

Steps to Becoming a Science Teacher

Step #1

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

Step #2

Understand the requirements, including basic skills and subject-matter competency. Be prepared to take science courses or required exams. Visit your local university for help in identifying your individual requirements.

Step #3

Create a career plan based on the type of credential that is best for you, according to your education level and teaching interests.

Step #4

Enroll in a Commission-approved teacher preparation program that meets your specific degree, credential, and lifestyle requirements.

Step #5

Locate sources of financial aid such as federal grants, scholarships, loans, and campus-based programs.

Step #6

Find a teaching job and launch your career!

TEACH California Can Help

The TEACH California Web site provides a wealth of information and resources to help you with each step of the process. You can also register in the Career Plan section of the site to build an individualized plan and track your progress.

Begin your journey toward a rewarding career today! Visit TEACH California at www.teachcalifornia.org.



Make the **difference**
of a lifetime.

Teach.

www.teachcalifornia.org

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This brochure and other teacher recruitment materials may be downloaded for free. Log on to www.teachcalifornia.org, select **Learn More**, then **Recruitment Materials**.

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Teach Science

A guide to becoming a
Science Teacher
in California



California Needs Science Teachers

California will need an estimated 33,000 new science and math teachers in the next ten years. Despite significant demand, fewer people are entering these fields, leading to an acute shortage. This suggests strong career prospects for science teachers.

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics are key sources of innovation in the global economy. All students must gain skills in these areas in order to thrive in the 21st century, with most careers requiring at least three to four years of science.

Highly skilled teachers are essential to the development of science-literate students prepared for the challenges of college, careers, and even citizenship. Teacher knowledge and skill is shown to be the single greatest predictor of student success in science.

Are you ready to inspire the next generation of scientists? Will your students find a new source of fuel, develop a lifesaving vaccine, or make a discovery we have yet to imagine? 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 requirements and a teacher preparation program recommends him or her to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), the state teacher licensing agency. Individuals with out-of-state credentials, teaching experience at regionally accredited private schools, or National Board Certification may 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 that requires knowledge beyond subject matter. Although many prospective teachers are confident in their science abilities, successful teaching also 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 programs focus on learning how to teach. They are designed to develop the skills necessary for successful classroom teaching and include coursework in instructional methods, curriculum development, and classroom management. These programs also help teacher candidates meet licensure requirements. The Commission provides information on what entities are approved to offer which types of teacher preparation programs. Please visit the Approved Programs Dashboard at www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/reports/data/app-approved-program. You can filter your selections to show only programs that prepare science teachers and which institutions offer the program through an intern model (the candidate is employed as a teacher of record while completing teacher preparation).

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 science degree in order to teach?

While a science degree is not required, you must be able to demonstrate subject-matter competency, or in-depth knowledge of what you will be teaching. This generally requires advanced coursework in a subject area. However, you may also show competency by passing the California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET) in Foundational-Level General Science or Science.

Is there just one type of science credential?

There are two types of science credentials, with distinct requirements and outcomes. The Foundational-Level General Science credential allows you to teach introductory science (General, Life, or Physical) or integrated science (K-8). The Single Subject Science credential (Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Physics, Geosciences) allows you to teach advanced courses in the designated subject area, as well as and introductory or integrated science (K-12) courses.

Are there exam requirements for becoming a science teacher?

There are no specific exam requirements for teaching science; however, the basic skills and subject-matter competency requirements can be fulfilled by successfully passing the California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET) in Foundational-Level General Science or the candidate's area of concentration (Life Sciences, Chemistry, Earth and Space Sciences, or Physics).

What is a blended teacher preparation program?

The blended or integrated 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. The curriculum sequence "blends" science and education courses, as well as 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 or intern 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) while taking classes at night, on weekends, or during school breaks.

