

# What can I do with a major in Animal Health

The University of Georgia Career Center

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*This information describes typical occupations and employment settings associated with this major. Understand that some of these options may require additional training. Moreover, you are not limited to these options when choosing a possible career path.*

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## Description of Animal Health

The degree program was designed in close cooperation with the College of Veterinary Medicine, specifically for students entering veterinary school after three years of pre-veterinary study in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Students who enter the College of Veterinary Medicine upon completion of the degree requirements are eligible to receive the B.S.A. degree with a major in animal health only after successfully completing the first year of study in the College of Veterinary Medicine. Alternatively, students may also use the senior year to complete requirements for a B.S.A. degree in an appropriate major in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

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## Researching Job Titles and Careers

**O\*NET** <http://online.onetcenter.org> (click on Find Occupations)

**Occupational Outlook Handbook** <http://www.bls.gov/oco> (type in general term for career of interest)

**Georgia Career Information Center** <http://www.gcic.peachnet.edu> (accessible only on campus computers)

**Career Insider: Vault Guides** [http://career.uga.edu/resources/online\\_resources](http://career.uga.edu/resources/online_resources) (Under the “Resources” tab and select “Online Resources”)

**Candid Career** [http://career.uga.edu/resources/online\\_resources](http://career.uga.edu/resources/online_resources) (View professionals speaking about their careers under the “Resources” tab and select “Online Resources”)

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## Possible Job Titles

Veterinarian

*To learn what types of positions and companies UGA students are working with, see the UGA Career Center Post Graduation Survey at [www.career.uga.edu/gradsurveyresults/](http://www.career.uga.edu/gradsurveyresults/) and search for alumni on LinkedIn at [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com).*

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## Campus Resources

**Animal and Dairy Science Clubs and Organizations-** <http://www.ads.uga.edu/academics/clubs.html>

**Pre-Veterinary Medicine Club-** <http://pre-vet.uga.edu>

**College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Clubs and Organizations-** <http://students.caes.uga.edu/athens/organizations.cfm>

**Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS)-** <http://www.caes.uga.edu/academics/manrrs/>

**Alpha Gamma Rho (Men pursuing careers in agriculture)-** <http://www.georgiaagr.com/home>

**Sigma Alpha (Women pursuing careers in agriculture) -** <http://www.ugasigmaalpha.com>

**To find additional clubs and organizations, go to the Center for Student Organizations at-** <http://stuorgs.uga.edu/find/index.html>

**Connect with your Career Consultant** <http://career.uga.edu/contact#careerconsultants>

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## Employment Websites

### GENERAL:

**CareerSearch** [http://career.uga.edu/resources/online\\_resources](http://career.uga.edu/resources/online_resources) (Research employers by location and/or industry)

**DAWGlink** [www.career.uga.edu/](http://www.career.uga.edu/) (login with your UGA MyID and password)

**GoinGlobal** (To access GoinGlobal, login to your DAWGlink account)

**Idealist** [www.idealists.org/](http://www.idealists.org/) (nonprofit jobs)

**USAJobs** [www.usajobs.gov/](http://www.usajobs.gov/) (federal jobs)

### MAJOR/CAREER SPECIFIC:

**The American Veterinary Medicine Association Job Board-** <http://bit.ly/1jG9uHR>

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## Professional Information Resources

**The American Veterinary Medicine Association-** <http://www.avma.org/>

**American Association of Zoo Veterinarians-** <http://www.aazv.org/>

Tip: Join LinkedIn groups that are related to your career interest. Need help finding groups? Check out the Groups You May Like link under the Interests/Groups tab. Review the groups that professionals in your field of interest have joined and consider joining them as well.

## **Additional Career Consultant Recommendations:**

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### **Veterinary School Admission 101: Give yourself the best chances of being admitted**

We're sure you've already heard how competitive it is to get into veterinary school. Sure, it's competitive – but it's not impossible. If you've got good science and math skills and an interest in helping animals, follow your dream. Who better to help you than the people who've already been there?

#### **Grades**

Duh, you say. Of course you have to have good grades to be competitive. Although a 4.0 will certainly help you, it's not an absolute necessity. Why are grades important? They can indicate your intelligence, your study habits, and your dedication and drive to succeed. Those are all qualities veterinary schools are looking for when they evaluate applicants. When a school sees an "A," they think you studied hard, did well, and learned.

