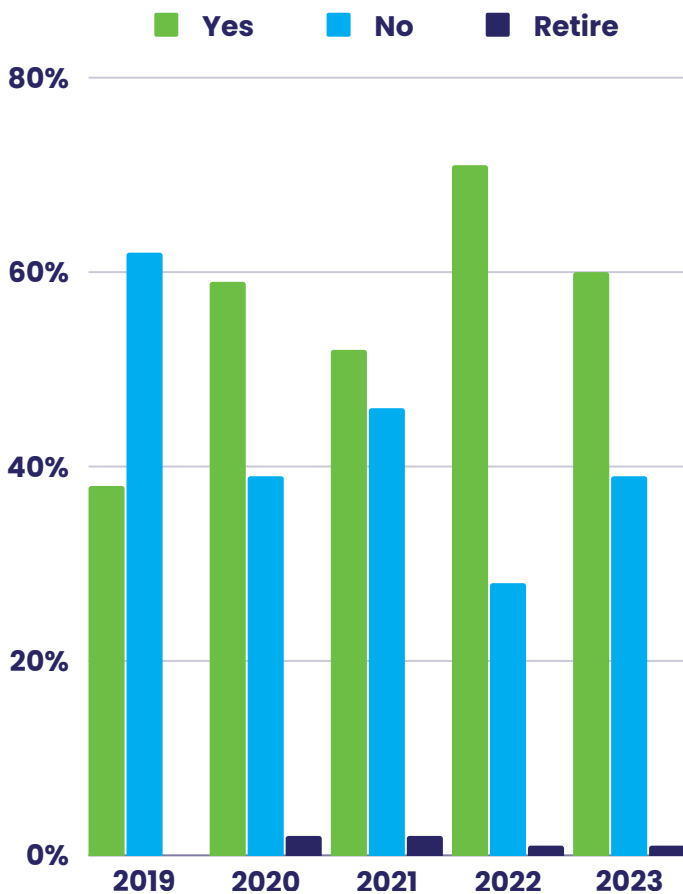
# Retention

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

With the noticeable shift in plans by employers to retain rather than just attract talent, job-seeking sentiments are going to be very important to employers. Not only are we in a period where the market is dominantly candidate-led, but we are also seeing the time to hire increase significantly.

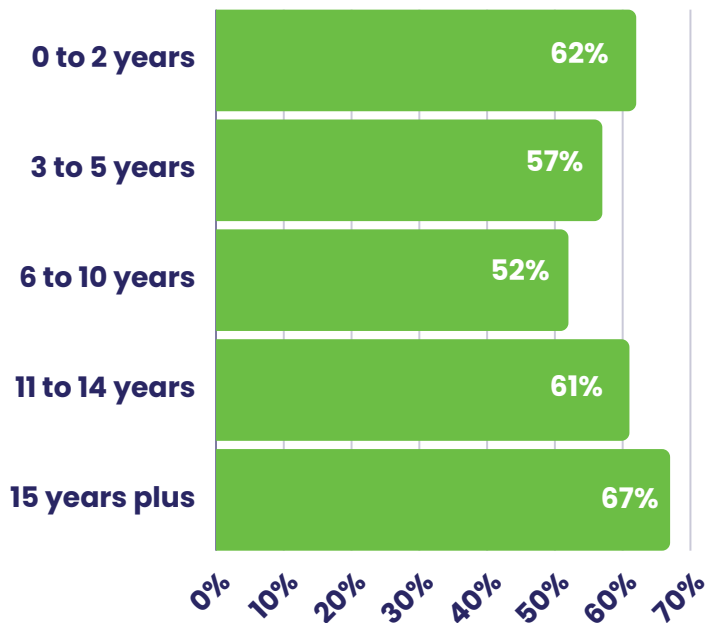
Retention rates amongst naval architects are on the uptick this year, with job-seeking sentiments declining from 71% to 60% year on year. However, job-seeking behaviours have fluctuated over the years quite dramatically, and we could see activity change quite rapidly.

### Are you planning to change jobs in the next 12 months? 2019 to 2023



"The great resignation that we saw after the storm of the pandemic appears to be diminishing, with more naval architects feeling settled with their current employer. However, it is the most experienced candidates (over 15 years post-graduate experience) who are now more active in search of a new opportunity, and this is going to be concerning for employers. Increased 'bear hugging' tactics will need to be deployed," shares Mark Charman.

### Job seeking by years of post-graduate experience



### Compensation and career development top the job-seeking motivations

Salary and benefits remain the top job-seeking motivator but has only increased by one percentile year on year. It remains that naval architects want to be paid what they believe they are worth and searching for a new opportunity is often a natural way to find this. The alternative is often considered an uncomfortable conversation with their employer that they may not be prepared to have.

Career development was again chosen for the third year as the second most popular motivator for job-seeking.

Adam Graves says: "The change we are seeing is not just the demand for outright promotions but for what we like to call 'micro-markers'. People want to see their careers grow and feel more successful by making progressive steps. This can be from learning opportunities, mentoring, training, new challenges, attending events, gaining more responsibility, and managing projects. Small steps can go a long way in making people feel challenged and stimulated in their role, often a helping hand in retention."



