



# Your Journey to Medical School

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Test Prep  
Tutoring  
Admission Services



# MISSION: MEDICAL SCHOOL

Getting into medical school takes more than a premed major and a passion for *Grey's Anatomy*.

It means working hard to build the right foundational knowledge and presenting yourself as a desirable candidate that medical schools vie to enroll.

Admission to the medical school of your dreams requires a lot of foresight and planning. A successful medical school candidate is always thinking two steps ahead—and constantly curating his or her list of “experiences” for the Work and Activities section of the AMCAS application.

**You'll need to ace the following aspects of the medical school application:**

1. Your GPA
2. Your MCAT® scores
3. Letters of recommendation
4. Experience related to the medical field (such as volunteer work or research)
5. Extracurricular activities
6. Your personal statement
7. Interview

Get the resources you'll need to approach your medical admission journey with confidence and swagger.

Visit [PrincetonReview.com/Toolkit](https://PrincetonReview.com/Toolkit).

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# Plan Your Path

A clear four-year plan for coursework is key to completing necessary medical school prerequisites. By knocking out your medical school requirements in the first two years, premeds can use the last two years of college to take electives, study abroad, or pursue a nonscience major or minor.

## Basic Subject Requirements



- Biology (with Lab)
- General Chemistry (with Lab)
- Organic Chemistry (with Lab)
- Physics (with Lab)
- English

## Required or Recommended Subjects



- Biochemistry
- Calculus
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Statistics/Biostatistics
- Genetics
- Humanities
- Behavioral Sciences
- Social Sciences

Bear in mind that each medical school has its own premed course requirements. Depending on where you plan to apply, courses in the above subjects may be required or recommended.

*“My tutor was awesome and helped a lot! I’ve been having a really difficult time with physics this year, and this service has really helped. The year is almost over, but I hope to continue to use it next year.”*

—Madison, on-demand tutoring student

### Freshman Year:

Get started on prerequisites and extracurricular activities.



#### Academics:

- 1 year of general chemistry
- 1 year of calculus
- 1 year of biology



#### Extracurriculars:

- Begin a health care-related volunteer program, job, or internship
- Research academic societies and premed clubs or other organizations, and consider joining one



#### Applications:

- Review course requirements and create a premed game plan
- Build relationships with professors

## Hit Your Marks

Due to the sheer volume of medical school applications submitted each year, admission officers have to make some initial screening decisions based largely on GPA and MCAT scores. Your undergraduate performance is the most important aspect of your medical school application—especially your grades in hard sciences. Keep in mind that some of the most competitive medical schools may use national GPA averages as cutoffs for initial selection.

The average GPA for medical school matriculants is around 3.70 with a 510/511 MCAT. If your GPA falls below a 3.40/3.45, you should consider completing some graduate-level coursework or a graduate program prior to applying. We recommend at least one full year of graduate-level work BEFORE applying if your GPA is an issue.

### ADMISSION TIP:

You can also find average GPAs and medical school acceptance rates in our online school profiles at [PrincetonReview.com](http://PrincetonReview.com).

	Applicants	Matriculants
Science GPA	3.45	3.64
Nonscience GPA	3.70	3.79
Total GPA	3.56	3.71

Source: [www.aamc.org/data/facts/applicantmatriculant/](http://www.aamc.org/data/facts/applicantmatriculant/)

## Does Your GPA Need a Boost?

Our tutors are online 24/7 to help you conquer your toughest premed courses. From calculus to chemistry, our experts have you covered. Jump online or snap a picture of your assignment with our mobile app, and connect to an expert in less than a minute.

Our tutors will work through any problem with you to ensure you understand it and get the right answer.

Need help with your premed requirements? Visit [PrincetonReview.com/PreMedGPA](http://PrincetonReview.com/PreMedGPA) to try a free session.



96%

of students who used on-demand tutoring say we helped them improve their grades.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Based on 2016 survey of students of The Princeton Review/Tutor.com.

# Know Your Opponent

Your GPA and your MCAT score are the two most crucial factors for medical school admission. The first step to conquering the MCAT is knowing it inside and out, section by section.

