

Endodontist

The root canal specialist. Dental school, then two or three more years learning to save teeth other dentists would pull.

TYPICAL PAY

\$227,690

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$107k to \$239k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

10 to 11 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Specialty endodontic practices, group dental offices, dental schoo...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Biology, chemistry and physics, plus anything that trains your hands. Dexterity is tested at every stage.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
Any major, as long as you finish the science prerequisites and take the Dental Admission Test.
- 3 Dental school** 4 years
Four years for a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) degree. The two are the same qualification with differ...
- 4 State licensure** Final year and after
Pass the national written dental exam and a clinical examination, then register with your state dental board.
- 5 Endodontics residency** 2 to 3 years
A postdoctoral program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation. Microscopes, surgery, and hundreds of supervised cases.
- 6 Board certification, optional** After residency
The American Board of Endodontics grants Diplomate status after written and oral examinations. Not required to practice, but it is the ma...

Pros and cons

- + Very well paid, with normal weekday hours
- + Work arrives by referral instead of by advertising
- + You save teeth that would otherwise be extracted
- Ten or eleven years, and the specialty years usually cost you money rather than pay you
- Debt of \$300,000 or more is common before you earn anything
- The field is small and barely growing, so location choices are limited

Optional boosts

Board certification. Microsurgery skills. Three-dimensional imaging. Teaching at a dental school.

Where these numbers come from

O*NET OnLine: Dentists, All Other Specialists (29-1029.00)
American Association of Endodontists
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/endodontist>

Good to know

It is a very small profession

The whole category of other dental specialists, endodontists included, is only about 6,600 people nationally, with roughly 200 openings a year. Very few jobs, very little competition for the work, and not man...

The microscope is the reason for the specialty

Root canals are branched, curved and often invisible on a flat image. Endodontists work under an operating microscope at high magnification, which is the main reason they succeed where a gener...



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