**60% of Naval Architects are planning to change jobs**

# Retention – continued

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

### Job seeking motivations

Motivation	%
Better salary and benefits	35%
Career progression	34%
Better work-life balance	19%
Relocation	5%
Not aligned with culture and values	5%
Job security	2%

### *Work-life balance continues to dominate as a loyalty factor*

If you want to work on strategies to retain your naval architects, creating a better work-life balance could make a significant impact. Every year it comes out on top as the reason to stay with a current employer, significantly rising to nearly 50% of the answers this year.

It is also worth noting, that across all respondents in the survey, 74% agreed that ultimately work-life balance was more important to them than salary.

### Loyalty motivations

Motivation	%
Work-life balance	46%
Salary & benefits	22%
Clear progression path	11%
Relationships	9%
Company culture and values	8%
Job security	4%

### *What does work-life balance mean to naval architects?*

Work-life balance in all its varying forms is used in many conversations, reports, and media but we wanted to get to the root of some of the factors that naval architects think contribute to it. They shared that it meant flexible working hours, having sufficient annual leave entitlement, working from home, not being contacted whilst on annual leave and not working overtime.



### *A decreasing desire for relocation*

In previous years we have seen an ongoing upward trajectory in the percentage of naval architects who would be willing to relocate to another country for a new job. For the first time, we see these sentiments decreasing with a drop from 81% to 73% year on year.

### *London comes out on top as the most attractive maritime hub*

Whilst the attractiveness of relocation has declined, we still wanted to see where in the world naval architects thought the most attractive hubs were. A first for our employment surveys this year, London (28%) in the UK came out on top, followed by Singapore (14%) and Oslo (9%) and Copenhagen (9%) joint third.

### Most attractive maritime hubs

1. London
2. Singapore
3. Copenhagen and Oslo
4. Dubai
5. Athens

# Working styles

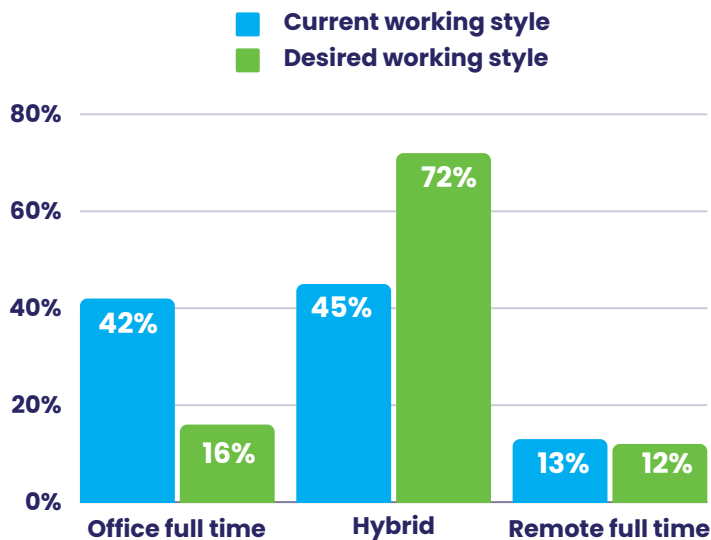
## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

We can't escape the 'office versus home' work debate and it is not ending anytime soon. It is still one of the most discussed factors in recruitment from both an employer's and candidate's point of view. We have seen again in the media lately reports of employers requesting their employees to return to the office, with some denying homework outright.

### Working styles overall have not changed for naval architects

12 months on and we see the same breakdown of working styles again. 42% are working in the office full-time, 13% working remotely full-time, and 45% are working in a hybrid style. When it comes to the style that naval architects want to work, however, we see that this year the desire to work remotely full-time has decreased from 14% to 12% and the desire for hybrid working has increased from 70% to 72%.

### Working styles: Current versus desired

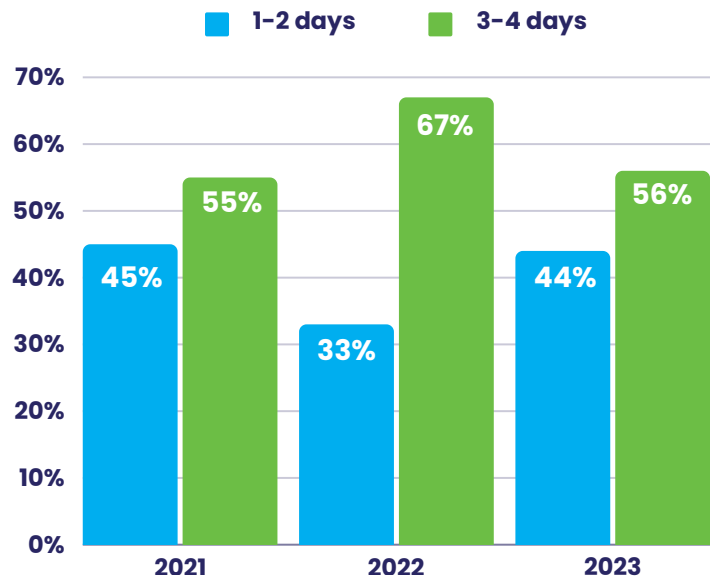


### Fewer days in the office for hybrid-workers

In a step change from last year, naval architects shared with us in this latest survey that more hybrid workers are working fewer days in the office once again.

