



Getting Into Dental School

1. **Take the required PreDental 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 dental school, nurture your life passions, and skills. You don't have to major in a science. You'll learn lots of science in dental school. Some great majors: History, Philosophy, Literature, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Political Science, Spanish, Business, English, Engineering. If you can't decide on a major, design your own. This is your last chance to get a well-rounded education because dental education is very focused and technical!
3. **To supplement the required Pre-Dental courses in College,** try to take Biochemistry, Physiology, Anatomy, Microbiology.
4. **Take Arts & Crafts classes to develop hand skills:** quilting, sewing, jewelry-making, sculpture, model-making, ceramics.
5. **Take Literature & Humanities classes** that you enjoy. *Theater and improvisation* are good for improving patient communication skills.
6. **The best time to take the DAT** 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 DAT 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.
7. **Work DAT questions.** Make sure you understand why you got correct answers correct and wrong answers wrong. The best DAT study prep course is ____
8. **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.
9. **Shadow at least one dentist.** Try to shadow a variety of providers across specialties and who practice in different settings (urban, rural, small town, and suburban) For example, consider shadowing a dentist in a rural community if you would consider practicing in a rural area long term. If so, make sure to make this known in your personal statement and/or interview.
10. **Get a job in a dental environment** as an assistant or lab tech.
11. **Attend one of the many pre-health conferences held each year!** Two specific ones that happen annually in Northern California: the UC Davis pre-health conference as well as the Stanford pre-health conference called SUMMA.
12. **Attend the open houses of dental schools** or arrange a visit with their admissions offices. Find out about special requirements or recommendations that dental schools have.
13. **Talk to at least 3 people** who have successfully gotten into dental school.
14. **Volunteer** (legally and ethically, of course) in dentistry: at events, in charitable clinics, in and out of the US.
15. **Attend dental meetings** for dental access coalitions, organized dentistry, etc.
16. **Join ASDA, the American student dental association.**

“GPA and DAT are key, dental experience and “maturity” next, then communication skills in the interview/luck of the draw with who interviews you/how pro-you they are/how much other admissions committee members listen to them. Leadership, volunteering, hand skills... they may help differentiate between two candidates with amazing numbers. But there's no amount of leadership/dental experience/volunteer hours that will make up what a DAT score is lacking.”— Dr Jeannie Bath, who helps mentor pre-dental students in Oklahoma.