Admission to law school is highly competitive. Law school prepares students to understand and work with legal systems by developing their abilities to write and speak persuasively, anticipate consequences, and use creative and analytical problem solving skills. Most law school graduates practice law; but a legal education is very flexible, providing training for any number of professions.

The Juris Doctor, or JD, is the most common degree conferred by law schools. All American Bar Association approved law schools usually require 3 years of full-time study to earn a JD. Some law schools also offer part-time programs that generally take 4 to 5 years to complete. In addition, many schools offer joint degrees. A JD/MBA or JD/MA may take 4-5 years to complete, but generally takes less time to complete than completing the two degrees separately.

Choosing an Undergraduate Major
“Pre-law” is not a major at universities. You should give careful consideration to your choice of major and select an area of study that interests you. Law schools do not require or prefer any particular major; they look for an undergraduate educational background that sharpens analytical reasoning and writing skills. However, students should select an appropriate major that could lead to an alternative career, if necessary.

Students with good skills before entering law school will be better prepared to manage the demands of their law school courses. Therefore, take challenging courses that require extensive writing, reading, research, and critical analysis, regardless of whether these courses are in your field of study. Participating in extracurricular activities or research projects can also develop your critical thinking abilities.

Law School Selection Criteria
- **GPA** in terms of overall college grades is a major factor in the selection process. You should be cautious of which courses you take on a Pass/No Pass basis as a No Pass is calculated as an “F” grade by the Credential Assembly Service. Repeated courses are also counted into the GPA. You can find a detailed description of the GPA calculation on the LSAC website.
- All American Bar Association approved law schools require the **Law School Admission Test (LSAT)**. The LSAT is a standardized test that assesses your reading comprehension, analytical reasoning, logical reasoning, and your writing through a writing sample. This is a major factor in the selection process.
- **Law School Data Assembly Service (LSDAS) report** standardizes your grades and sends them as a part of a report to the law schools you want to attend. Almost all American Bar Association approved law schools require applicants to use the LSDAS. Your LDSAS subscription is good for 12 months.
- **Letters of recommendation** from professors, people who know you well, or employers who can attest to you analytical and logical reasoning skills.
- The **personal statement** is a sample of your ability to write clearly and consciously. It is also an opportunity for you to tell the admissions committee about yourself. Most schools do not conduct interviews; therefore, the statement represents an opportunity for you to present yourself as more than just a GPA and an LSAT score.

Salary Information
The median wage in 2014 in California was $158,200 annually (www.cacareerzone.org). The median is the point at which half of the workers earn more and half earn less.

Recommended Websites
- Law School Admissions Council: www.lsac.org
- Official Guide to ABA Approved Law Schools: http://officialguide.lsac.org
- UC Berkeley Career Center: http://career.berkeley.edu/Law/Law.stm

**Note:** Information is subject to change without notice. Check with the individual campus for the most up-to-date information.
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<th>Select Law School Websites</th>
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