**72% of Naval Architects want to work in a hybrid style**

### Hybrid workers days in the office 2021 to 2023



*"It is worth considering whether employees have put the pressure back on employers to let them work from home more often. If work-life balance is impacting retention levels then additional days at home is a great way to ensure that naval architects are getting the time they need to manage their personal life whilst getting their job done,"* says Graves.

In turn, the percentage of hybrid workers who only wanted to work in the office one or two days per week also increased year on year.

Charman comments *"My continued concern is that if employees are together less, it harms culture. If we are looking for cohesive teams that share ideas, inspire one another, and help each other to continuously learn and grow, are we impeding business growth if we don't get together more frequently? Every business will be different but, in my experience, those who work remotely more frequently are the least engaged with the business's purpose and values."*

### The impact of remote working and flexible hours on job offer acceptance

We have seen an upward trajectory in the percentage of naval architects who would reject a job offer if it did not offer flexible hours, from 45% to 50%. In turn, there is also an increasing sentiment to turn down a job offer if it does not allow at least one day working from home, up from 36% to 45%. Food for thought when making job offers.



# Compensation

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

Compensation and benefits are hot topics right now and have become more strategic in their use within businesses. Not only are human resources professionals involved but is becoming part of larger boardroom discussions.

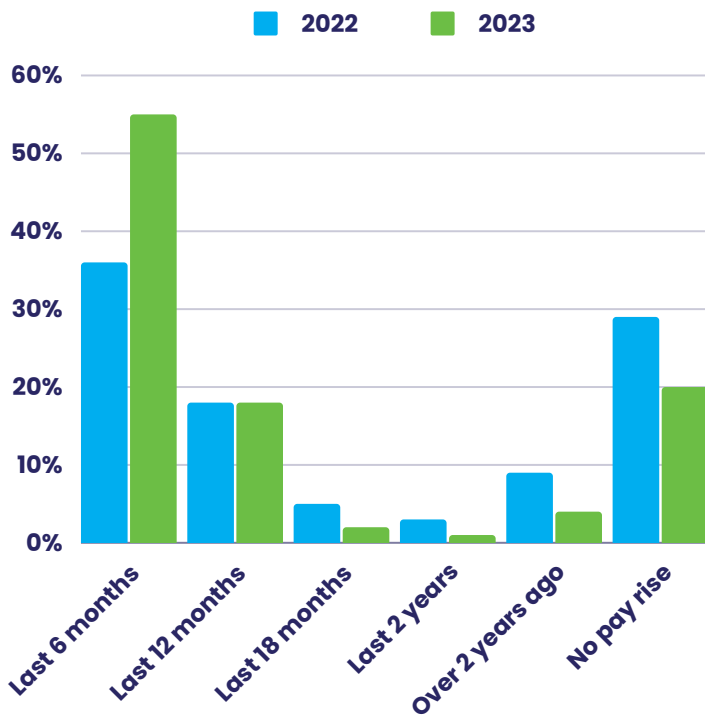
*"Employers tell us, that getting compensation and benefits right is like being stuck between a rock and a hard place. In a highly competitive talent marketplace like naval architecture, you might feel like you are in the hardest and rockiest place of all,"* says Charman.

### The recency of pay rises increases

80% of respondents shared that they had received a pay rise, an uptick from 71% last year. But the most stand-out finding was the increase in pay rises given in the last six months in comparison to the data from 2022.

55% of all naval architects had received a pay rise in the last six months with an additional 18% agreeing they had one in the last year. That equates year on year to a 19-percentile increase.

### Pay rise recency - 2022 versus 2023



There are a lot of theories on why pay rises are increasing in frequency, just a few to mention would be the ongoing pressures of the cost of living and inflation levels, counteroffers, levelling out pay discrepancies within teams, more transparency among employees of pay grades and scales, counteracting job seeking and headhunting behaviours.

*"Simply, the pressure is on for employers, and we are seeing it in the survey results this year,"* Graves observes.

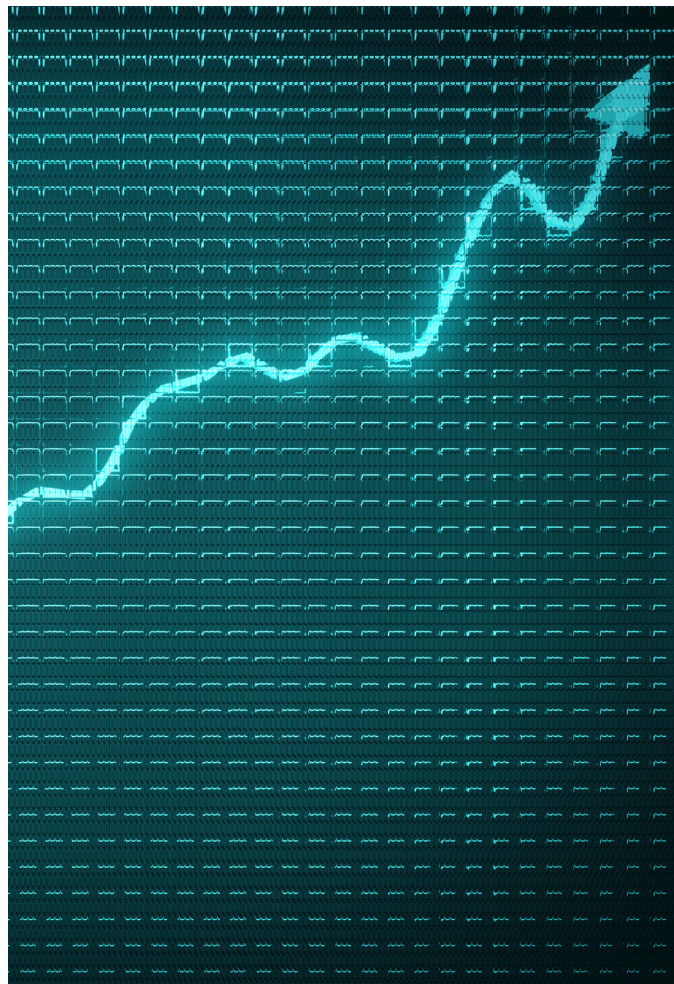
### Nearly a third of naval architects have secured a ten percent or more pay rise

