Physical therapists help people overcome or adjust to physical disabilities caused by injury, illness or birth defects. They evaluate physical disabilities and treat patients to relieve pain and restore function. They plan and administer treatments, on referral by Physicians. They administer and interpret tests and measurements for muscle strength, coordination and respiratory and circulatory efficiency. They instruct patients in care and use of wheel chairs, braces, canes, crutches, and other devices.

Physical therapists must receive a master’s degree from an accredited physical therapist program before taking the national licensure examination that allows them to practice. Other requirements for physical therapy practice vary from state to state according to physical therapy practice acts or state regulations governing physical therapy. Many schools also offer the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree.

The master’s in physical therapy and entry-level doctoral program are usually three years long. Generally speaking, the first two years are focused on academic and clinical course work including relevant clinical rotations. The third year consists predominately of challenging clinical experiences as well as advanced courses and seminars.

### LOWER DIVISION SUBJECTS REQUIRED BY MOST U.S. PHYSICAL THERAPY SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One year of English Composition</td>
<td>English 110 &amp; 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year of Biology</td>
<td>Biology 101, 102 &amp; 103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year of Inorganic (General) Chemistry</td>
<td>Chemistry 155 &amp; 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One semester of Anatomy</td>
<td>Bio-Medical Sciences 107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One semester of Physiology</td>
<td>Bio-Medical Sciences 108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Requirements vary by campus. Some schools require calculus while other schools require statistics. Your undergraduate major may also determine your choice of Math requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LOWER DIVISION SUBJECTS RECOMMENDED BY MOST U.S. PHYSICAL THERAPY SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One semester of Public Speaking/Speech</td>
<td>Communication 131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year of Organic Chemistry</td>
<td>Chemistry 211 with 221 (lab) &amp; 212 with 222 (lab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One semester of Psychology or Abnormal Psychology</td>
<td>Psychology 100 or Psychology 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One semester of Microbiology</td>
<td>Bio-Medical Sciences 127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Skills</td>
<td>Basic computer knowledge is necessary for many physical therapy schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All courses should be taken for a letter grade, not Pass/No Pass.*

**Choosing an Undergraduate Major**

“Pre-physical therapy” is not a major at universities. You should give careful consideration to your choice of major and select an area of study that interests you. Biology and Kinesiology are often popular majors selected. However, students should select an appropriate major that could lead to an alternative career, if necessary.

Students applying to physical therapist programs need to plan carefully and complete not only the physical therapist requirements, but also the requirements for their undergraduate major and the general education required by the undergraduate transfer institution.

**Note:** Information is subject to change without notice. Check with the individual campus for its specific requirements and the most up-to-date information.
PHYSICAL THERAPY ADMISSION INFORMATION

Physical Therapist Selection Criteria
- GPA is a major factor in the selection process. Both overall college grades and science grades are considered.
- Some schools may require admissions tests such as the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). Check with the individual campus schools you plan to apply to for information.
- Physical Therapy schools expect applicants to have experience in documented community service.
- To determine oral and written communication skills, physical therapy applicants are required to participate in physical therapy interviews.

Salary Information
In 2012, the average annual wage in California was $89,370 with most people making between $65,890 and $115,530 according to (www.cacareerzone.com).

Recommended Websites
American Physical Therapy Association  www.apta.org

Select Physical Therapy School Websites
Azusa Pacific University  www.apu.edu/bas/physicaltherapy/
California State University, Fresno  www.csufresno.edu/chhs/depts_programs/physical_therapy/
California State University, Long Beach  www.csulb.edu/colleges/chhs/departments/pt/
California State University, Northridge  http://hhd.csun.edu/pt/
California State University, Dominguez Hills  http://www.csudh.edu/hhs/kr/physical.htm
California State University, Sacramento  www.hhs.csus.edu/PT/
Chapman University  www.chapman.edu/wcls/pt/
Loma Linda University  www.llu.edu/llu/sahp/pt/
Mount St Mary’s College  www.msmc.la.edu/pt
Samuel Merritt College  www.samuelmerritt.edu/
University of Southern California  http://pt.usc.edu/
University of the Pacific  www.pacific.edu/x9640.xml
Western University of Health Sciences  www.westernu.edu/allied-health-dpt_about
San Francisco State University  http://pt.sfsu.edu/
Humboldt State University  http://www.humboldt.edu/kra/programs/bachelors-kinesiology/pre-physical-therapy-option
University of California, San Francisco  www.ptrehab.medschool.ucsf.edu/Education/

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