

# What Does a Veterinarian Do?

Most people know that a veterinarian treats sick and injured animals. About 75% of all veterinarians in the United States practice in private clinics.

A veterinarian may treat not only small animals like cats, dogs, birds and fish, but also large animals like horses, cows, pigs and sheep.



## Did you know?

The number and variety of job opportunities for veterinarians continues to increase.

There are 28 fully accredited colleges of veterinary medicine in the United States.

The University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine is one of the leading veterinary colleges in the nation and enrolls 102 new students each year.

For more information on admissions requirements to The University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine, please visit our Web site at [www.vet.uga.edu/admissions](http://www.vet.uga.edu/admissions).



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The University of Georgia is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution and does not discriminate in admission or access to its programs on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability or veteran status.

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# So you

want to

become a

# Veterinarian?



Helpful  
information  
on becoming  
a veterinarian



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA  
College of Veterinary Medicine

# veterinary school

## What you might not know is that a veterinarian may also:

- Specialize in a particular breed of animal, like equine medicine or exotics (tigers, bears, otters).
- Specialize in a medical field, like ophthalmology, oncology, neurology, pathology or dermatology.
- Conduct research to prevent and cure the spread of disease between animals and humans.
- Work in government agencies to help regulate food processing, promote food animal health, and preserve and protect wildlife.
- Work in agricultural settings to help prevent disease in livestock.
- Teach others how to become veterinarians at a college or university.



## What courses should you take in high school?

- In addition to doing well in general science courses in junior high or middle school, you should pursue a strong science, mathematics and biology program in high school.
- Courses in English, the humanities and social studies are also recommended.
- Excellent grades and high SAT scores will ensure your entrance into a good undergraduate institution which will prepare you for admittance to veterinary school.



## How long does it take to become a veterinarian?

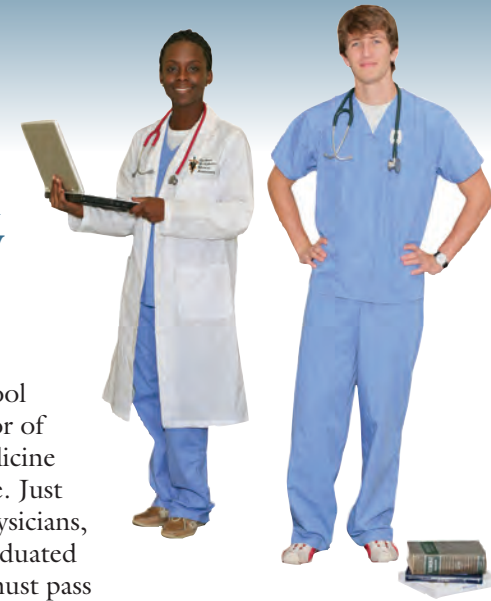
Most students complete a four-year undergraduate degree before entering veterinary school, which takes another four years. Of course, veterinary medicine is a life-long learning process to keep up with the latest medical practices and treatments.

## What should be your major in college?

As long as you take specific courses required for admission to veterinary school, you may major in anything that interests you. Animal health or biological sciences is a popular undergraduate major among veterinary students.

## What happens after you finish veterinary school?

Students who graduate from veterinary school receive a doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM) degree. Just like human physicians, all recently graduated veterinarians must pass a board certification exam to allow them to practice veterinary medicine.



If you want to specialize in a particular veterinary medical field, like exotic medicine, oncology, pathology, ophthalmology or neurology, you may obtain a master's degree or Ph.D. to further your breadth of knowledge and skill set. You also may serve an internship or residency to acquire training to become board certified in your specialty.

## In the meantime, what else should you do to prepare for becoming a veterinarian?

- Get a job or volunteer in any profession that involves all types of animals, large and small.
- Spend time in places that will give you an idea of what being a veterinarian entails, from small animal clinics to livestock farms to zoos or animal refuges.



## Is a veterinary career the right choice for you?

Beyond a love for animals a veterinarian must possess:

- An inquiring mind and keen powers of observation, as well as a strong aptitude and interest in biological sciences.
- Good communication skills, including the ability to meet, talk and work well with a variety of people, particularly when dealing with an owner's grief and loss of their pet.
- Excellent leadership and management skills for clinical practice and other structured work environments.