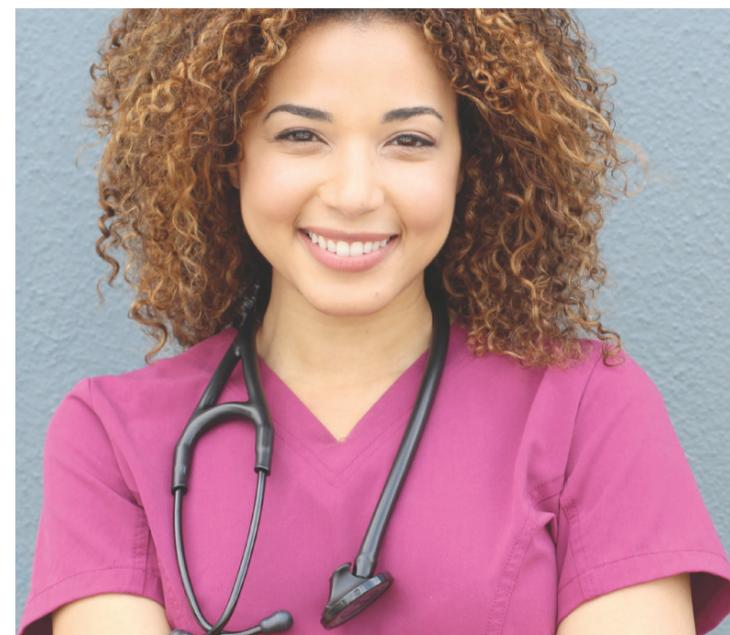
## MCAT Sections:

	Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59 multiple-choice questions</li> <li>• 95-minute section</li> <li>• Tests basic biology, organic chemistry, inorganic chemistry, and biochemistry</li> </ul>
	Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59 multiple-choice questions</li> <li>• 95-minute section</li> <li>• Tests basic biochemistry, biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics</li> </ul>
	Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59 multiple-choice questions</li> <li>• 95-minute section</li> <li>• Tests introductory psychology, sociology, and biology</li> </ul>
	Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 53 multiple-choice questions</li> <li>• 90-minute section</li> <li>• Similar to reading comprehension sections on other standardized tests</li> <li>• Passages come from a variety of humanities and social sciences disciplines</li> </ul>



**Last year, 53,042 students submitted 830,016 applications to 146 medical schools—only 21,030 students matriculated.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup>Source: AAMC. Table A-1: U.S. Medical School Applications and Matriculants by School, State of Legal Residence, and Sex, 2016-2017.



## STUDY TIP:

Memory questions represent 25% of science questions on the MCAT.<sup>3</sup> To help with memorization, try creating a memory palace to help you remember everything from the steps of the Krebs cycle to the parts of the cell.

<sup>3</sup>Source: <https://www.princetonreview.com/med-school-advice/mcat-study-guide/mcat-memorization-tips>

## MCAT Percentiles

You'll receive a percentile rank along with your MCAT score to help you compare how you did with other test takers. Did you get a percentile rank of 50? This means you scored higher than or equal to 50% of other test takers! The higher your MCAT percentile, the more competitive your application.

Here are some sample MCAT percentiles for the 2017 admissions cycle from the latest MCAT percentile ranks released by AAMC.

MCAT Total Score	MCAT Percentile Rank
524-528	100
517	95
514	91
511	84
509	79
500	49

Source: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/advisors/article/percentile-ranks-for-the-mcat-exam/>

**Visit [PrincetonReview.com/Toolkit](https://www.princetonreview.com/Toolkit) for even more study tips.**

### Sophomore Year:

Begin research and commit to your extracurricular activities.



#### Academics:

- 1 year of organic chemistry
- 1 semester of psychology or sociology



#### Extracurriculars:

- Continue to build your extracurricular profile
- Start pursuing research/clinical experience



#### Applications:

- Begin researching medical school programs
- Continue developing relationships with professors and mentors

