

# DENTAL SCHOOL GENERAL TIMELINE



*This is a general timeline for traditional pre-dental students who plan to matriculate into dental school after graduating from a four-year university. It is to be used for general guidance and should not be used as an ultimate guide. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic counselors to map out a strategic academic blueprint.*

## YEAR 1

- Talk to your academic counselor and/or pre-health advisor to strategically plan out your college career.
- Look into volunteer, research and/or intern opportunities in the field of dentistry. You will need experience in a dental setting to get into dental school. The earlier you start, the better off you will be.
- Become a part your school's pre-dental club and/or any other campus organizations. Try joining a club that will help hone your interpersonal and leadership skills.
- Make sure to research into dental schools to learn about their requirements. Every dental school may differ on its exact pre-requisites.
- Develop relationships with your professors who can possibly help you prepare for dental school. You will also need letters of recommendation for dental school.
- Make sure you are keeping up with your pre-dental and school-related courses.

## SUMMER AFTER YEAR 1

- Take summer courses if needed and/or for enrichment. Talk to your pre-health advisor to determine the best way to take advantage of your summer. As a pre-dental student, you should use your summers productively to build up your resume.
- Work, volunteer, or intern in a dental setting; consider shadowing or working for a dentist.

## YEAR 2

- Continue talking with your academic counselor and/or pre-health advisor to make sure you are on track to get into dental school.
- If you have not done so already, obtain a volunteer, research, intern, or work position in a dental setting. Talk to your counselors and advisors to see what the best opportunities available are for you.
- Continue to develop relationships with your college's faculty. Remember that you will need letters of recommendation from people who can comment on your academic abilities.
- Continue to partake in campus organizations such as the pre-dental club.
- Make sure you are keeping up and doing well in your pre-dental and school-specific courses. Remember your GPA is one of the most important, if not most important, factor in your dental school admissions.
- Look into the Dental Admission Test (DAT). Determine when you want to prepare for this crucial test and when you plan to take it.
- Consider when you want to enroll in dental school. If you want to enroll soon after you graduate college, you need to start applying after your third year. If you want to take a year off (called a gap year), you can apply after your senior year.

## SUMMER AFTER YEAR 2

- By now you should have obtained meaningful dental experience. Continue working, interning, or volunteering at your current position. If there are promotions at your current position or if you find even more meaningful positions, apply to those. You want to make your dental school resume as strong as possible. Talk to your counselors and advisors regarding any questions.
- Consider taking summer courses if needed and/or for enrichment. Make sure to take advantage of every summer.
- If you want to apply for dental school the summer after your third year, consider taking the DAT this summer. If not, decide when you want to take it.

## YEAR 3

- Continue talking with your academic counselor and/or pre-health advisor to make sure you are on track to get into dental school. You should have determined by now whether you want to apply after your third year or fourth year of college.
- Continue to gain experience in a dental setting. If possible, try gaining both clinical and research experience, and make sure that your role is becoming increasingly meaningful.
- If possible, try to earn leadership positions. Consider running for a leadership position of a campus organization or being part of your school's student body association.
- Think about which professors and/or professionals you want to ask for letters of recommendation. It is crucial that you consider this way before they are due. If you want to apply to dental school in summer after third year, it is best to ask professors for recommendations during your third year.
- Make a list of all the dental schools you are considering and make sure you have a good grasp on the specific requirements of each respective school.
- If you want to apply the summer after your third year, you should take the DAT sometime during this year if you have not done so already.
- Make sure to register and adequately prepare for the DAT. Consider taking a DAT preparation course.
- Make sure you are keeping up and doing well in your pre-dental and school-specific courses.

## SUMMER AFTER YEAR 3

- Continue your meaningful participation in a dental setting.
- If planning to enroll in dental school after your senior year, make sure to apply for dental school during this time. It is recommended you apply as early as possible.
- If you have not done so, consider taking the DAT this summer.
- Make sure you are keeping up with your pre-dental and school-specific courses.

## YEAR 4

- Continue meeting with your counselor or advisor to make sure you are doing everything you need to for dental school.
- If you applied for dental school already, start practicing for your interviews for they are extremely important. Schools usually start interviewing candidates in August and September.
- If you received acceptances, research the different schools to see which one fits you best.
- If you are applying for dental school after the spring of your senior year, make sure that you take the DAT and start preparing your application materials. Make sure to ask for your letters or recommendations as early as possible. If there are any questions, consult your counselor or advisor.
- Continue your involvement in meaningful extracurricular activities.
- Make sure you are keeping up and doing well in your pre-dental and school-specific courses. Complete all your requirements and declare for graduation.

## SUMMER AFTER GRADUATION

- If you are enrolling in dental school in the fall, prepare for dental school by purchasing books, making living arrangements, talking with current students, etc.
- If applying during this time, make sure to collect all your application materials and apply. You want to apply as early as possible.
- Continue your involvement in meaningful extracurricular activities if possible.
- Talk to your counselor and/or advisor to make sure you have done everything you possible could do to succeed.