So, what if your grades are good but not great? Does that mean you've got no chance? No, it doesn't. Veterinary schools are looking for well-rounded students. They're looking for future leaders. You can make yourself a better candidate by getting good (or great) grades as well as experience and leadership skills.

#### **Prerequisites**

You could have a 4.0 GPA and still not get into veterinary school if you haven't completed the prerequisites required for admission. Make sure you know your prospective schools' requirements when you plan your undergraduate classes. Fortunately, most schools have similar requirements. For more information and links to U.S. veterinary colleges, visit the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) website at [www.aavmc.org](http://www.aavmc.org).

That said, check out your school's undergraduate catalog for courses that aren't on the vet school prerequisite list but might be good courses to give you a "leg up" and better prepare you for the coursework you'll have in vet school. For example, consider taking upper-level anatomy & physiology, zoology, microbiology, animal science/animal production, nutrition, and histology courses, to name a few. It's possible that taking these courses as an undergrad can make the comparable vet school classes much less stressful for you because you've already got a good foundation in that subject.

#### **Majors**

You don't have to be a pre-vet major to get into vet school – you just need to get the prerequisite coursework completed and do well. We've seen vet students whose undergraduate majors were math, engineering, English, and many others. Once you're in vet school, the playing field is equal. It's important to enjoy your undergrad studies by picking a major that you are passionate about—not simply the "best one" for getting into vet school.

#### **Experience**

If you've been in 4-H, FFA or a similar group, that's great experience that should go on your veterinary school admission form. Similarly, working with animals in any way can be of value. For example, volunteering at shelters or rescues can provide animal handling experience that will help make you a better candidate.

It goes without saying that volunteering or working for a veterinarian is very important. Not only does it expose you to your potential career (so you know what you're getting into, so to speak), but it also might provide a good recommendation for you from the veterinarian.

Varied experience is also helpful. If you have the opportunity to work in a research lab or for veterinarians who work with different species, that's a bonus that can make you more appealing to a veterinary school admissions committee. Get as much experience as you can while you have the opportunity.

#### **Leadership Skills**

Leadership experience, such as holding an office in student government or other groups, is a big plus. Get involved in your pre-vet club, student government, fraternity/sorority, or other organization. If one of these doesn't exist, get some others together and start a club of your own!

#### **Communication Skills**

Because veterinarians' patients can't really talk and tell them what's wrong, people tend to think that communication skills are less important. That couldn't be more untrue. It's essential for veterinarians to have good communications skills so their clients can understand what's going on with their animals and do their parts to help resolve the problem. Coursework or extracurricular activities that improve your communication skills are definitely helpful...not to mention it can help you when it comes to the interview.

Most of us dread public speaking, but that's all the more reason to take a class or two. Becoming more comfortable speaking to larger audiences will come in handy later in life.

### **Letters of Recommendation**

Get to know your professors. Sure, a professor can write a letter stating that you got an "A" in their class, but can they say anything else about you? A good letter of recommendation comes from a person who knows who you really are. You can get to know professors by attending office hours, volunteering in their research projects, or joining a club that they advise. Check with the vet schools you are applying to for their requirements of who they want the letters to come from—usually they want to hear not only from your professors, but also vets that you have worked with.

### **Standardized Tests**

Standardized tests? Again? And you thought that was over when you finished high school! The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required by most veterinary schools, and some also require the Biology GRE. The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) is also accepted by some schools in place of the GRE. Find out where you can take the exam and what preparation you need to succeed. For a listing of each accredited veterinary school's requirements, go to the AAVMC site at [www.aavmc.org](http://www.aavmc.org). More information can be found at <http://www.ets.org/gre/>.

### **Have fun!**

All work and no play can actually make you a less desirable candidate. Not all of your courses and extracurricular activities should be 100% focused on meeting the admission requirements. Do the things you like, join the clubs you find fun, and enjoy your life.

### **What if you don't get in?**

You're not alone, and it doesn't mean you don't have what it takes. Contact the admissions staff and request feedback on your application, then address the deficiencies and reapply next year.

\*Taken from the American Veterinary Medical Association: <http://bit.ly/1hg9MZ0>

Please visit the "Animal Science" handout for additional career paths that involve working with animals.