# Sample Questions

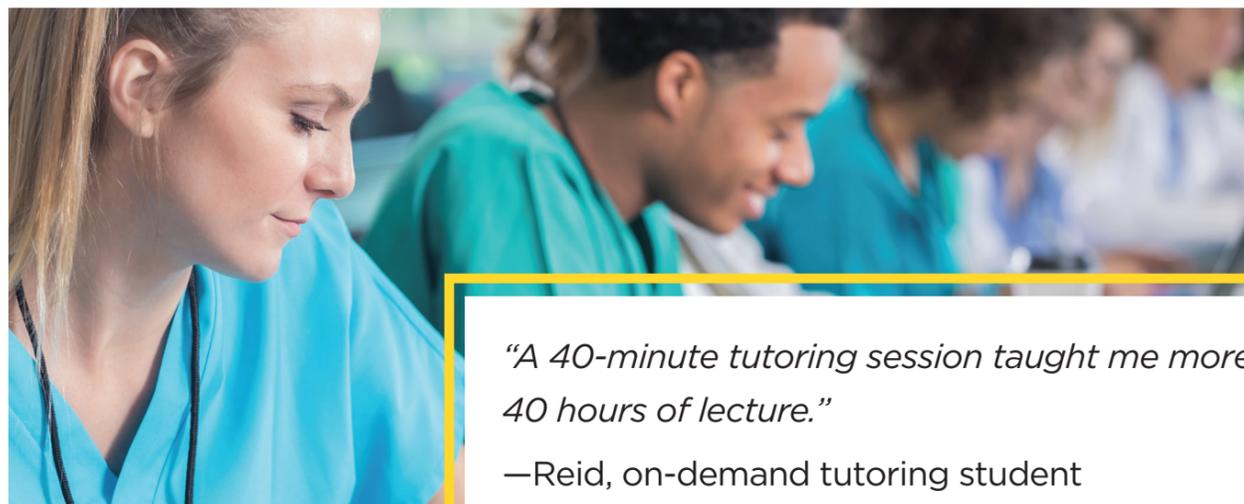
Think you're ready to conquer the MCAT? Check out some of our sample problems below.

## Sample #1

At a pH of 9.5, tyrosine is strongly attracted to the positive end of an electrophoresis gel, whereas lysine moves a very small distance from the origin. What is the best explanation for this observation?

- A. The pI of lysine is greater than tyrosine because the ammonium side chain in lysine is more acidic.
- B. At high pH, the R group in tyrosine is uncharged whereas the R group in lysine is negatively charged.
- C. The phenol side chain in tyrosine is acidic, whereas the amino side chain in lysine is basic.
- D. The oxygen in tyrosine's side chain is more electronegative than the nitrogen in lysine's side chain.

Amino Acid	Acidic Group	pK <sub>a</sub>
Tyrosine	α-COOH	2.2
	α-NH <sub>3</sub> <sup>+</sup>	9.1
	R=CH <sub>2</sub> C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>4</sub> OH	10.1
Lysine	α-COOH	2.2
	α-NH <sub>3</sub> <sup>+</sup>	9.0
	R=(CH <sub>2</sub> ) <sub>4</sub> NH <sub>3</sub> <sup>+</sup>	10.5

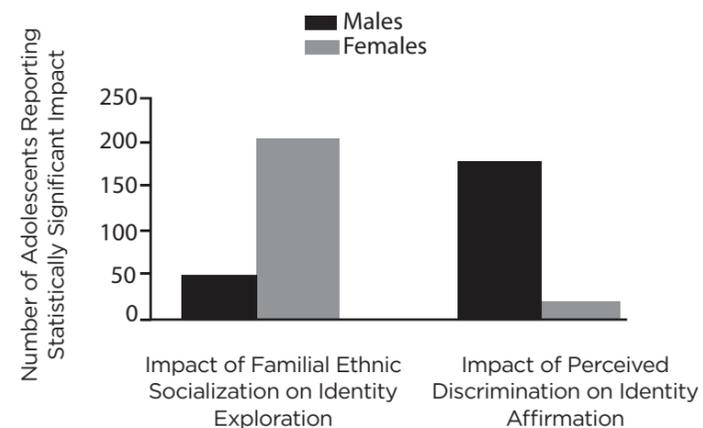


*"A 40-minute tutoring session taught me more than 40 hours of lecture."*  
—Reid, on-demand tutoring student

## Sample #2

Many studies have addressed the broad topic of identity formation among ethnic groups. One particular study examined how familial ethnic socialization and perceived discrimination impacted identity processes in male and female Latino adolescents. Some of the findings are represented in Figure 1. Which of the following conclusions can be drawn from the figure?

Figure 1:



Adapted from A. J. Umania-Taylor and A. B. Guimond, "A longitudinal examination of parenting behaviors and perceived discrimination predicting Latino adolescents' ethnic identity." ©2010 the American Psychological Association.

- A. In the face of discrimination, male Latino adolescents tend to affirm their ethnic identity more than their female counterparts.
- B. Identity exploration is more important to female Latino adolescents than is identity affirmation.
- C. Male Latino adolescents suffer more discrimination than female Latino adolescents.
- D. Familial ethnic socialization plays a more prominent role in the process of identity exploration for female Latino adolescents than it does for their male counterparts.

