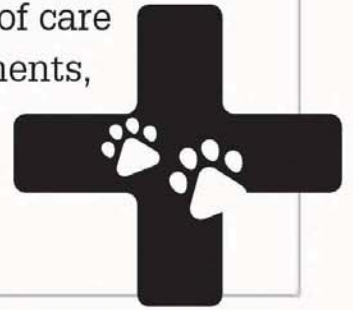


VETERINARIAN



JOB DESCRIPTION

Veterinarians, commonly known as vets, treat and operate on sick or injured animals. They train to work with many species, including animals in zoos and in the wild—but in general practice, vets focus mostly on domestic and farm animals. As a vet, you may control standards of care and hygiene in animal care environments, such as veterinary hospitals, and also research the diagnosis and prevention of animal diseases.



SALARY

Newly qualified vet ★★☆☆☆
Senior practitioner ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Nearly half of vets self-employed in general practice • Many opportunities in nonprofit animal organizations, zoos, and hospitals

CAREER PATHS

After qualifying, most vets begin their careers as employees in a general veterinary practice. With experience and further study, they can specialize in a wide range of fields, such as surgery, nutrition, or parasitology (the study of parasites). Some go on to start their own practices, or to work in research or for the government.

GRADUATE You will need a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) accredited by a professional body. Courses can take between four and six years.



DOMESTIC ANIMALS' VET

Works in a veterinary practice that deals with domestic animals such as cats, dogs, gerbils, rabbits, caged birds, and others.



VET Provides general health care treatment to animals. As an experienced vet, you can choose to specialize in a specific area, such as emergency care.

The word "veterinarian" comes from the Latin "veterinae," meaning "working animals."



SKILLS GUIDE



Excellent verbal and written communication skills to advise owners on the best care practices for their animals.



Good team-working skills in order to work closely with practice support staff to ensure animals receive the best health care.



Strong organizational skills, particularly when running a practice that involves accurate billing and record-keeping.



The ability to solve problems quickly, make difficult decisions, and take prompt action when treating ill or injured animals.



FARM VET Works with animals that are reared on farms, such as sheep, pigs, cattle, and chickens. Farm vets spend a lot of their time traveling to farms, checking livestock, and advising farmers.



ZOO VET Works specifically with wild animals that are kept in captivity in zoos and wildlife parks. They can work with some rare and unusual species.



EQUINE VET Specializes in working with horses in riding schools, farms, or polo clubs, and other similar locations. Some also care for high-value race horses.

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Animal welfare • Biology • Chemistry • Zoology • Scientific research • Mathematics



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS Vets need to complete a degree at a veterinary college, pass a national exam, and apply for licensure.



LIFESTYLE The job involves long days and being on call at odd hours. Vets often work outdoors and in all kinds of weather.



LOCATION Vets can work at varied locations—from farms, zoos, and stables to wildlife hospitals—in order to treat sick animals.



THE REALITIES The job can be physically and emotionally stressful, and requires assertiveness yet sensitivity when making decisions.

▼ RELATED CAREERS

▶ **ANIMAL CARE WORKER** *see pp. 162–163*

▶ **ZOOKEEPER** *see pp. 164–165*

▶ **VETERINARY PHYSICAL THERAPIST** Treats dogs and horses, including both pets and “working animals,” such as greyhounds and race horses. Veterinary physical therapists can also work with farm or zoo animals. A degree in veterinary physical therapy is required to qualify in this profession. It is also possible to get a bachelor’s degree in human physical therapy followed by graduate training in veterinary physical therapy.