

# Dental Hygienist



## What do they do?

Dental Hygienists clean and polish teeth, examine patients for oral disease and take x-ray images of the mouth and jaw. They work closely with both Dentists and Dental Assistants.

A Dental Hygienist works with patients every day. They also teach patients how to care for their teeth and gums.

## Where do they work?

Almost all Dental Hygienists work in a dentist's office. More than half of all Dental Hygienists work part time.

## Pay:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average yearly income for Dental Hygienists is \$77,090.



## Education:

Anyone wanting to work as a Dental Hygienist must complete an accredited two-year associate's degree program.

## Dental Hygienist training in Madison:

Madison Area Technical College: [www.madisoncollege.edu](http://www.madisoncollege.edu)

High School students interested in becoming a Dental Hygienist should take classes in biology, chemistry and math. Dental Hygienists interested in continuing their education and going into research or teaching, could complete a bachelor's or master's degree.

## Accreditation:

Education programs for Dental Hygienists are accredited by the American Dental Association. Learn more about the ADA here:

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



## Professional Associations:

Dental Hygienists can join both a national and state association:

**American Dental Hygienists Association:**

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



**Wisconsin Dental Hygienists Association:**

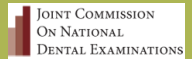
[www.wi-dha.com](http://www.wi-dha.com)

## License:

After completing their education, graduates of a Dental Hygiene program must pass three areas of testing.

The national level exam is taken through the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations. National Board Dental Hygiene Examination:

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



## Regional Dental Hygiene Exam:

At the regional level, the Central Regional Dental Testing Services also administers a dental hygiene exam.

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



At the state level, Dental Hygienists must also become licensed through the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services.

Wisconsin Dental Hygiene Examination:

[www.dsps.wi.gov/HOME](http://www.dsps.wi.gov/HOME)



## Potential for Advancement:

With additional education or work experience, a Dental Hygienist could go into:

Dental Hygiene Instructor  
Dental Laboratory Technician  
Dental Sales Representative

Public Health Hygiene  
Public School Hygienist  
Dental Hygiene Administrator

## Job Outlook:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for Dental Hygienists is expected to grow 11 percent between 2020-2030, which is much faster than the average across all occupations.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2017-18 Edition*, Dental Hygienists, [www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dental-hygienists.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dental-hygienists.htm) (visited September 08, 2021).

