

The Career Step Pharmacy Technician training program covers:

- Pharmacology
- Pharmacy law, regulations, and standards
- Business of a pharmacy (both retail and institutional)
- Prescriptions
- Pharmaceutical Calculations
- Nonsterile Compounding
- And more

The online Pharmacy Technician classes includes images, videos, and interactive games to help you learn the material and develop your skills as a pharmacy technician. The program's focus is on helping you gain the skills you need to pass the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) Exam and start working as soon as you graduate.

Career Step has [externship partnerships with Walgreens and CVS Pharmacy](#). These partnerships provide eligible Career Step students the opportunity to participate in an externship with one of these retail pharmacies as long as positions are available in their local areas.

After gaining a solid foundation of pharmacy technician knowledge in the course, the externship program offers the chance to begin gaining hands-on experience. Students can start their externship before they graduate—smoothing the transition from classroom to workplace and helping to cement the skills they're learning in the training program with hands-on experience.

PROGRAM ORIENTATION (1 hour)

- Identify the elements, expectations, and requirements of the program.
- Navigate the program using the pages, menus, and buttons provided.
- Use the program tools, including the study planner, gradebook, and completion report, as well as be able to contact Career Step using communication tools, including phone, email, forums, chat rooms, and social media.
- Identify and use program-specific resources.

WORKING AT A PHARMACY (5 hours)

- Identify industry basics as well as tools and trends of both retail and institutional pharmacy settings.
- State the occupational conditions and expectations of pharmacy technicians and the differences between the roles and responsibilities of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

COMPUTER FUNDAMENTALS (5 hours)

- Identify basic computer hardware, and interpret system requirements.
- Navigate a Windows operating system environment as well as install and operate basic software utilities.

- Use a web browser to navigate between websites in multiple tabs or windows, send and receive email, and access search engines to find information and troubleshoot basic computer problems.
- Recognize basic technologies related to an office environment.

KEYBOARD KINETICS (10 hours)

- Demonstrate proper, effective finger placement and typing proficiency.
- Access keyboarding performance in terms of gross words per minute and net words per minute.

PHARMACOLOGY (48 hours)

- Distinguish between drugs of different classifications and their corresponding rules and regulations.
- Distinguish between common medication dosage forms.
- Distinguish between different topical, enteral, and parenteral administration routes and their corresponding methods and recommendations.
- Properly identify common generic and brand name drugs and their basic functions from the following categories: cardiovascular, digestive, endocrine, immune, pain management, psychological, central nervous system, respiratory, topical/ophthalmic/otic, chemotherapy, and alternative supplements.
- Use legitimate resources to find drug definitions, dosages, pronunciations, and other related information.

PHARMACY LAW, REGULATIONS, AND STANDARDS (15 hours)

- Identify and describe federal laws affecting pharmacy practice and controlled substances.
- Identify and describe current pharmacy-related regulations and standards, including safety, accuracy, dispensing, and ethical behavior.
- Distinguish between the five schedules of controlled substances.

BUSINESS OF PHARMACY (15 hours)

- Describe proper customer service procedures related to professional communication, appearance, duties, and limits.
- Describe and differentiate between prescription insurance plans, including Medicaid, Medicare Part D, and Workers' Compensation. Students will also be able to state the proper procedures for filing claims and accepting payment.
- Identify procedures and regulations related to proper retail and institutional pharmacy inventory management, including purchasing, receiving, returns, and recalls.

PRESCRIPTIONS (25 hours)

- List each component of creating and reviewing a patient profile.
- Identify physiological and social causes of medical errors and list prevention methods.

- Perform a proper check for the validity of a prescriber's DEA number.
- Verify the completeness of a prescription and interpret and process special types of prescriptions.

PHARMACEUTICAL CALCULATIONS (60 hours)

- Calculate fractions and decimals as well as convert numerals from Roman to Arabic.
- Apply principles of algebra to solve an equation for an unknown variable x.
- Recognize and convert metric system measurements.
- Use knowledge of significant figures to estimate appropriate drug dosages.
- Convert numbers between ratio/proportion, percent, and decimal format.
- Calculate appropriate doses based on age, weight, and body surface area.
- Convert measurements of weight, volume, and temperature between household, metric, avoirdupois, apothecary, and grains.
- Calculate appropriate compounding measurements involving concentrations, dilutions, stock preparations, compound formulas, alligations, and aliquot measurements.
- Calculate appropriate measurements for injectable and intravenous medications involving ratio strength, milliequivalents, units, solutions, powders, flow rates, drop sets, IV piggybacks, and pediatric parenterals.
- Calculate appropriate values related to overhead, gross/net profit, discounts, wholesale prices, insurance reimbursements, inventory, and turnover rate.

NONSTERILE COMPOUNDING (20 hours)

- Differentiate between sterile and nonsterile compounding as well as identify the terminology, uses, requirements, regulations, and documentation of nonsterile compounding.
- Define Good Compounding Practices (GCP) and list the 14 standards required by the USP United States Pharmacopeia (USP) for both nonsterile (Chapter 795) and sterile (Chapter 797) compounding.
- Identify pharmaceutical compounding equipment and its appropriate use as well as be able to describe the techniques used in weighing, measuring, and mixing compounded drugs.
- Identify the proper methods and ingredients for compounding solids, and compare and contrast the steps in the processes for compounding powders, capsules, lozenges, and suppositories.
- Identify the proper methods and ingredients for compounding dispersions, and compare and contrast the steps in the processes for creating suspensions, ointments, creams, and gels.

RETAIL PHARMACY PRACTICE (30 hours)

- Define the responsibilities of a pharmacy technician in retail pharmacy settings, including Disease State Management, common over-the-counter medication restrictions, common diabetes management supplies awareness, and Medicare Part B

supplies.

- Use pharmacy management software to enter patient data, process prescriptions refills, process third-party claims, and process refill authorizations, verify cash pricing, and produce an audit log.

INSTITUTIONAL PHARMACY PRACTICE (40 hours)

- Identify the unique organizational and functional elements of an institutional pharmacy. Students will also be able to name the roles and responsibilities of the following: Director of Pharmacy, Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T), Infection Control, and Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- List the appropriate steps to prepare oral syringes; check and fill the medication cart, floor stock, and crash cart; and fill and record narcotic floor stock and the automated dispensing machines (ADM's).
- Describe the elements of proper aseptic technique, including personal hygiene, garb, hand washing, USP 797 standards, environmental standards, LAFWs, and hood cleaning.
- Identify sterile compounding terms and procedures related to ampules, vials, syringes, needles, parenteral solutions, and sterile powder drug vials.
- Identify proper procedures for handling hazardous agents, including chemotherapy drugs and radiopharmaceuticals.

PREPARING FOR THE WORKFORCE (5 hours)

- Differentiate between registration, state licensure, and certification. Students will also be able to state the differences between an externship and on-the-job training.
- Compare and contrast the exams (PTCE and ExCPT) required to become nationally certified. Students will also be able to state the requirements for continuing education and recertification.

FINAL EXAM PREPARATION (1 hour)

- Identify the steps they need to take to be eligible for and effectively prepare for and access their final exam.
- Identify the format, restrictions, and policies of final exams, including scoring, retakes, allowed resources, and time limits.