With pay rise frequency on the up, many may believe that employers are using 'micro-rise' techniques to keep up with the frequency.

Charman explains *"Micro-rises can be used more frequently as the name suggests, smaller pay rises but deployed more often. But in the case of naval architects, we also see pay rise percentages on the up."*



## 55% of Naval Architects have had a pay rise in the last six months

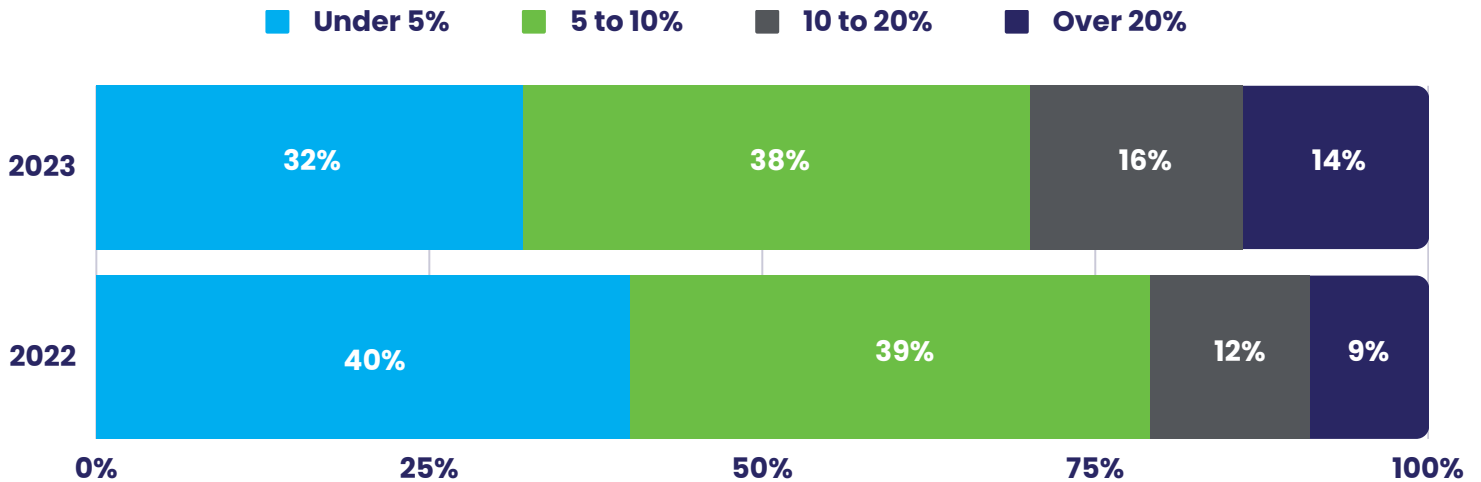


# Compensation – continued

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

As pay rises of 10% or less have decreased, in turn, year on year we can see that pay rises of over 10% and over 20% have increased.

### Pay rise percentages – 2022 versus 2023



### Spotlight on UK naval architect salaries

Naval architects were asked to state their base salary. The table below portrays the low salary, median salary, mean salary, high salary and interquartile\* range of salaries on offer based on the number of years of post-graduate experience (PGE), creating our second-year overview of UK naval architect salaries.

Post Graduate Experience	Low Salary	Median Salary	Mean Salary	High Salary	Interquartile Range
0 to 2 years	£25,000	£34,000	£35,035	£46,000	£30,000 to £40,000
3 to 5 years	£28,000	£43,000	£43,465	£70,000	£35,500 to £50,000
6 to 10 years	£38,000	£53,800	£56,497	£86,852	£45,500 to £63,000
11 to 14 years	£43,680	£57,500	£62,824	£117,000	£46,939 to £73,000
15 years plus	£47,000	£77,000	£86,825	£190,000	£60,000 to £85,000

\*The interquartile range portrays the middle 50% of values when ordered from lowest to highest

### Increased confidence in future compensation

As pay rise frequency and percentages have gone up, so too has the confidence of naval architects' in how they see compensation performing in the future. This year 51% confided that they thought compensation would increase over the next two years (up from 43%), just 7% saw it decreasing (down from 15%) and the remainder thought it would stay the same.

# Employee benefits

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

The unique set of benefits and rewards you offer are a key part of your employer value proposition and can set you apart in the marketplace. They can be a great value-add to a base salary and many employees see benefits that create work-life balance as valuable too, not just monetary ones.

We asked naval architects to share what employee benefits they were currently receiving. The top benefits included working from home (59%), bonus (56%), flexi-time (44%), private medical for the individual and family (34%) and enhanced pension (32%). All of these have increased year on year and are reflective of what we see being offered in the best benefit packages.

### Employee benefit reviews

We wanted to establish the regularity that naval architects are having their employee benefits reviewed. This is something we have never examined before but look forward to seeing the trends emerge over the next few years.

On average, 39% had their benefits reviewed in the last six months, 24% in the last 12 months, 4% in the last 24 months, 4% over 24 months ago and 29% had never had their benefits reviewed.

*“What is apparent is that pay rises are being reviewed and given more frequently than benefits are. This might be because salaries are seen as an easier way to reward people than benefits are. However, I like to think of reward as being more holistic than just the salary itself, which can often become a hygiene factor. Employee benefits give added layers to a package and can even make jobs feel a little more rewarding,” says Graves.*

### Over a third of naval architects have never had their benefits communicated to them

How well are employers communicating benefits? We asked naval architects how often their employers communicated the benefits that they received. On average 8% said monthly, 15% said quarterly, 41% said annually and 36% said never.



# Employee benefits

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

Charman comments: "These results confirm that some naval architects don't know all the benefits their role includes. 36% said their employer never communicated their benefits. Regular communications about benefit schemes and how to access them are a must today. If naval architects don't know about them, they can't value them as part of their package and may seek a new role for a benefit they already get."

### Bonuses are the most desired benefit

Naval architects indicated their top three desired benefits from a list. Bonuses came out on top, followed by flexi-time, paid overtime, and private medical for the individual and family. The top two desired benefits matched with the top benefits received, indicating that employers are doing a good job of prioritising offering the benefits that mean the most to naval architects.



### Benefits received 2019, 2020, 2022 and 2023

Benefit	2019	2020	2022	2023
Bonus	47%	55%	51%	56%
Company Car/Car Allowance	23%	22%	25%	15%
Enhanced Maternity/Adoption/Paternity	9%	9%	10%	17%
Enhanced Pension	21%	25%	23%	32%
Flexi-Time	33%	35%	37%	44%
Gym Membership	9%	9%	7%	13%
Paid Overtime	Did not ask	Did not ask	26%	30%
Personal Development Fund	Did not ask	Did not ask	10%	12%
Private Medical – Family & Individual	28%	30%	30%	34%
Private Medical – Individual only	35%	39%	20%	20%
Working from home	30%	44%	52%	59%
None of these benefit	10%	8%	13%	10%

# Career development

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

For some, it can be important that their job offers more than just an occupation. Many want a job that offers a rewarding career, and the opportunity to progress and develop themselves to their fullest capability.

Regular progression or development reviews can be a great way for employees to gain feedback on what they are doing, where they can develop more skills and knowledge and set goals in progressing their careers.

57% of naval architects said their employer conducted regular reviews with them, an increase year on year from 53%. Yet, 88% of naval architects said these reviews were important or very important to them in their jobs.

Graves shares *"We are still seeing a disparity between those who value reviews and those who are getting them. In my experience, people need more opportunities to grow but on top of that people need to see more frequent expressions of recognition. Reviews are a great way to inspire two-way feedback and create small progressive steps for employees to aspire to but also recognise when an employee is doing a good or great job. People can feel despondent and unappreciated when they aren't getting the feedback they deserve. I think there will be more pressure on expressions of gratitude and recognition as we have all gotten so used to the instant gratification that we can gain from likes, comments and shares on social media."*

