

Veterinary Technologists and Technicians

SOC: 29-2056 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$45,980

Median Salary

134,200

Employment

+9.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Associate's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 8.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■■ Work-Life Balance

7.4/10 - Good work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.4/10	Investigative	8.6/10
Artistic	4.8/10	Social	9.0/10
Enterprising	5.4/10	Conventional	6.2/10

■ Top Skills Required

Communication skills, Compassion, Detail oriented, Manual dexterity, Physical strength

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Veterinary Technologists and Veterinary Technicians are essential animal healthcare professionals who support veterinarians by providing **hands-on medical care, diagnostic assistance, and clinical support for animals**. Working at the intersection of medicine, animal welfare, and client education, these professionals play a critical role in ensuring animals receive safe, effective, and compassionate care. Unlike veterinarians, veterinary technologists and technicians do not diagnose or prescribe, but they are deeply involved in nearly every aspect of animal treatment and recovery.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy working directly with animals, prefer a practical and fast-paced healthcare role, and want to contribute meaningfully to animal health without pursuing a doctoral degree.

What Do Veterinary Technologists and Technicians Do?

Veterinary technologists and technicians assist veterinarians during examinations, procedures, and surgeries while also providing direct care to animals. Their responsibilities vary by work setting but consistently focus on patient safety, clinical accuracy, and efficient care delivery.

Common responsibilities include:

- Assisting veterinarians during medical exams and surgical procedures
- Collecting blood, urine, and tissue samples for laboratory testing
- Performing diagnostic tests such as blood counts and urinalysis
- Administering medications and vaccines as directed
- Monitoring anesthesia and vital signs during procedures
- Providing nursing care, wound management, and post-operative support
- Educating pet owners on aftercare, medications, and preventive health

Types of Veterinary Technologists and Technicians

This occupation includes multiple practice environments and specialization paths:

- Veterinary Technicians: Typically hold an associate degree and focus on clinical support and patient care.
- Veterinary Technologists: Usually hold a bachelor's degree and may take on advanced technical or supervisory roles.
- Companion Animal Practices: Work in clinics treating pets such as dogs and cats.
- Emergency and Specialty Clinics: Assist with critical care, surgery, or advanced diagnostics.
- Laboratory and Research Settings: Support medical research and testing.
- Zoo and Wildlife Facilities: Provide care for exotic and wild animals.

Skills and Abilities Needed

Veterinary technologists and technicians must combine medical precision with compassion and adaptability.

Core Clinical Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Credentialing Pathway

Entry into this occupation requires formal education and credentialing:

- Veterinary Technology Program: Associate degree (technician) or bachelor's degree (technologist) from an accredited program
- Clinical Training: Supervised hands-on experience during educational programs
- Credentialing: Passing the Veterinary Technician National Examination (VTNE)
- State Licensure or Registration: Required in most states
- Continuing Education: Ongoing training to maintain credentials and skills

Where Do Veterinary Technologists and Technicians Work?

Veterinary technologists and technicians work in a variety of animal care environments:

- Veterinary Clinics and Animal Hospitals
- Emergency and Specialty Veterinary Centers
- Animal Shelters and Humane Societies
- Research Laboratories and Universities
- Zoos, Aquariums, and Wildlife Parks
- Government Agencies and Inspection Services

Schedules may include evenings, weekends, holidays, or on-call shifts, depending on the setting.

Is This Career Difficult?

Veterinary technologists and technicians face both physical and emotional challenges. The role often involves long hours on your feet, handling anxious or injured animals, and supporting owners during difficult moments. Success in this field requires resilience, teamwork, and a genuine commitment to animal welfare.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This occupation may be a strong fit if you:

- Want a hands-on role in animal healthcare
- Enjoy working closely with animals in clinical settings
- Prefer a technical healthcare career without medical school
- Are comfortable in fast-paced, sometimes stressful environments
- Value teamwork and direct patient care

How to Prepare Early

- Take high school courses in Biology and Animal Science
- Gain experience through volunteering at animal clinics or shelters
- Develop physical stamina and safe animal handling skills
- Build communication skills for working with clients and medical teams
- Research accredited veterinary technology programs early

Veterinary technologists and technicians are the backbone of animal healthcare teams, ensuring animals receive safe, compassionate, and effective medical care every day.

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Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/veterinary-technologists-and-technicians.htm>