Explore

Motivation for medicine/personal characteristics
A qualified applicant to dental school must have not only a general understanding of the profession, but also a demonstrated interest in and awareness of dental/medical and social issues. Prospective applicants should be prepared to answer the question, “Why do you want to be a dentist?” with a response that goes beyond “I want to help people.”

Experience
Desirable qualifications are a well rounded academic background, a knowledge of and exposure to the needs of individuals and society, and an awareness of current health care delivery systems. Diversity and cross-cultural competency are critical. Further, motivation for dental careers can be measured in part by the candidate’s exposure to health-care environments.

Choosing a Major
While a bachelor’s degree is necessary to be a competitive applicant to dental school, dental schools do not give preference to any particular major. You should be considering majors that align your interests, passions, and abilities. Your departmental adviser, in partnership with your pre-health adviser, can help ensure you take the appropriate pre-requisite courses for dental school as part of your coursework.

Prepare
An excellent dental school applicant will have a strong grade point average, both overall and in the pre-requisite coursework. Additionally, a strong applicant will have competitive DAT scores. Beyond grades and test scores, dental schools will look for ample time spent shadowing a dentist, experience volunteering in a clinical setting, and both research and leadership experiences.

Prerequisite courses for most dental schools are listed below; you should review the admissions information for each of your desired schools to be sure you are meeting all coursework and other requirements.

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<tr>
<th>Math/Stats</th>
<th>Chemistry</th>
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<th>Physics</th>
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**Sample Schedule 1: No gap year**

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**Other Important Activities**

**Freshman Year**
- Meet with your general adviser
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, “Pre-Health 101”
- Consider joining a pre-health RSO
- Begin establishing relationships with faculty for future letters of recommendation
- Identify summer volunteer, research, and/or leadership opportunities related to dental field
- Review pre-health website

**Sophomore Year**
- Meet with your general adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Continue involvement with pre-health or other RSO
- Pursue meaningful clinical experiences (paid, volunteer, and/or research)
- Begin researching dental schools and DAT on ADA, ADEA and other sites

**Junior Year**
- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Meet with a pre-health adviser to strategize coursework, DAT, and application(s) timing
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, “Pre-Health Application Class” in winter or spring quarter
- Seek leadership position(s) in RSO or other activity
- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Finalize list of 10-15 dental schools
- Familiarize yourself with application to dental schools (AADSAS)
- Request recommendation letters

**Spring quarter:**
- Take DAT by mid-April or earlier
- Apply to dental schools beginning June 1

**Senior Year**
- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Meet with a pre-health adviser to prepare secondary application materials
- Prepare for campus visits and interviews
- Receive acceptances!
- Notify schools you will not be attending
- Complete UG coursework and graduate!
- Apply for financial aid as early as possible

**Sample Schedule 2: Gap year**

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**Other Important Activities**

**Freshman Year**
- Meet with your general adviser
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, “Pre-Health 101”
- Consider joining a pre-health RSO
- Begin establishing relationships with faculty for future letters of recommendation
- Identify summer volunteer, research, and/or leadership opportunities related to dental field

**Sophomore Year**
- Meet with your general adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Continue involvement with pre-health or other RSO
- Pursue meaningful clinical experiences (paid, volunteer, and/or research)

**Junior Year**
- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Seek leadership position(s) in RSO or other activity
- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Begin researching dental schools and DAT on ADA, ADEA and other sites

**Senior Year**
- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Meet with pre-health adviser to strategize coursework, DAT, and application(s) timing
- Finalize list of 10-15 dental schools
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, “Pre-Health Application Class” in winter or spring quarter
- Familiarize yourself with application to dental schools (AADSAS)
- Request letters of recommendation

**Spring quarter:**
- Take DAT by mid-April or earlier
- Apply to dental schools beginning June 1

**After Graduation**
- Continue meaningful clinical experience
- Meet with pre-health adviser to prepare secondary application materials
- Prepare for campus visits and interviews
- Receive acceptances!
- Notify schools you will not be attending
- Apply for financial aid as early as possible