

# PHYSICAL THERAPY SCHOOL GENERAL TIMELINE



*This is a general timeline for traditional pre-physical therapy students who plan to matriculate into physical therapy 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.
- Try to gain some type of exposure to physical therapy.
- Join campus organizations that can help you develop leadership skills. If it exists, join a club that provides support to pre-physical therapy students.
- Make sure to research into different physical therapy programs to learn about their specific requirements.
- It will be important to develop relationships with your professors because you will need them to write you letters of recommendations.
- Make sure you are keeping up in classes that are required for physical therapy schools and for college graduation.

## 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. Since physical therapy is a competitive field, you should use your summers productively to build up your resume.
- Try to obtain a position in a physical therapy clinic.

## YEAR 2

- Continue talking with your academic counselor and/or pre-health advisor to make sure you are on track to get into physical therapy school.
- If you have not done so already, try working or volunteering for a physical therapy clinic. Talk to your counselors and/or 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 extracurricular activities that might help strengthen your physical therapy application. Consult your academic advisor or counselor.
- Make sure you are keeping up in classes that are required for physical therapy schools and for your college graduation. GPA is arguably the most important factor in your graduate school admissions.
- To enter physical therapy school, you will most likely need to take the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE). Think about when you want to prepare and take this exam.

## SUMMER AFTER YEAR 2

- By now you should have had some exposure to physical therapy. Continue working, interning, or volunteering at your current position. You may also consider applying for a better position if one exists.
- Consider taking summer courses if needed and/or for enrichment. Make sure to take advantage of every summer.
- Make sure you are thinking about when you want to take the GRE.

## YEAR 3

- Continue talking with your academic counselor and/or pre-health advisor to make sure you are on track to get into physical therapy school.
- Continue to work in a physical therapy clinic or setting.
- Continue your participation in meaningful extracurricular activities.

### YEAR 3 CONTINUED

- 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.
- Make a list of all the physical therapy schools you are considering and make sure you have a good grasp on the specific requirements of all your potential schools.
- Make sure you are keeping up with classes that are required for physical therapy schools and for your college graduation.

### SUMMER AFTER YEAR 3

- Continue working in a physical therapy setting.
- Take summer school if necessary.
- You should consider taking your GRE if you have not done so already.

### YEAR 4

- Continue meeting with your counselor or advisor to make sure you are doing everything you need to get into physical therapy school.
- Start applying to physical therapy school. Application deadlines vary from school to school. Some physical therapy schools have deadlines in November while others have it in February.
- If you received acceptances, research the different schools to see which one fits you best.
- Continue your involvement in meaningful extracurricular activities.
- Make sure you are keeping up and doing well in your pre-physical therapy and school-specific courses. Complete all your requirements and declare for graduation.

### SUMMER AFTER GRADUATION

- If you are enrolling in physical therapy school in the fall, prepare for physical therapy school by purchasing books, making living arrangements, talking with current students, etc.
- Talk to your counselor and/or advisor to make sure you have done everything you possible could do to succeed.