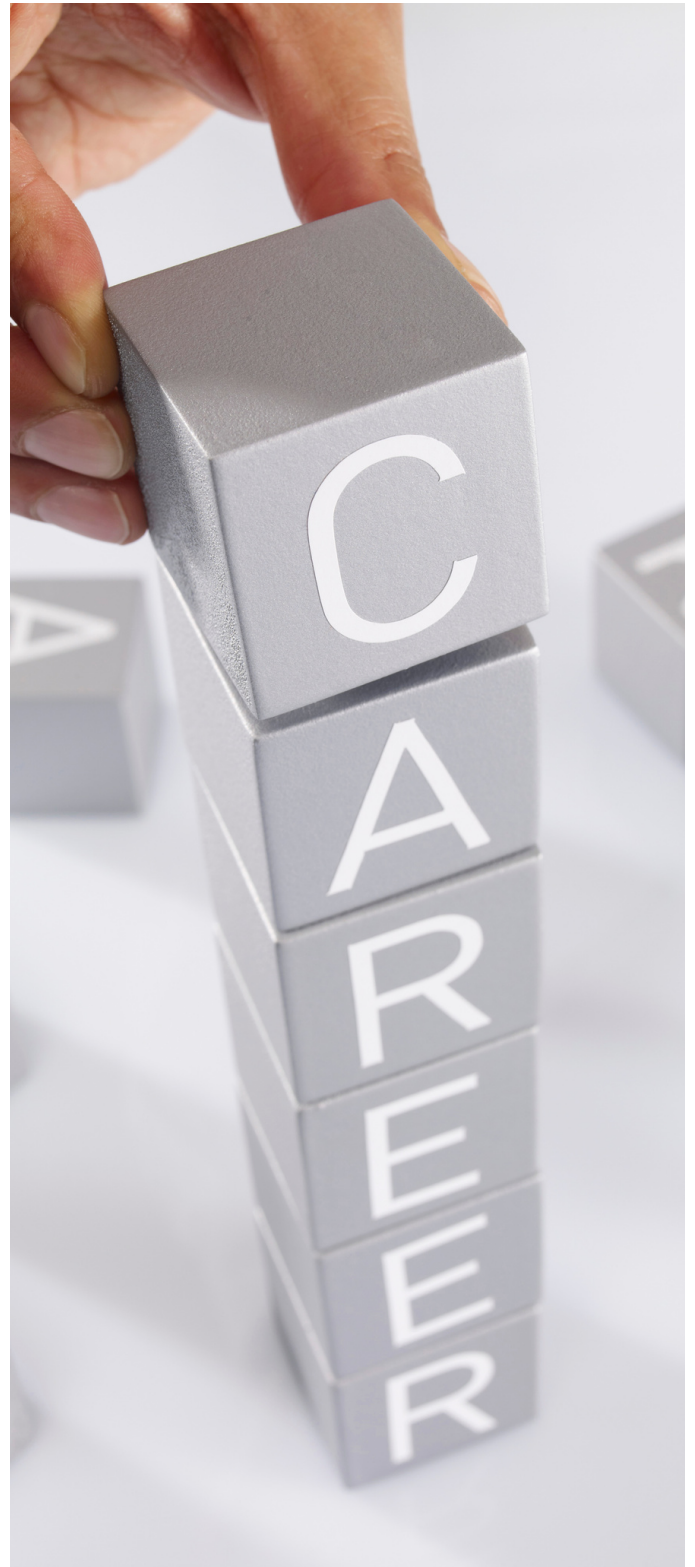


**88% of Naval Architects say that regular reviews are important or very important to them**

### **Naval architects feel more invested in**

We were delighted to see an increase in the percentage of naval architects who felt invested in by their employer, from 49% up to 57% this year. Naval architects shared what made them feel like this. Training and continuous development, the opportunity to manage projects, and gaining constructive feedback came out as the top answers.

*"I think it is inspiring to see how many naval architects are benefiting from their employers investing in them and giving them opportunities to better themselves in their careers. This is a great sign that naval architect employers are staying ahead of the curve by implementing 'micro-markers';" says Charman.*



# Final thoughts and recommendations

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

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We must note that in our survey data comparisons between female and male respondents, we found two stark differences. Females were more motivated to job seek for better career progression in comparison to males. Females were also more likely than males to turn down a job if it did not offer at least one day per of home working and desired their working style to be hybrid. Is there a direct impact on promotions and career progression for those who spend more time working from home?

As the hiring marketplace for naval architects and the ability to retain them becomes increasingly competitive, people strategies will remain important. Attracting new generations has been talked about in detail over the last five years, but the switch to how businesses can retain them in the future is going to become more prevalent. We must also factor in the growing trend of hiring naval architects for non-traditional opportunities, such as superintendents, that we have seen in increasing numbers.

Maritime and energy businesses may wish to re-evaluate some of their talent strategies and so, we have produced a selection of recommendations to consider, including:

### **Tailor retention efforts for experienced employees**

The most experienced candidates (15+ years of post-graduate experience) are more active in searching for new opportunities.

- Pay special attention to retaining these valuable employees and consider incentives at points in tenures where these employees may become more vulnerable to leaving the business.
- Schedule regular conversations and check-ins to see how naval architects are feeling in their roles.
- Don't negate reviews, even with employees who have been with you for a long time. They can be a great source to understand the plans of your people.

### **Create compelling compensation and benefits packages**

We don't necessarily mean being the highest paying in the marketplace but ensuring your compensation packages are competitive is a useful exercise.

- Be careful with aggressive counteroffers that may create salary disparities within the same or similar roles. This can cause conflict internally if compensation packages are discussed.
- Benchmark compensation internally, comparing the same or similar roles to level out pay discrepancies regularly.
- Invest in a bespoke compensation intelligence report to benchmark your current packages with your direct competitors and seek external advice on your future reward strategies.
- Start sharing annual total reward statements encompassing both past and potential future earnings. Include the value of the benefits you offer here too.

### **Create a culture of progression and growth**

Career development was the second most important motivator for job-seeking. Employers should consider providing opportunities for career growth, such as training, mentoring, challenging projects, and increased responsibility. It doesn't have to be a full promotion.

- Consider offering "micro-markers" for career progression to keep employees engaged.
- Ensure you have a structured system in place for regular reviews that provide employees with feedback, helping them identify areas for skill and knowledge improvement, and set clear goals for career advancement.

*Continued over page...*

# Final thoughts and recommendations – *continued*

## The Naval Architecture Employment Report

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- Employees value recognition and feedback. Implement a culture of appreciation and recognition and recognise and reward outstanding performance, whether through formal reviews or more frequent expressions of gratitude. Encourage employees to recognise each other's achievements as well.
- Regularly solicit feedback to determine employees' specific goals and how you can support them in achieving those goals.

### **Emphasise work-life balance**

Work-life balance is a significant loyalty factor for naval architects. Work-life balance often means different things to different individuals.

