



Veterinary Technologists

Course Overview: Focuses on careers in planning, managing, and providing therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development.

Career Goal (O*NET Code): (29-2056) - Veterinary technologists typically conduct clinical work in a private practice under the supervision of a veterinarian—often performing various medical tests along with treating and diagnosing medical conditions and diseases in animals. While most of these duties are performed in a laboratory setting, many are not. Veterinary technologists assisting small-animal practitioners usually care for companion animals, such as cats and dogs, but can perform a variety of duties with mice, rats, sheep, pigs, cattle, monkeys, birds, fish, and frogs.

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

School: _____

SUGGESTED COURSEWORK

EXTENDED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Middle School	8th	HS Courses:	(Local districts may list high school credit courses here)			<p>Curricular Experiences: *** Health Occupations Students of America</p> <p>Career Learning Experiences: Career Preparation Internship Job Shadowing Clinical Rotations Certifications Clinical Volunteer Work (local hospitals & medical facilities)</p> <p>Extracurricular Experiences:*** Language Immersion Programs National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine School Newspaper Student Council UIL Academic Competitions Yearbook</p> <p>Service Learning Experiences: Boy/Girl Scouts Campus Service Organizations Community Service Volunteer Medical Mission Trips Peer Mentoring / Peer Tutoring Special Olympics</p>
	High School	9th	Courses*:	English I Algebra I or Geometry Biology	World Geography Foreign Language I Physical Education or Athletics	
Career-Related Electives:			Principles of Health Science			
10th		Courses:	English II Geometry or Algebra II Chemistry	World History Foreign Language II Elective	Elective	
		Career-Related Electives:	Medical Terminology and Pathophysiology			
11th		Core Courses:	English III Algebra II or Pre-Calculus Physics	United States History Foreign Language III ** Professional Communications or Speech	Elective	
		Career-Related Electives:	Health Science			
12th	Core Courses:	English IV Pre-Calculus or Calculus 4th Science	Government/Economics Elective Elective			
	Career-Related Electives:	Practicum in Health Science				
					COLLEGE CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES -- High School	
					Students should take Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual credit, Advanced Technical Credit (ATC), or locally articulated courses (Tech Prep), if possible. List those courses that count for college credit on your campus.	

Postsecondary	How to Become a Veterinary Technologist or Technician Veterinary technicians may assist veterinarians with surgeries. There are primarily two levels of education and training for entry into this occupation: a 4-year program for veterinary technologists and a 2-year program for veterinary technicians. Typically, both technologists and technicians must take a credentialing exam and must become registered, licensed, or certified, depending on the state.			Carrer Options (Sample of reported job titles)		Professional Associations:	
		Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Veterinary Medical Association • National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America • American Association for Laboratory Animal Science • American Association of Veterinary State Boards 	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterinary Technician (Vet Tech) • Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT) • Licensed Veterinary Technician (LVT) • Certified Veterinary Technician (CVT) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterinary Assistant • Veterinary Nurse • Veterinarian Technician • Internal Medicine Veterinary Technician • Medical Technologist • Emergency Veterinary Technician
		The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American				

* Students must meet local & state high school graduation requirements. ** Required course for the Distinguished Graduation Plan (in addition to other measures). *** Based on campus availability. Students may select other elective courses for personal enrichment purposes.

This plan of study serves as a guide, along with other career planning materials, for pursuing a career path and is based on the most recent information as of 2009. All plans meet high school graduation requirements as well as college entrance requirements.



Veterinary Technologists

TEA Industry Cluster	Health Science
SOC Code	29-2056
Identified by	Tech Prep Occupations
Projected Growth (2018)	50%
BISD Magnet School Available	Yes

Source: Demand Occupations by Cluster, updated June 27, 2012

Description

What Veterinary Technologists and Technicians Do

Veterinary technicians often analyze lab samples. Veterinary technologists and technicians perform medical tests under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian to treat or to help veterinarians diagnose the illnesses and injuries of animals.

Duties

Veterinary technologists and technicians typically do the following:

- Observe the behavior and condition of animals
- Provide nursing care or emergency first aid to recovering or injured animals
- Administer anesthesia to animals and monitor their responses
- Collect laboratory samples, such as blood, urine, or tissue, for testing
- Perform laboratory tests, such as urinalyses and blood counts
- Take and develop x rays
- Prepare animals and instruments for surgery
- Administer medications, vaccines, and treatments prescribed by a veterinarian
- Collect and record patients' case histories

To provide superior animal care, veterinarians rely on the skills of veterinary technologists and technicians, who do many of the same tasks for a veterinarian that nurses would for a doctor. Despite differences in formal education and training, veterinary technologists and technicians carry out many similar tasks.

Many veterinary technologists and technicians work in private clinics, animal hospitals, and veterinary testing laboratories. They conduct a variety of clinical and laboratory procedures, including postoperative care, dental care, and specialized nursing care.

Veterinary technologists and technicians who work in research-related jobs do similar work. For example, they are responsible for making sure that animals are handled carefully and humanely. They commonly help veterinarians or scientists on research projects in areas such as biomedical research, disaster preparedness, and food safety.

Veterinary technologists and technicians most often work with small-animal practitioners who care for cats and dogs, but they may also do a variety of tasks with mice, rats, sheep, pigs, cattle, and birds.

Veterinary technologists and technicians can specialize in a particular discipline. Specialties include dental technology, anesthesia, emergency and critical care, and zoological medicine.

