

## A BRIGHT SMILE CAN LEAD TO A BRIGHT FUTURE

Consider a career in dentistry! Dentists help individuals in many ways by diagnosing and treating diseases, repairing smiles, relieving pain, and giving teeth to those without. Dentists earn either a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or a Doctor of Dental Medicine (DDM). Most dentists are self-employed general practitioners. Like the pathway to becoming a medical doctor, a career in dentistry is no easy task, but the results are very rewarding.



## THINGS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR DECISION TO PURSUE A CAREER AS A DENTIST:

- Education and training requirements are extremely demanding
  - Must have a strong foundation of biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics
  - 4 years of college
  - 4 years of dental school
- Acceptance into dental school is very competitive
- Must pass multiple examinations and specialty examinations if appropriate.

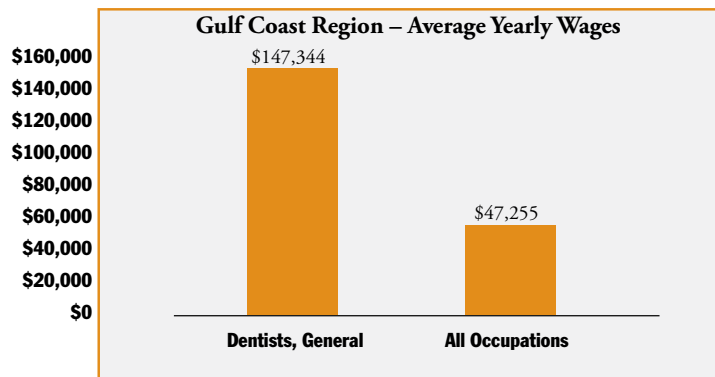
## ALTHOUGH MOST DENTISTS ARE GENERAL PRACTITIONERS, MANY WORK IN SPECIALTY AREAS:

- Orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics
- Pediatric dentistry
- Endodontics
- Prosthodontics
- Oral and maxillofacial surgery
- Periodontics

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Latest data available. June 2013.

\*Includes the following counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton.

## DENTISTS EARN EXCELLENT WAGES!



## PATHWAY TO BECOMING A DENTIST

### 1. Dental School Preparation

Becoming a dentist begins with a college program that emphasizes science, and courses such as biology or chemistry. Although many dental schools only require 2 years of college, most dental students earn a bachelor's degree. A few applicants do, however, get accepted to dental school after several years of college. They complete their bachelor's degree while attending dental school. Individual dental schools require different courses, so it is important to check with prospective schools in order to select the best courses. All dental students are also required to complete the Dental Admissions Test (DAT). In addition to a high score on the DAT, students must have a high grade point average. Dental schools are very competitive and require exceptional academic performance.

### 2. Dental School

Dental school involves four years of classroom instruction and lab work in the sciences, including courses in anatomy, microbiology, biochemistry, and physiology. During the last two years, students treat patients under the supervision of licensed dentists. If seeking to practice in a specialty area, a student must complete two to four years of postgraduate work and complete a special exam. Exams for board certification are usually taken during dental school.

## LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION

A student must pass four different examinations prior to applying for a professional dental license in Texas.

- The National Board Dental Examination (NBDE), Part One, is taken during the second year of dental school. It consists of 400 multiple choice questions and assesses a student's knowledge of
  - Human anatomy and histology
  - Biochemistry and physiology
  - Microbiology and pathology
  - Dental anatomy and occlusion
- NBDE, Part Two, is taken during the fourth year of dental school and assesses a student's knowledge of clinical dental topics, such as
  - Endodontics
  - Oral and maxillofacial surgery/pain control
  - Oral diagnosis
  - Orthodontics and pediatric dentistry
  - Patient management
  - Periodontics
  - Pharmacology
  - Prosthodontics
- Upon completion of dental school, a dentist candidate must successfully complete an exam from one of the following
  - Western Regional Examining Board
  - Central Regional Dental Testing Service
  - North East Regional Board
  - Southern Regional Testing Agency
- To become licensed to practice dentistry, a candidate must successfully complete the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners Jurisprudence Assessment



