



Getting Into Medical School

1. **Take the required PreMedical Courses** (Gen Chem, Organic, Physics, Bio). Do really well in these.
2. **Major in anything you want or like.** Pick a major that can be useful after medical school, nurture your life passions, and skills. You don't have to major in a science. You'll learn lots of science in medical school. Some great majors: History, Philosophy, Literature, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Political Science, Spanish, Business, English. If you can't decide on a major, design your own.
3. **To supplement the required Pre-Med courses in College,** try to take Biochemistry, Physiology, Anatomy, Microbiology.
4. **Take Arts & Crafts/Literature & Humanities classes** that you enjoy. *Recommended ones:* quilting, sewing (good for surgery). Theater and improvisation are good for improving patient communication skills.
5. **The best time to take the MCAT** is the summer between Junior and Senior year (if you don't want to take a year off). It is extremely difficult to try to study for the MCAT while taking a full course load of classes, so that is why summer break is the best time to buckle down and get through it.
6. **Work MCAT questions.** Make sure you understand why you got correct answers correct and wrong answers wrong. **The best MCAT study prep course is _____.** "Even though I didn't take Kaplan's MCAT course," Najiba Afzal, UC Davis Medical School Class of 2023 says, "I did use their study materials, which helped a lot."
7. **Apply as Early as you can in the application cycle.** If the application cycle runs from June 1 to November 30, apply in June – not October or November. Apply within the first week the application process opens.
8. **Shadow at least one physician.** Try to shadow a variety of specialists.
9. **Get a job in a medical environment** as an assistant, lab tech, or scribe. As a medical scribe, you will work side by side with a physician or NP/PA for 8+ hours a day. This can help you decide if medicine is actually the career you want to pursue. "Lots of my friends became scribes and realized medicine was actually not for them," says Afzal. "For others, it strengthens their desire in addition to making great connections with physicians."
10. **Leadership is KEY!** Demonstrate leadership in an existing organization or one you start. Remember you don't necessarily have to be involved in medicine-related organizations.
11. **Attend one of the many pre-health conferences held each year!** Two specific ones that happen annually: the UC Davis pre-health conference as well as Stanford pre-health conference called SUMMA.
12. **Attend the open houses of medical schools** or arrange a visit with their admissions offices. Find out about special requirements or recommendations that medical schools have.
13. **Talk to at least 3 people** who have successfully gotten into medical school.

"The process of getting into medical school is one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome. Every person faces unique hardships in the process, but through perseverance and continued dedication, we gain the power to overcome the challenges we once felt were impossible. You are the only person stopping yourself from making your dreams become reality." — *Najiba Afzal, Manteca, CA; UC Davis School of Medicine Class of 2023, Stanislaus State 2019, Sierra High School Class of 2014*