Want to see how to tackle these questions? Visit [PrincetonReview.com/Toolkit](https://www.princetonreview.com/toolkit) to watch a video on how to solve each sample question.

**For more study tips and free resources, visit [PrincetonReview.com/Toolkit](https://www.princetonreview.com/toolkit).**

## STUDY TIP:

Not all "true" statements are the right answer. Make sure your answer choice actually responds to the question and isn't just a true statement.

### Junior Year:

It's time to prep for and take the MCAT.



### Academics:

- 1 year of physics
- 1 year of biochemistry



### Applications:

- Keep researching medical schools
- Begin drafting your personal statement in early spring
- Request applications from non-AMCAS medical schools in April
- Collect letters of recommendation



### MCAT:

- Register for the MCAT at [aamc.org](https://www.aamc.org) (the basic fee is \$300)
- Take the MCAT no later than mid-May to receive your scores in June

# Find Your Prep Plan

Go ahead. Fill in the blank. Chances are we've got the right prep for you. No matter what kind of learner you are, our courses are designed to match your learning style and are focused on delivering results.

## Prep for the "I want to eat, sleep, and breathe the MCAT" student

### MCAT Immersion

Live and breathe the MCAT for six weeks and work with experts on campus at universities in select cities.

## Prep for the "I need the soup-to-nuts experience" student

### MCAT Ultimate

Our gold standard of MCAT courses. Work with a team of subject matter experts who will lead you through 123 hours of focused content review and MCAT-specific strategies. Available in person or LiveOnline.

## Prep for the "Show me the strategy" student

### MCAT Strategy

Focus your class time on learning how to apply your subject knowledge to the test. Our team of experts will use each session to provide direct instruction on MCAT strategies and guided practice.

## Prep for the "I'll do what I want, when I want" student

### MCAT Self-Paced

Prep for the MCAT on your terms. This interactive self-guided system leverages the same expert-created practice, lessons, and drills as our classroom courses.

## Prep for the "I want a life coach, err...private tutor" student

### MCAT Private Tutoring

Prep with our most experienced instructors on a customized plan created specifically for your needs. Prep for as long as you need to meet your goals.

## All prep programs come with online tools and resources to ensure you are ready on test day:

- 500+ on-demand content review videos
- Smart practice technology
- Practice tests
- Diagnostic tests and score reports

Try us for free!

[PrincetonReview.com/MCATFreeTrial](https://PrincetonReview.com/MCATFreeTrial)

## Get to Know The Princeton Review

We work around the clock to offer you extensive prep beyond the classroom. Our cutting-edge online tools provide you with a targeted learning experience that's not only ahead of the game, but also ahead of those other guys.

	The Princeton Review MCAT Ultimate	Kaplan's MCAT Prep
<b>Dedicated Classroom Time</b>	✓ 123 hours of classroom time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full content and test-taking strategies</li> <li>• 21 hours of Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills</li> <li>• 33 hours of Biochemistry and Biology</li> </ul>	✗ 36 hours of classroom time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary focus on test-taking strategies</li> <li>• 9 hours of Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills</li> <li>• 9 hours of Biochemistry and Biology</li> </ul>
<b>Teachers</b>	✓ 4 to 6 subject experts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Princeton Review-certified specialist teaches each individual subject</li> </ul>	✗ 1 generalist instructor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ONE instructor for ALL classroom sessions</li> </ul>
<b>Online Practice</b>	✓ Interactive student dashboard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3,000+ questions</li> </ul>	✗ MCAT QBank <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,000+ questions</li> </ul>
<b>Practice Tests</b>	✓ 15 full-length practice tests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All official AAMC practice exams</li> </ul>	✓ 15 full-length practice tests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All official AAMC practice exams</li> </ul>
<b>Interactive Learning Technology</b>	✓ Smart practice technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusive online study tool</li> </ul>	✗ None
<b>On-Demand Content Review</b>	✓ MedFlix <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500+ on-demand MCAT videos</li> <li>• Your go-to resource for MCAT content review</li> <li>• Review topics you need help on and skip the ones you don't</li> </ul>	✗ MCAT Channel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archived videos</li> <li>• Some live sessions available</li> </ul>
<b>Access to Online Materials</b>	✓ 270 days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to online tools upon enrollment</li> </ul>	✗ 4 months

## Considering dental or optometry school?

Visit [PrincetonReview.com](https://PrincetonReview.com) for more information on the DAT® and OAT®. Whatever your target score is, we can help you achieve it.

