

## Steps to Becoming a Science Teacher

### Step #1

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

### Step #2

Verify subject-matter competence through the science 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 website.

## Where can I get additional information?

For additional information about each of these steps or more information about what it takes to teach science in California, visit the TEACH California website at [www.teachcalifornia.org](http://www.teachcalifornia.org)

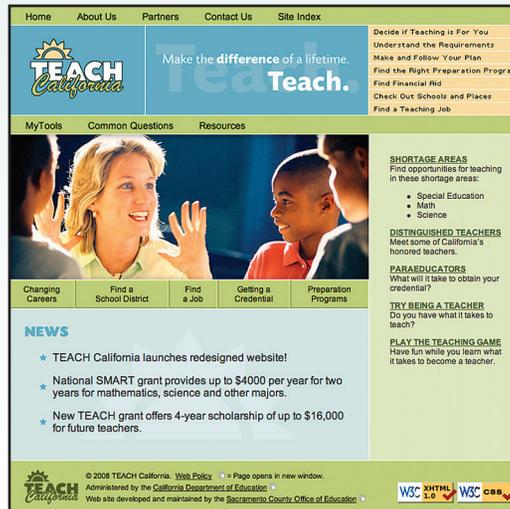
Track your progress by registering in the **My Career Plan** section of the TEACH California website.

Make the **difference**  
of a lifetime.

**Teach.**



[www.teachcalifornia.org](http://www.teachcalifornia.org)



This brochure and other free teacher recruitment materials may be downloaded or ordered online. Log on to [www.teachcalifornia.org](http://www.teachcalifornia.org), click on "Resources," then "Outreach Materials." Online orders will be shipped within two weeks.



Funds for this project come exclusively from federal funds awarded to the California Department of Education under the Elementary Secondary Education Act.

# TEACH Science

A guide to becoming a  
**science teacher**  
in California



# California Needs Science Teachers

It is estimated that California will need more than 33,000 new science and math teachers in the next ten years. Science is one of the most acute shortage areas. The number of science teachers being prepared in the most recent years significantly dropped while the demand only increased.

Science teachers have the unique opportunity to inspire students to take an interest in science—a field that can lead to wondrous events, such as the ability to find new sources of fuel or to develop life-saving vaccines and medications. In addition, students' success in science depends largely on the knowledge and skills of their teachers more than any other single factor.

Careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics are the sources of innovation. All students must gain skills in science and technology to succeed in any future career including career technical fields. Three to four years of science is required for most future careers. To thrive in today's society, students must have the skills needed for the global economy.

Become a science teacher!

## 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 many years of experience in science?

Teaching is a profession and requires knowledge beyond subject matter. Although many individuals are familiar with science 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 science to teach this subject?

Knowledge of science 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 science, you can satisfy the subject-matter competence requirement by passing specific exams.

### Is there just one type of science credential?

There are two types of science credentials. Requirements for the two types differ, as does the subject matter that can be taught. Holders of a Foundational-

Level General Science credential may teach only introductory science (General, Life, or Physical) and integrated science (K-8). Holders of a subject area credential (Biological Science, Chemistry, Physics, Geosciences) can teach courses in their subject area, as well as integrated science (K-12) and any introductory science.

### Are there exam requirements for becoming a science teacher?

No specific exam requirements exist for teaching science; 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" science 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 who 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 high school teachers, 2014-15, was \$79,043. 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.