

Veterinary Surgeon

What is it?

A Veterinary Surgeon (often called a vet) diagnoses, treats and cares for animals that are sick or injured. They work with pets such as cats and dogs, but may also work with farm animals, horses, wildlife or zoo animals. Veterinary Surgeons play an important role in animal welfare, public health and supporting pet owners.

Qualifications/Experience Required:

Becoming a Veterinary Surgeon requires a high level of training. You must:

Complete a degree in Veterinary Medicine or Veterinary Science approved by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) (usually 5–6 years).

Strong GCSEs and A levels are required, particularly biology, chemistry and maths. Register with the RCVS to practise in the UK.

Type of person who may be suited to this job:

- Loves animals and is committed to their welfare.
- Strong academic ability, especially in science.
- Calm and confident under pressure.
- Good problem-solving and communication skills.
- Emotionally resilient and compassionate.

What the Work Involves:

- Examining animals and diagnosing illnesses or injuries.
- Carrying out medical procedures and surgery.
- Prescribing medication and treatments.
- Giving advice to animal owners on care, diet and welfare.
- Keeping detailed clinical records.
- Working with veterinary nurses and other professionals.

Money/Wage Guide:

- **Starting Salary: £32,000-£36,000**
- **Experienced Salary: £50,000-£70,000+**

Related Opportunities:

- **Veterinary Nurse**
- **Animal Behaviourist**
- **Zoologist**
- **Animal Welfare Officer**

Future Prospects – Labour Market Information:

Veterinary Surgeons are in demand across the UK, particularly in small animal practices. With experience, vets can specialise in areas such as **surgery, exotic animals, farm animals, or dentistry.**

Typical weekly hours – 40+ hours per week.

This can include evenings, weekends and on-call work, especially in emergency or hospital settings.

Further Information:

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-profiles/veterinary-surgeon>

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk>