



Veterinary Medicine

Scouts BSA · Careers

Name

Started

Completed

Veterinary Medicine is about caring for animals and protecting the health of people too. You will learn about the many jobs veterinarians do and spend time seeing their work up close. If you love animals, this badge is a great way to explore a future career.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/veterinary-medicine/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

1 Vet roles in animal practice (discuss with counselor)

Tips for this section: Look up the different kinds of vets, like those who treat pets, farm animals, or zoo animals.

Example for this section: Compare three kinds of vets: a small-animal vet who treats pets at a clinic, a food-animal vet who drives to farms to check cattle, and a zoo vet who treats animals from lions to lizards. Explain what a day might look like for each.

- ☐ **1a** Small animal (companion) and equine medicine

- ☐ **1b** Food animal (large animal) medicine

- ☐ **1c** Exotic animal medicine

- ☐ **1d** Marine animal medicine, including mammals and fish

- ☐ **1e** Poultry medicine

- ☐ **1f** Wildlife and aquaculture medicine

2 Vet roles beyond animal practice (discuss with counselor)

Tips for this section: Learn how vets help keep food safe, prevent diseases, and help in research and the military.

Example for this section: Explain how vets protect people too: inspecting meat at processing plants, tracking diseases like rabies or bird flu, caring for military working dogs, and helping develop new medicines in research labs.

- ☐ **2a** Public health, including tracking and controlling zoonotic diseases

- ☐ **2b** The military

- ☐ **2c** Food safety and inspection

- ☐ **2d** Laboratory animal medicine and research

- ☐ **2e** Teaching and government

- ☐ **3** Describe the training needed to become a veterinarian and what's required to apply to veterinary school, and find the veterinary college in or nearest your state

Tip: Look up the training it takes to become a vet and find the veterinary college nearest you.

Example: Describe the path: college classes in science, then four years of veterinary school to earn a DVM or VMD, plus a license exam. Share what you found about the veterinary college nearest you.

- ☐ **4** Explain to your counselor what an animal health technician (A.H.T.) or registered veterinary technician (R.V.T.) does, the training required, and where the nearest training school is. Describe how one would help a vet in three practice types from requirement 1

Tip: Ask a vet tech at a clinic what they do each day and how they trained.

- ☐ **5** Discuss with your counselor the vet's role in the bond between people and animals

Tip: Talk about how pets help people and how vets support that bond.

Example: Share a story about how an animal helped someone you know, like a dog that keeps a grandparent active or a therapy animal at a hospital, and explain how a vet keeps that animal healthy so the bond lasts.

6 Learn from a veterinarian: Choose 1 of 2

Tips for this section: Call a local clinic with a parent to arrange a visit, and bring a list of questions.

Example for this section: Bring a list of questions to your clinic visit and take notes on what you see: exam rooms, the lab, surgery prep, and how staff calm nervous animals. Ask the vet what their favorite and hardest parts of the job are.

- ☐ **6a** Visit a vet clinic, hospital, or referral teaching hospital working in a requirement 1 practice area. Observe the vets and staff as long as you can, then prepare and share a presentation on what you learned with your counselor

- ☐ **6b** Spend as much time as you can with a vet working in a requirement 2 field. Learn about any extra training beyond vet school and unusual duties, then present to your counselor what you learned, including how the field serves the public

7 Discuss a vet career you pick from requirement 1 or 2

Tips for this section: Pick the veterinary career that interests you most and dig into what it involves.

- ☐ **7a** Discuss with your counselor why someone would choose this field

- ☐ **7b** Discuss what you would enjoy about the job

- ☐ **7c** Discuss what the hardest parts of the job would be

- ☐ **7d** Discuss what has surprised you most about the job

- ☐ **7e** Discuss what continuing education is needed to keep certification for the job