



Veterinarian and Veterinary Technician

Commonly Asked Questions

Do you need to go to college to become a veterinarian or a veterinary technician?

Yes, you DO need a college degree to be a **veterinarian**. Pursue a strong science, mathematics and biology program in high school. So, in other words, take as many natural science classes as you can! If there are AP or advanced classes, go for it! The Veterinary field, especially with exotics, is very competitive, so it is a good idea to start challenging yourself now with the classes that can really help you throughout college and vet school. Start planning to go to college, and go to a school that has a solid biology program. Some schools have biology programs that are specifically for pre-vet students. Keep in mind that each veterinary school you apply to after your 4-year bachelors degree has their own set of pre requisites, so it is a good idea to start researching vet schools early, or go to a university that you can continue through the entire program (CSU in Ft. Collins is an example). I would recommend that you visit the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA) website, as they have excellent information about accredited U.S. vet schools, specialty organizations, and additional resources. The site is: www.avma.org

Similar to a veterinarian career path, try to pursue a strong science, mathematics and biology program in high school and take as many natural science classes as you can if interested in becoming a **veterinary technician**. If there are AP or advanced classes, go for it! The field is very competitive, so it is a good idea to start challenging yourself now with the classes that can really help you throughout college and/or in vet technician programs. Start planning to go to college, and go to a school that has a solid biology program. Some vet technician programs are associates only technician licenses, this type of degree can land you a position with many vet offices/clinics.

Is it hard to get a job as a zoo veterinarian or veterinary technician?

Pursuing a career in **exotic veterinary medicine** can be very competitive, so keep in mind that once you get into vet school, you will want to diversify your animal experience as much as possible, and utilize your professors for their contacts and advice on how to enter the exotic vet field. As far as salary goes, the above-mentioned website will have more up to date information but keep in mind that zoo vets tend to make less money than vets working with domestic animals. Zoo career salaries on a whole are competitive, but we always say that you work with animals because you love it, not because of how much money you make.

Working at a zoo as a **veterinary technician** is much more competitive as there are fewer opportunities within any given city being that there are more private vet clinics than there are zoos. Anything you can do to stand out will help you, having a 4-year degree *in addition* to a technician associates degree is desirable. The website below is a good starting point for the technician programs, but again, you may want to look at schools that can offer you both a 4-year bachelors and technician licensure if you want to work in a zoo with exotics. <http://www.veterinarytechnicianschools.com/Default.aspx?ID=128>