

# PHYSICAL THERAPY RESOURCES

This handout is designed to provide students a general guide to applying to physical therapy schools. For further assistance, please schedule an appointment with a Career Advisor.



CAREER CENTER

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## QUICK FACTS

Physical therapy is a healthcare field dedicated to improving movement, relieving pain, and restoring physical function for individuals of all ages. To become a physical therapist (PT), you must pursue a **Doctor of Physical Therapy or Doctor of Physiotherapy (DPT)**. You must thoroughly read the requirements that each school has for admission.

Here are some things for physical therapy applicants to consider:

- The **American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)**, covers the general admission process for physical therapy programs, <https://www.apta.org/your-career/careers-in-physical-therapy/pt-admissions-process>.
- You can review programs through the APTA website: <https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/>.
- Applications usually require some combination of these materials:
  - **Minimum GPA, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, a personal statement, a cover letter, observation hours, and an interview.**
  - Some, but not all, programs require **interviews**, and the process varies from school to school.
  - Thoroughly read through the requirements each school/program has for admission.
- Most schools require applications to be submitted through the **Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS)**, <https://ptcas.liasoncas.com/>
  - However, **not all programs use PTCAS**. Check the admission procedures for each school to ensure you apply in the correct location.
- The number of **physical therapy shadowing hours** required varies from school to school, but most programs want experience from at least **2 physical therapy settings (inpatient and outpatient), often supervised by a licensed practitioner**.
- **Personal Statements** used to apply to physical therapy programs being submitted through PTCAS should be a general overview as to why you chose this profession and answer the prompt: **"Reflect on a meaningful experience in your life and share how that experience influenced your personal growth, such as your attitudes or perceptions."**
- When requesting **letters of recommendation**, most programs are seeking **1-4 letters** from licensed physical therapists, science faculty, advisors, or other professionals that can adequately speak on your behalf.
  - However, certain schools may only accept a certain number or have specifications on letter writers, so it is vital to check the website of each program you are applying to.
  - You can review the [PTCAS Reference Section](#) for important information for both you and your references.

## GRE PREPARATION

### Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

- Applicants are required to take the GRE only by some programs, but **required minimum scores vary**.
- You can register for the GRE using this link: <https://www.ets.org/gre.html>
- The exam is made up of 3 sections including: **Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Analytical Writing**.
- Be sure to take the test in enough time to make the application deadline.

### Prepare in advance!

- Spend time prior to your test date familiarizing yourself with the types of questions in each section.
- You can study through taking a course with a company like Kaplan or Princeton Review, or you can purchase study books online that contain practice tests and examples.

## COMMON PREREQUISITES

### Common:

Human Anatomy and Physiology I & II  
Principles of Biology I & II  
Principles of Chemistry I & I  
Introductory Physics I & II  
Intro to General Psychology  
Probability & Statistics

### Highly Suggested:

Genetics  
Cellular and Molecular Physiology  
Histology  
Allied Health Microbiology  
Microbiology  
Exercise Physiology  
Abnormal Psychology  
Intro to Human Development  
Sport & Exercise Psychology

**\*This is not an exhaustive list. Please research each program's requirement, and please consult with your academic advisor prior to registering for classes.**

## KEY NUMBERS

- Average GPA: cumulative **3.0**
- Average GRE: Verbal Reasoning – **155**; Quantitative Reasoning – **154**; Analytical Writing – **4.3**

**\*Check with each individual school for their GPA and score requirements.**

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## INTERVIEW PREPARATION

When preparing for professional school interviews, a lot of the same rules apply as with most job interviews.

- Visit **Handshake** to view the Career Center's interview resources and handouts.
- **Practice to answer common questions:** Why physical therapy?" or "Why our program?"
- Ensure you have **in-depth responses** to interview questions that are specific to you and how you fit into the program you're applying for.
- **Not all programs require interviews**, and the process varies from school to school, so read the program's webpage thoroughly.

## SOURCES

**American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) – Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT) Admissions Process:**

<https://www.apta.org/your-career/careers-in-physical-therapy/pt-admissions-process>

**APTA – PTCAS: The Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service:**

<https://www.apta.org/cas/ptcas>

**Educational Testing Service (ETS) - GRE:**

<https://www.ets.org/gre.html>

**Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS) Directory:**

<https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/>

**PTCAS – GRE Requirements and Codes by Programs:**

<https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/5254/GRE-Requirements-and-Codes-by-Program>

**PTCAS Applicant Help Center:**

[https://help.liaisonedu.com/PTCAS\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center?navID=10737427434](https://help.liaisonedu.com/PTCAS_Applicant_Help_Center?navID=10737427434)

**Student Progress - GRE Score for PT School Admission: Minimum, Average and Good Scores for Physical Therapy:**

<https://www.studentprogress.org/gre/score/pt/#:~:text=A%20GRE%20score%20above%20310,good%20for%20Physical%20Therapy%20School>