



JOB of the Week



Job name: Veterinary Surgeon

Job description: Veterinary surgeons provide medical care to a range of animals, from domestic pets to those in farm and zoo settings and wild animals with injuries. Your role as a veterinary surgeon (often known as a vet) will be to safeguard the health and welfare of animals. It's likely you'll do this in a general practice, where you'll be responsible for the medical and surgical treatment of a range of animals. You'll use your practical skills and knowledge of animal physiology, nutrition and medicine to diagnose illnesses, prescribe medicines and perform surgery. You'll also manage anaesthesia during procedures and will work to prevent disease in animals and the spread of disease.

Tasks you will undertake in the job: As a veterinary surgeon, you'll need to:

- work from a surgery or visit animals in their living environments, such as a farm or stables
- carry out home visits, which only some vets do
- handle, examine and treat all species of animals, including domestic animals, farm livestock and horses
- meet and consult with the owners and carers of various animals, including zookeepers
- carry out tests such as x-rays, blood samples and ultrasound scans
- give advice to farmers on issues such as nutrition, breeding and herd health
- routinely visit farms to check the health of livestock
- immunise animals against different types of disease
- euthanise old and terminally ill animals
- perform surgery, including managing anaesthesia
- work on out-of-hours emergency cases when on call
- provide suitable paperwork for animals travelling abroad, as well as inserting identification microchips
- maintain up-to-date records
- liaise with, and refer to, other professionals within the industry
- inspect certain animal products to ensure they are safe for human consumption
- manage the practice finances, promotional activities and recruitment, if you work as a practice partner
- research diseases, test and manage infection outbreaks, investigate food safety issues and complete paperwork for pet passports, if you work for a government agency.

Skills required for this job (core competencies):

Communication	Resilience	Organisation	Teamwork
Problem Solving	Initiative	Creativity	Digital literacy

Sectors in which Veterinary Surgeon would normally work: Many vets work in private practices and experience as a vet can lead to buying into or setting up a practice of your own. Locum work is often possible. Working conditions vary. Vets work in surgeries, farms, zoos, customers' homes and other environments. They may be required to work outdoors in poor weather conditions.

The job can be physically demanding and stressful due to its high level of responsibility. There are physical risks, spanning from minor injuries such as scratching and biting from animals to the much rarer risk of catching a trans-species disease. There has been a significant increase in the number of women entering the profession and there are now more female practising veterinary surgeons than male. There are also significantly more female undergraduate veterinary students, though in most veterinary practices women are still underrepresented at very senior level and sometimes face discrimination for their gender.

Career path and progression within the industry:

As a newly-qualified veterinary surgeon, you'll usually start work as an assistant before becoming fully-fledged. Once working, there are opportunities to specialise in particular areas, for example, equine medicine, small animal surgery or dermatology. Further training is required for these specialisations, which may lead to a diploma.

With time and experience you may be offered the opportunity to become a partner or a principal in a veterinary practice. Whether you decide to take this up is a personal decision, as it requires a greater degree of responsibility and financial and management input into the practice. Partnership opportunities have decreased somewhat as a result of large companies taking over many veterinary practices and employing vets on a salaried basis.

With further training, extensive professional experience and publication of articles on a chosen area, it is possible to gain RCVS Recognised Specialist Status. Recognised specialists offer consultation in their chosen field.

You could move from practice work to working for an animal welfare society, or government service in a related field such as the licensing of veterinary medicines.



Salary: Starting salaries for newly-qualified vets are generally around £30,500 to £35,500. With further training and experience, your salary can rise to approximately £40,000 to £70,000. Vets working in large animal practices tend to earn more than those working with smaller animals.

Working hours: Many veterinary practices offer service 24/7, 365 days a year. Because of this, your working hours may be irregular as it's important to be available for emergencies.

Essential skills you need to show: You will need to show evidence of:

- commitment to animal welfare
- flexibility
- an ability to communicate to clients in a way that is easy to understand - especially in emotional circumstances
- being caring and approachable
- good organisational skills
- being able to work in a practical and unsentimental way with animals
- commercial and management skills, for those wishing to progress to practice partner.

The main employers of vets are: mixed veterinary practices; practices specialising in a particular type of animal, such as small animals, food-producing animals and equine. The specialism may depend on the practice's rural or urban location; zoos; animal hospitals; animal charities and welfare societies, such as the RSPCA, PDSA, The Blue Cross

This job in the future: The workforce is projected to grow by 8.7%, creating 2 300 jobs; in the same period, 53.7% of the workforce is likely to retire, creating 13 900 job opportunities.

www.icould.com

www.successatschool.org

www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk

www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors

www.ucas.com/careers-advice

www.kudos/casaid.co.uk/#/ (you all have a log on for this service)

www.careersbox.co.uk (careers videos)

Helpful sites for careers information

GAT careers links

<http://airhead.io/public/launchpads/XqbuOMJgb0OfqvMPCykcZA>