## MedFlix and Chill



Our extensive collection of fun and informative video lessons and drills will have you canceling your Saturday night plans in favor of conquering the MCAT. Ready. Set. Binge.

Created by our best and most experienced instructors, these short videos target specific content areas, so you can focus your review exactly where you need it.

## Drill till You Drop



You'll get 235 drills covering 1,520 questions to practice for the MCAT. But...practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect. Our state-of-the-art smart practice technology will ensure you're working harder and smarter toward your goal score. We deliver 101 drill modules covering 1,525 questions.

## An Expert in Your Corner



We're pretty picky when it comes to selecting our instructors. Our ideal instructor is the teaching equivalent of a unicorn: someone who's a subject matter expert and can adapt to different learning styles, and is in constant pursuit of the perfect pun. We make our new instructors undergo extensive content training to make sure they're classroom-ready just for you.

We require that all our MCAT teachers meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrate expertise in subject matter by passing a qualifying exam
- Receive 16+ hours of in-person training with one of our subject gurus
- Prepare and conduct two lectures in their subject, to ensure they not only know the subject, but can teach it in an effective and entertaining way

# Be Your Best

Once you've put in the hard work to focus on achieving competitive grades and MCAT scores, it's time to start thinking about how to best position yourself to medical school admission committees.

Medical schools are looking for applicants who demonstrate key leadership skills and dedication throughout their extracurricular activities. Section 5 of the AMCAS application covers work experience, extracurricular activities, awards, honors, and publications, with room to enter a maximum of 15 experiences. Here are some activities that can help you shine:

1. Research
2. Study Abroad or International Mission Trips
3. TA Experience/Tutoring
4. Shadowing
5. Paid Clinical
6. Service

To learn more about these experiences, visit [PrincetonReview.com/Webinars](https://PrincetonReview.com/Webinars) and check out our "Five Aspects of an Awesome Applicant" video.

Be prepared to go beyond simply making a list of your credentials. Medical schools look for students who can reflect on their experiences in the field and demonstrate growth.



*"The MCAT Ultimate course was extremely helpful. It not only taught me where to focus my studying but also taught me helpful time management, and strategic approaches for this test. The office staff and all instructors were always readily available and willing to help even after the course ended. Without taking this course I don't think I would have been as prepared as I am for my upcoming test. I would recommend The Princeton Review to all my friends!"*

—Akinchita, MCAT Ultimate

# Avoid Pitfalls

Sometimes, even the most qualified medical school applicants are guilty of committing the biggest application errors.

## Mistakes to Avoid Throughout the Application Process:

### 1. Emphasizing breadth over depth

Look to communicate the quality of and your dedication to the service and shadowing experiences listed on your application. Medical schools are looking for your ability to show depth and growth throughout your experiences.

### 2. Sacrificing quality to meet deadlines

You may be in a hurry to apply for a particular admission cycle, but don't let your excitement negatively impact your application. Hitting send before you have all of your experiences in line will make you seem like an unprepared candidate.

### 3. Getting lackluster letters of recommendation

To avoid generic letters of recommendation, make sure that whoever is writing on your behalf can actually speak to all of your accomplishments. Provide your recommenders with a copy of your personal statement and a bulleted list of characteristics you'd like them to include in the letter of recommendation. The more information you provide your recommenders up front, the better.



## Up Close and Personal: Essay Tips

- 1. Stay on topic.** Your statement's theme is your reasons for choosing a career in medicine. Stick to it, and support it with specific examples.
- 2. Good writing is simple writing.** Good medical students—and good doctors—use clear, direct language. Your essays should not be a challenge to comprehend.
- 3. Follow the rules.** Use correct grammar and syntax, spell check, and proofread.



## Stand and Deliver: Interview Tips

### 1. Be prepared.

While there's no way to predict all the questions you'll be asked, you should be ready to discuss the following:

- Academic background
- Extracurricular and recreational activities
- Employment and research experience
- Views on medical problems or relevant ethical issues
- Why you want to become a physician



### 2. Take your time.

Some interview committees will use this as a chance to see how you function under pressure. If a question catches you off guard, don't be afraid to take a moment to formulate your answer. If a question seems ambiguous, ask for clarification. By taking the time to make sure that your response is well-conceived and well-spoken, you will come across as thoughtful and articulate—two characteristics essential in a good doctor.