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

American Dental Association: [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)

American Dental Education Association: [www.adea.org](http://www.adea.org)

American Student Dental Association: [www.asdanet.org](http://www.asdanet.org)

Texas Dental Association: [www.tda.org](http://www.tda.org)

Texas State Board of Dental Examiners: [www.tsbde.state.tx.us](http://www.tsbde.state.tx.us)

## START EARLY AND BE PREPARED!

Gaining admission into dental school is very competitive. Students should strive for the highest GPA possible to give themselves the edge needed for acceptance into a dentistry program.

The successful completion of a dentistry program requires a strong grasp of chemistry, biology, physics, and mathematics.

## PREPARING FOR A CAREER AS DENTIST\*

9th Grade	Suggested Coursework		
	English I	World Geography	<b>Career-Related Electives:</b> Introduction to Health Science Technol- ogy AND Medical Terminology
	Algebra I	Languages other than English I	
	Biology	Health/PE or Equivalent	
10th Grade	Suggested Coursework		
	English II	World History	<b>Career-Related Electives:</b> Health Science Technology I
	Geometry	Languages other than English II	
	Chemistry	Technology Applications	
11th Grade	Suggested Coursework		
	English III	United States History	<b>Career-Related Electives:</b> Health Science Technology II or Anatomy and Physiology of Human Systems or Languages other than English III
	Algebra II	Communications Applications	
	Physics	PE or Equivalent	
12th Grade	Suggested Coursework		
	English IV	Government/Economics	<b>Career-Related Electives:</b> Health Science Technology III or Pathophysiology or Medical Microbiol- ogy or Clinical Nutrition or Independent Study or Languages other than English IV
	AP Calculus	Fine Arts	
	Scientific Research and Design		

\*Source: AchieveTexas.org

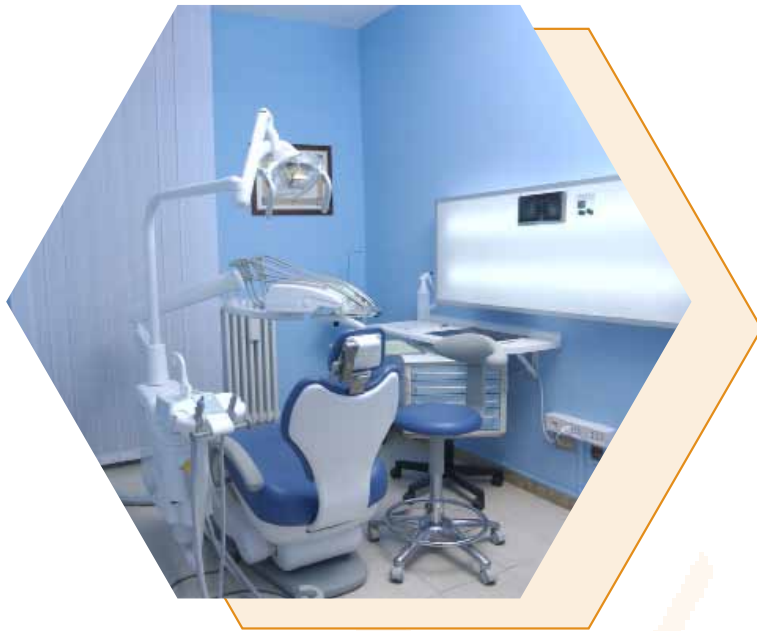
## DENTAL SCHOOLS IN TEXAS

### UNIVERSITIES

- Baylor College of Dentistry (Texas A&M University System Health Science Center)
- University of Texas Health Science Center – Dental Branch at Houston
- University of Texas Health Science Center – San Antonio Dental School

### EMPLOYMENT

Most dental school graduates purchase an established practice or open a new one immediately after graduation. Others work for established dentists as associates for 1 to 2 years to gain experience and save money to equip an office of their own.



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