- Take the time to understand what work-life balance means to your naval architects and tailor policies and practices accordingly.
- Consider implementing flexible working hours, generous annual leave entitlement, and measures to prevent employees from being contacted while on leave.

### **Flexibility is key when it comes to working styles**

Assess your employee work style preferences. These preferences can evolve, and understanding them is essential for making informed decisions.

- If you decide to offer flexibility, make sure expectations are communicated clearly. This includes guidelines on when employees are expected to be in the office, how they should communicate when working remotely, and the importance of meeting deadlines and performance metrics.
- Assess whether working styles have an impact on business growth and tailor your approach based on your specific business needs and goals.

### **Maintain a positive office culture**

While remote and hybrid work arrangements offer flexibility, they can also impact the sense of belonging and office culture.

- Consider strategies to maintain a positive office culture, such as regular team meetings, collaboration events, and opportunities for employees to connect in person.
- Emphasise the benefits of in-person interactions and highlight the value of teamwork, idea sharing, and professional development.
- Stay informed and adapt to the workplace landscape. Be prepared to adapt your policies and practices to remain competitive in the talent market.

We are honoured to share the fifth edition of this survey and report. We would first like to say a huge thank you to all the naval architects who took part this year and have continued to support us with the findings. We would also like to say thank you to our clients who always give us fantastic feedback on these reports and help us to improve them every year.

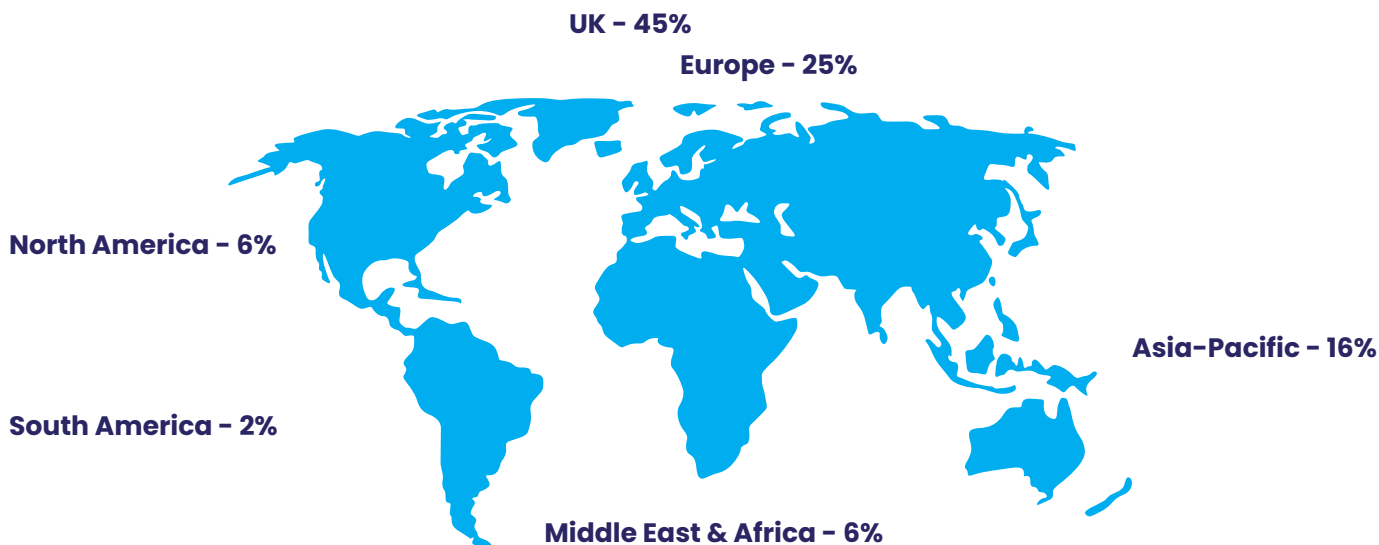
We hope you enjoyed the report, and until next year, we wish you all the best with your retention and hiring efforts. We are here for you when you need us.

*Mark and Adam*

# Demographics and career information

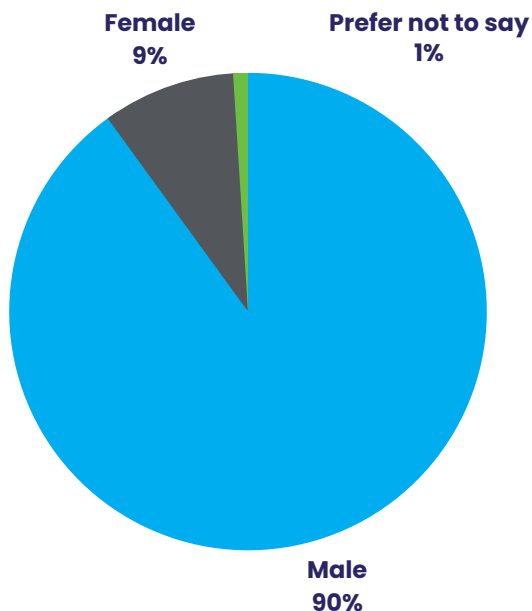
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This world map demonstrates the breakdown of respondents by working location