### 3. Ask great questions.

Approach the interview as a conversation and not a Q&A. You should already know a lot about the school, so don't ask a question that you could easily find the answer to on its website or in its brochures. Instead, take the opportunity to learn more about faculty, research opportunities, and access to internships.

Visit [PrincetonReview.com/Toolkit](https://www.princetonreview.com/toolkit) to view more essay and interview tips.

### Summer Before Senior Year:

Finalize your list of medical schools.



- Finalize the list of schools to which you will apply and complete the AMCAS application
- You may start the primary application process as early as May



- We recommend you complete and submit your application by June, even if your MCAT date is later



- Regular application deadlines fall between June and November
- The deadline for the early decision program (EDP) is August 1

# It's Our Job to Make You Look Good

With the expert guidance and support of our medical school admission counselors, you can get that coveted acceptance letter. We'll help you submit a polished and timely application, find the right medical schools for you, stay on schedule with secondary applications, and be ready for interview day.

Our medical school admission counselors have years of experience working with applicants to develop custom counseling plans and guiding them through the complicated medical school admission process. Our counselors have one goal: to make your medical school admissions goals a reality.

The Princeton Review offers a variety of medical school admission counseling products designed to provide the support and guidance you need. Regardless of where you are in the application process, we can help—from planning course schedules or graduate programs to primary applications and secondaries to interview prep, we will be with you every step of the way.

Learn more about how we can help at [PrincetonReview.com/MedAdmissions](https://PrincetonReview.com/MedAdmissions).

*"My admissions counselor went above and beyond to help me get into medical school, as she is so passionate about helping pre-health students. I had no idea how to build a great application, and she helped me get started with hospital volunteering, a teaching assistantship, and various other activities to enhance my resume. When it was time to start my application, she helped me perfect my CV and personal statement. Without my advisor I wouldn't have just finished my first year at UNC School of Medicine!"*

—M.D. Candidate

# Student Resources

No matter where you are on your journey to medical school, we can help.

- **Free practice tests for the MCAT, DAT, and OAT**  
How will you score? Find out by taking one of our free practice tests. Take the test in person or online. You'll get a detailed score report that analyzes your strengths and weaknesses and gives you an action plan for improvement.
- **Webinars hosted by industry-leading experts**  
Get top-notch advice on how to ace the medical school admission process and get your most pressing questions answered by our experts.
- **Local events**  
Our strategy sessions are packed with information about the MCAT and the role it plays in medical school admissions. An expert MCAT instructor will cover the content of the test, walk you through sample questions, and share some examples of our proven test-taking strategies.
- **Tools to help find your dream med school ([PrincetonReview.com/Med-School](https://PrincetonReview.com/Med-School))**
- **Free 60-minute on-demand tutoring trial ([PrincetonReview.com/PreMedGPA](https://PrincetonReview.com/PreMedGPA))**
- **MCAT free trial**  
Sample the powerful tools that accompany our in-class lectures with our MCAT free trial. You'll start with a free practice test before moving on to online video lessons and drills in biological macromolecules, thermodynamics and reaction coupling, catalysts and enzymes, and more.



All of our programs come with our famous Princeton Review Guarantee.<sup>4</sup> You'll score higher, or we'll refund your tuition. **If you're not 100% satisfied with your course, we'll let you repeat the program for free.**

Visit [PrincetonReview.com/Toolkit](https://PrincetonReview.com/Toolkit) to review all of our resources.

<sup>4</sup>Restrictions apply. Visit [PrincetonReview.com/Guarantee](https://PrincetonReview.com/Guarantee) for details.

*"I had an amazing experience with The Princeton Review! What I loved the most was the way their classes fit into my schedule. Their LiveOnline classes on the weekends allowed me to learn all the content I needed even with my busy schedule. The instructors were super knowledgeable and helpful. I also liked how they had more teaching hours than other test prep programs did. And the best part was I achieved a score that was even better than I had hoped for."*

—Laura, MCAT Ultimate student

# The Princeton Review Can Help You Reach Your Goals

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For more than 35 years, The Princeton Review has been a one-stop shop for getting students into their dream schools. We help students succeed by providing them with resources for better grades, better test scores, and stronger medical school applications. We look forward to helping you excel on your journey to medical school.

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