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Can you get a job in data science and machine learning without a college degree?

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Short Answer: Yes.

Long Answer, keep reading ■

(Advice from industry experts who I talked to.)

Companies are looking for people who add value.
In order to add value, you'll need skills. Simple as that.

Get the skills to provide value and you'll get the job.

In the age of the internet where everything is pretty much free, why do college degrees matter?

A college degree makes it easier to get the skills to get a job in machine learning or data science.

College degrees also help you make many useful connections and provides many opportunities in the form of internships and whatnot.

College degrees have their own place

However that does not mean that you cannot get into these fields without a degree, it'll just take more work.

For machine learning and data science you mainly need 3 skills:

- The theoretical part which mainly includes math
- The practical part which includes programming skills
- An understanding of the industry in which one is applying machine learning and data science

Most people will probably stop here because of the math.

Math is important, but not when you are starting out. You can learn math as and when you need it, programming is actually the more important part.

Start by having strong fundamentals in programming.
This is more important than you think it is.
Python, R and Julia are some of the options out there.
Python is the most recommended for several reasons.

Next, work on a few Kaggle challenges by taking the help of submissions of other users, the docs and the internet.

While you are making these models, try to research a bit more about what's going on under the hood.

If you're making a neural network, try researching about the some of the activation functions you have used in the model.

This was just one approach to learning the skills needed for machine learning and data science. Do what works for you, just get the job done.

And of course, this isn't going to be a very easy process.

It could take more than a year before you could get ready for applying to jobs.

That doesn't mean it can't be done.