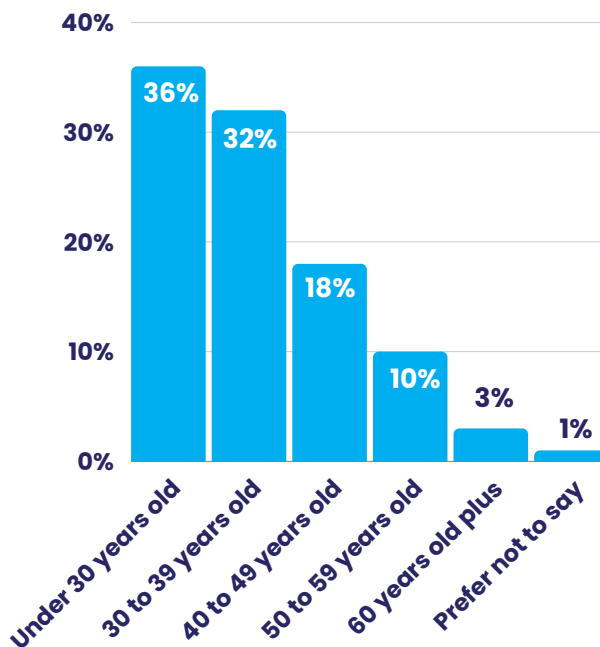


These charts illustrate the gender and age of respondents

Gender



Age



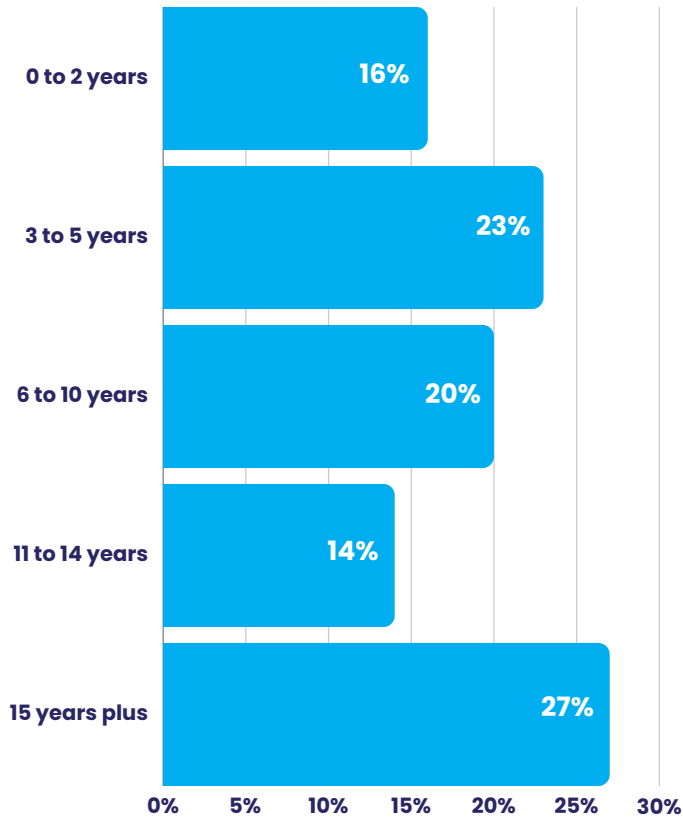


# Demographics – continued

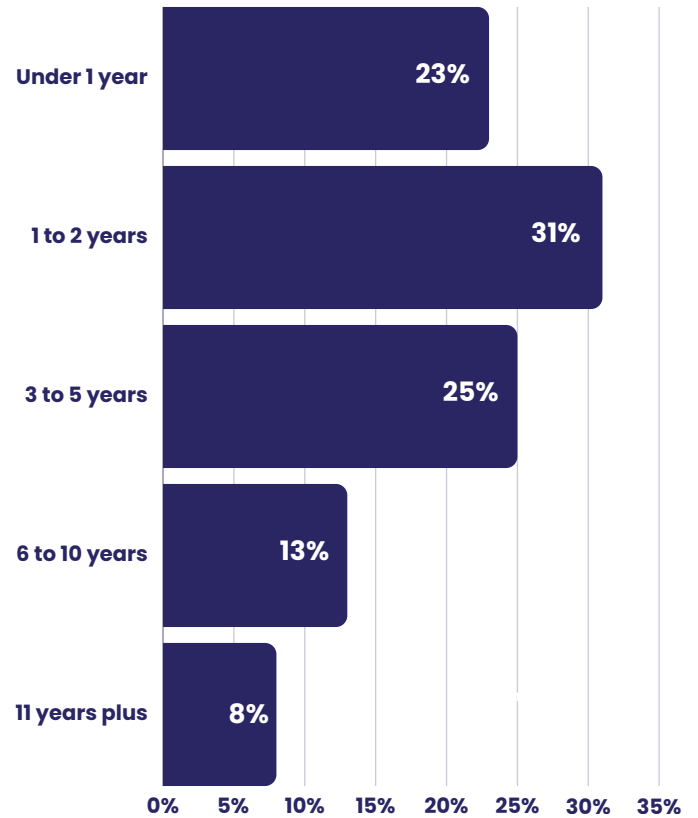
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These charts illustrate the years of post-graduate experience and years of tenure with their employer

### Years of Post-Graduate Experience



### Years of Tenure with Current Employer





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