The differences between technologists and technicians are the following:

Veterinary technologists usually have a 4-year bachelor's degree in veterinary technology. Although some technologists work in private clinical practices, many work in more advanced research-related jobs, usually under the guidance of a scientist and sometimes a veterinarian. Working primarily in a laboratory setting, they may administer medications; prepare tissue samples for examination; or record information on an animal's genealogy, weight, diet, food intake, and signs of pain.

Veterinary technicians usually have a 2-year associate's degree in a veterinary technology program. Most work in private clinical practices under the guidance of a licensed veterinarian. Technicians may perform laboratory tests, such as a urinalysis, and help veterinarians conduct a variety of other diagnostic tests. Although some of their work is done in a laboratory setting, many technicians also talk with animal owners. They explain, for example, a pet's condition or how to administer medication prescribed by a veterinarian.

[Training Opportunities Linked to Those Jobs \(Degree Types and Colleges/Universities\)](#)

How to Become a Veterinary Technologist or Technician

Veterinary technicians may assist veterinarians with surgeries.

There are primarily two levels of education and training for entry into this occupation: a 4-year program for veterinary technologists and a 2-year program for veterinary technicians. Typically, both technologists and technicians must take a credentialing exam and must become registered, licensed, or certified, depending on the state.

Education

Veterinary technologists and technicians must complete a postsecondary program in veterinary technology. In 2011, there were 191 veterinary technology programs accredited by the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) (AVMA). Most of these programs offer a 2-year associate's degree for veterinary technicians. Twenty-one colleges offer a 4-year bachelor's degree in veterinary technology. Nine schools offer distance learning.

People interested in becoming a veterinary technologist or technician should take high school classes in biology, other sciences, and math.

Licenses and Certification

Although each state regulates veterinary technologists and technicians differently, most candidates must take a credentialing exam. Most states require the [Veterinary Technician National Examination](#). Depending on the state, candidates must become certified, licensed, or registered to practice.

For technologists seeking work in a research facility, the [American Association for Laboratory Animal Science](#) (AALAS) offers three levels of certification: assistant laboratory animal technician (ALAT), laboratory animal technician (LAT), and laboratory animal technologist (LATG). Although certification is not mandatory, workers at each level can show competency in animal husbandry, health and welfare, and facility administration and management to prospective

employers. To become certified, candidates must have work experience in a laboratory animal facility and pass the AALAS examination.

Important Qualities

Compassion. Veterinary technologists and technicians must treat animals with kindness and must be sensitive when dealing with the owners of sick pets.

Detail oriented. Veterinary technologists and technicians must pay attention to details and be precise when recording information, doing diagnostic tests, and administering medication. They must monitor the behavior and condition of animals and be able to recognize any problems that arise.

Interpersonal skills. Veterinary technologists and technicians spend a substantial amount of their time communicating with supervisors, animal owners, and other staff. In addition, a growing number of technicians counsel pet owners on animal behavior and nutrition.

Manual dexterity. Dexterity is important for veterinary technologists and technicians because they must handle animals, medical instruments, and laboratory equipment with care. They also do intricate tasks, such as dental work, giving anesthesia, and taking x rays, which require a steady hand.

Texas Southmost College	South Texas College	Texas State Technical College	The University of Texas at Brownsville	The University of Texas - Pan American

Local Employers

Employers	City		Employers	City
Animal Medical Clinic	Brownsville		Pda of Rio Grande Valley	Combes
Boca Chica Animal Hospital	Brownsville		Altas Palmas Animal Clinic	Harlingen
Brownsville Veterinary Hosp	Brownsville		Arroyo Animal Hospital	Harlingen
International Trading Svc	Brownsville		Infotek Research Ctr	Harlingen
Phelps Photography	Brownsville		Med Ed Program	Harlingen

Career Options (Specific Job Types)

Sample of reported job titles:

- Veterinary Technician (Vet Tech)
- Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT)
- Licensed Veterinary Technician (LVT)
- Certified Veterinary Technician (CVT)
- Veterinary Assistant
- Veterinary Nurse
- Veterinarian Technician
- Internal Medicine Veterinary Technician
- Medical Technologist
- Emergency Veterinary Technician

Salary Ranges

Wages for Veterinary Technologists and Technicians

Location	Pay Period	2011				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$10.04	\$12.02	\$14.49	\$17.62	\$21.51
	Yearly	\$20,900	\$25,000	\$30,100	\$36,600	\$44,700
Texas	Hourly	\$9.02	\$10.71	\$13.05	\$15.58	\$18.54
	Yearly	\$18,800	\$22,300	\$27,100	\$32,400	\$38,600
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX MSA	Hourly	\$9.09	\$10.17	\$12.25	\$21.34	\$26.16
	Yearly	\$18,900	\$21,200	\$25,500	\$44,400	\$54,400

Professional Associations Linked to the Careers

For information on careers in veterinary medicine and a listing of AVMA-accredited veterinary technology programs, visit

[American Veterinary Medical Association](#)

For more information on becoming a veterinary technician or technologist, visit

[National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America](#)

For information on certification as a laboratory animal technician or technologist, visit

[American Association for Laboratory Animal Science](#)

For information on the Veterinary Technician National Examination, visit:

[American Association of Veterinary State Boards](#)

Sources

The information provided in this document was collected from the following sources:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)
- O*NET OnLine (<http://www.onetonline.org/>)
- Texas CARES (<http://www.texascaresonline.com/>)
- CareerOneStop (<http://www.careeronestop.org/>)