This publication is not inclusive of all options that are available in pharmacy.

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How to Enter the Pharmacy Field

If your passion is towards chemistry/biology and you are good with mathematics you could be a good candidate for a career in the pharmaceutical field. It is important that you are able to work independently, be a problem-solver, and have good communication and strong organizational skills. This profession requires standing and lifting, so you should be in good physical condition. The hours in the field may vary and can be very flexible, as many pharmacies are open 24 hours a day.

What it Takes

Depending where you are on your education ladder you can become a Pharmacy Clerk, Pharmacy Technician or a Pharmacist. Clerks get most of their training on the job and should have good communication skills. For Pharmaceutical Technicians there are state and federal requirements for formal training. In order to be employed in a hospital setting, prior intravenous drug (IV) experience or training is necessary. Education is possible in the military, vocational colleges or technical schools. States require a licence to practice as a Pharmacist. Formal education usually takes 5 to 8 years (2 years pre-pharmacy curriculum that can be taken at a community college and 3 to 4 years in an accredited pharmacy school). Most people receive a Bachelor’s Degree in a science field prior to pharmacy school, making the average years to complete schooling 7 to 8 years. In addition Pharmacists may electively choose to pursue a residency fellowship or National Board Certification in a specialized area of Pharmacy practice.

Careers Galore

In 2000 there were about 217,000 job opportunities for Pharmacists. This number is expected to increase. Technicians will receive more and more responsibilities as will the clerks. Basis of acceptance: GPA (Grade Point Average), community service, experience, skills and interview.

Pharmacy Schools

University of Southern California School of Pharmacy (Los Angeles)
www.usc.edu

University of California San Diego
www.ucsd.edu

University of California San Francisco
www.ucsf.edu

Western University of Health Sciences (Pomona)
www.westernu.edu

University of California Los Angeles
www.ucla.edu

University of California Los Angeles School of Pharmacy
www.usc.edu

University of Southern California School of Pharmacy (Los Angeles)
www.usc.edu

Technical Schools

Academy of Professional Careers (La Mesa)
schools.naturalhealers.com/apc

California College for Health Sciences (National City, CA)
www.nationalponsi.org

Pima Medical Institute, Chula Vista, CA
www.pmi.edu

United Education Institute
www.uei-edu.com