



Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M)

Career Description

- Veterinarians play a vital role in the healthcare of pets, livestock, zoo animals, and laboratory animals. They also protect humans against diseases carried by animals and research human and animal health problems.
- Veterinarians take health histories of animals, perform and interpret tests, diagnose problems, prescribe medications, develop treatment plans, and perform surgeries. They specialize their care in a number of areas including large, small, and exotic animal care.
- Areas in need of more veterinarians include food animal safety and laboratory animal health.
- Having a love for animals is important in veterinary medicine, as well as being able to work with people, but veterinarians must also have a deep interest in science.
- Veterinarians help pet owners through difficult times, keep our food supply safe, and study diseases that often impact human populations.
- Many veterinarians are also involved in homeland security issues to help prevent bioterrorist attacks and to protect our populations following one.

Becoming a Veterinarian

- Veterinary school programs are competitive as there are relatively few programs in the

country. Competitive applicants are well-rounded students with leadership skills, research, and volunteer and shadowing experience.

- Significant animal experience is generally expected including time supervised by a veterinarian in both small and large animal settings and time spent in other contact with animals.
- After completing a bachelor's degree (which is preferred at most schools), students who have been accepted into a veterinary school program then complete 4 years of veterinary school. This may be followed by a residency if a specialization is the goal.

Prerequisite Courses

- Prerequisite courses vary slightly between programs.
- All required courses should have a minimum grade of C.
- A Careers in Veterinary Medicine course should be taken if available. Purdue undergraduate students should plan on taking this course.
- Veterinary programs appreciate rigor in undergraduate coursework. They expect to see you taking difficult courses.
- Information on each college's requirements can be found in the *Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements* book published by the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC).

Common Prerequisite Courses (pre-reqs determined by each vet school but similar to this list)

Requirements	Purdue Equivalents (specific courses may vary by major)
Biology with labs	BIOL 11000-11100 or BIOL 13100 & 23100 & 23200 (lab)
Microbiology with lab	BIOL 22100 or BIOL 43800 & 43900
Genetics (lab req. at some schools)	BIOL 24100 or AGRY 32000
General Chemistry with labs	CHM 11500-11600 or CHM 12500-12600 or CHM 12300-12400 or CHM 12901 (CHM 11500 credit exam recommended along with CHM 12901)
Organic Chemistry with labs	CHM 25500-25600 or CHM 26100-26200 or MCMP 20400-20500
Biochemistry (no lab required)	BCHM 30700 or BCHM 56100 or CHM 33300 or CHM 33900 or 53300 or MCMP 20800
Physics with labs	PHYS 22000-22100 or PHYS 23300-23400 or PHYS 17200 & 27200 or PHYS 17200 & 24100 (plus additional lab) or PHYS 21800 & 21900
Animal Nutrition	ANSC 22100
Calculus (req. at some schools)	MA 16100 or MA 22300
Statistics	STAT 30100 or 50300 (some schools may accept PSY 20100 or SOC 38200)
Communication	COM 11400 or 21200 or 21400
Humanities & Social Sciences	Courses from Foreign Language, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology
English Composition	ENGL 10600 or ENGL 10800 and upper level writing or literature
Careers in Vet Med (1 semester)	VM 10200
Pre-Med Planning Seminar (optional)	BIOL 39600-0 credit 10 week class covering how to apply to medical school and other health professions programs

Job Outlook

- The *Bureau of Labor Statistics* anticipates a growth of 9% in Veterinary Medicine jobs through 2024.
- The median salary for veterinarians in 2015 was \$88,490.

Preparation

- Get to know professors. This will greatly help when it's time to ask for recommendation letters which are required for applications.
- Take advantage of experiences offering leadership skills.
- Additional time should be spent volunteering, conducting undergraduate research, and shadowing a Veterinarian.
- Significant animal experience is generally expected including time supervised by a Veterinarian in both small and large animal settings and time spent in other contact with animals. Keep a log of your time and experiences.
- An interview is part of the admissions process. Practice talking about your experiences and what you learned from them.
- Take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) aptitude test.
- To earn admission, good grades overall (3.5 or better is typical) are a must, especially in prerequisite courses, in addition to high scores on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) aptitude test and significant experience with animals.

Applying

- The primary application is made through an online service called VMCAS the Veterinary Medical College Application Service which is sponsored by the AAVMC (the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges).
- If you are applying to schools in Texas, you will also need to complete the TMDAS (Texas Medical and Dental School Application Service).
- Applying to veterinary school is expensive so plan ahead for the \$1,000-2,000 of application costs.

Information on Veterinary Programs

Information on individual programs can be found in the VMSAR, the *Veterinary Medical Schools Admission Requirements* book from the AAVMC and published by Purdue University Press

<http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/titles/format/9781557537423>

More Information

[Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges](http://www.aavmc.org) <http://www.aavmc.org>

[TMDAS \(for applications to Texas A&M\)](http://www.utsystem.edu/tmdsas) <http://www.utsystem.edu/tmdsas>

Programs

[Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine](http://www.vet.purdue.edu/education) West Lafayette, IN <http://www.vet.purdue.edu/education>

[University of Illinois](http://vetmed.illinois.edu/) Urbana, IL <http://vetmed.illinois.edu/>

Information for this career guide came from the above websites and the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/veterinarians.htm)

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