

Steps to Becoming a Mathematics Teacher

Step #1

Find out if teaching is for you; volunteer, substitute teach, or visit a math class at your local middle or high school.

Step #2

Verify subject-matter competence through the mathematics department of your local university. Take courses or required tests as needed.

Step #3

Decide what type of credential program is best for you. Depending on your educational level (high school student, college student, career changer), take the proper course work as directed by your school or college and enroll in a teacher preparation program or intern program.

Step #4

Locate financial aid resources by logging on to the TEACH California Web site.

Where can I get additional information?

For additional information about each of these steps or more information about what it takes to teach mathematics in California, visit the TEACH California Web site at www.teachcalifornia.org

Track your progress by registering in the **My Career Plan** section of the TEACH California Web site.

Make the **difference**
of a lifetime.
Teach.



www.teachcalifornia.org



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TEACH Math

A guide to becoming a
math teacher
in California



California Needs Math Teachers

Over the next decade California will need more than 33,000 math and science teachers to take on the challenging yet rewarding job of teaching our state's youths.

Math teachers play an important part in educating our children. They convey the wonder of mathematics by teaching students to solve challenging programs, develop computation expertise, and apply logic and rationale to mathematical equations. They open up the world of mathematics and make it real. They make clear how abstract symbols are used to describe, order, explain, and predict everyday events.

The new mathematics standards in the Common Core focus on a clear set of math skills and concepts, with real-world problems to solve. They aim to help students learn in a more organized way both during a school year and from grade to grade. California needs qualified mathematics teachers. If you are interested and ready for a challenging career, take the next step—TEACH!

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a credential?

A teaching credential is a license to teach in public schools from kindergarten through grade twelve. The credential is granted after an individual completes all the requirements and a teacher preparation program recommends him or her to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), the state teacher licensing agency. Only certain individuals (those who possess out-of-state teaching credentials, have taught at regionally accredited private schools, or are National Board-Certified Teachers) can apply directly for a credential from the CTC.

Why do I need to get a credential if I already have years of math experience?

Teaching is a profession and requires knowledge beyond subject matter. Although many individuals are familiar with math and confident in their abilities, successful teaching requires an understanding of instructional methods. These skills and others are taught in teacher preparation programs.

What is the purpose of a teacher preparation program?

Teacher preparation focuses on learning *how* to teach. Teacher preparation programs are organized to develop the skills needed for teaching in classrooms and include course work in such areas as instructional methods, curriculum development, and classroom management.



What is subject-matter competency?

Subject-matter competence is knowledge of *what* is taught. This requirement is met either by completing specific examinations or by completing specific preparation programs in the academic subject area at a California college or university.

Do I need a degree in mathematics to teach this subject?

Knowledge of math is needed to teach the subject. Usually, advanced course work or certification is needed, along with introductory computer science courses. If your degree is in a subject other than mathematics, you can satisfy the subject-matter competence requirement by passing specific exams.

Is there just one type of mathematics credential?

There are two types of mathematics credentials. Holders of a Single Subject Credential in Foundational-Level Mathematics may teach general math, algebra,

geometry, consumer math, and probability and statistics. Holders of a Single Subject Credential in Mathematics can teach any mathematics course.

Are there exam requirements for becoming a mathematics teacher?

No specific exam requirements exist for teaching mathematics; however, the basic skills and subject matter competency requirements can be fulfilled by successfully passing certain exams.

What is a blended teacher preparation program?

The blended program is designed for individuals without a bachelor's degree. The programs often begin in the junior year and may be completed in five semesters. A program includes a curriculum sequence that "blends" mathematics and education courses and student teaching experiences and seminars.

I need to work while fulfilling the requirements for a credential. Is there a program that will work for me?

Alternative certification programs target individuals who have related work experiences and subject-matter preparation or are seeking a career change and have to work. These programs are structured so that the student teaches during the day (and gets paid for teaching) while taking classes at night, during weekends, or during school breaks. The intern program is one type of alternative certification program.

What is the average salary of a teacher in California?

According to the California Department of Education, the average salary for California's public school teachers, 2011-2012, was \$68,531. Teachers' salaries are established by each school district. More information regarding teacher salary schedules and benefits and additional salary incentives can be obtained by contacting school districts directly.