

How to Become a Teacher

Teachers are among the most important and respected individuals in our society. They are the ones that are teaching the newer generation everything they need to know to be successful in their future. Teachers have a huge impact on children and statistics show that teachers do their job because they love the profession and they love children.

Becoming a teacher is competitive and most states have strict guidelines to becoming certified. If done right and if you are prepared, you can be on your way to teaching shortly after your graduation. Although the process varies among states, there are general procedures that you can follow to help get you started.

Choose Your Major

Some schools have majors geared for education, such as early childhood education or elementary education. If this major is offered at your school, it is best to take advantage of it so that you take the classes necessary to help you learn how to handle young children. You may also want to consider a dual major by adding math, science or English as teachers in these areas are in high demand.

Get a Job

Get a head start on your peers and consider getting a part time job by working at a daycare or even as a teacher's assistant. In some states you can even become a substitute teacher even if you only have a limited amount of credits. This will give you tons of experience that you can add to your resume.

Keep Your Grades Up

Sometimes it does not matter if your grades in college are high, just as long as you pass, right? Well if you want to be a teacher, the schools you interview with will look at your transcript and your grades and if they are low, then you may not get hired. Think about it; who would want a teacher to teach students when they barely passed college themselves? Teaching jobs are highly competitive, especially in affluent areas. Chances are, your resume is only one of hundreds; therefore the better your GPA, the better your chances are of getting hired.

Teacher Certification

Before becoming a teacher, you will need to become certified to teach certain subjects and grade levels. Every state has certain tests that you will need to take to prove your knowledge of material so that you can be certified to teach. Your advisor at your current college or university can point you in the right direction so that you know which tests to take and when you should take them.

Alternative Route

What if you already have finished school and you majored in Business and now you decide you want to teach? Most states have an alternative route program where you only have to take a handful of credits and then certification to become a teacher. Or you can even start teaching, with a mentor in the classroom with you and gain your certification that way.

Other Tips

- Once you become certified, you may want to consider jobs in urban areas as they are usually in high demand.
- Math and science teachers are scarce, so if you have certification in either of those areas and you are right for the job, you can expect a quick hire.
- Since most teachers are female, men have an edge over women, as schools want to be diverse. Therefore they will hire more men and even minorities to make their school as diverse as possible.
- Start preparing your teaching portfolio as early in your college career as possible. You should collect all your awards,

transcripts, resumes, and even teaching ideas and compile them in a large binder. This will not only give you a head start in your profession, but it will impress the principals you interview with in the future.

- In most states, if you decide to teach in a low-income urban area, then you may be eligible for student loan forgiveness.

Before you run out and decide to teach because you'll get summers off, and holidays as well, just make sure that teaching is the job for you. Make sure you are ready to handle a classroom full of children and their parents as well. Teaching is a tough job and it takes patient and dedicated people to be successful with it.

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