### Choosing a Career in the Dental Profession

**Service to Others** • **Professional Growth Potential** • **Variety and Responsibility**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DENTAL ASSISTANTS</strong></th>
<th><strong>DENTAL HYGIENISTS</strong></th>
<th><strong>DENTAL OFFICE MANAGERS</strong></th>
<th><strong>DENTAL LABORATORY TECHNICIANS</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants are valued team members who help provide patient care and keep dental practices running efficiently.</td>
<td>Dental hygienists work with the dentist to meet patients’ oral health needs.</td>
<td>Dental office managers, or practice administrators, manage many of the duties that help make a dental practice a successful business.</td>
<td>Dental laboratory technicians work in partnership with the dentist to meet patients’ oral health needs.</td>
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#### Duties
- Assisting the dentist during procedures
- Taking X-rays and/or impressions of patients’ teeth
- Sterilizing equipment and instruments
- Teaching patients to brush and floss correctly
- Scheduling appointments, maintaining inventories and ordering supplies

##### Work Settings
- Dental practices
- Public health settings and military facilities
- Dental schools and other educational programs
- Dental manufacturers or service providers

Search “dental assistant” at [ADA.org/CODA](https://ADA.org/CODA) for more information.

#### Duties
- Screening patients, reviewing health histories, performing oral cancer screenings
- Cleaning teeth
- Applying sealants and fluoride to protect tooth surfaces
- Educating patients about proper oral hygiene and how their diets affect their oral health
- Charting treatment performed on each patient

##### Work Settings
- Dental practices
- Public health settings and military facilities
- Dental schools and other educational programs
- Dental manufacturers or service providers

Search “dental hygienist” at [ADA.org/CODA](https://ADA.org/CODA) for more information.

#### Duties
- Managing the practice’s daily operations, including marketing and communications
- Interviewing, coaching and supervising staff
- Making sure the practice complies with federal, state and local regulations
- Managing patient financial accounts

##### Work Settings
- Dental practices
- Dental manufacturers or service providers

Search “dental office manager” for more information.

#### Duties
- Partnering with dentists to improve patient’s health and appearance
- Combining artistry with technology to create customized replacements for patients’ teeth

##### Work Settings
- Privately- or commercially-owned dental laboratories
- Dental offices, dental schools, hospitals, military facilities
- Dental manufacturers or suppliers

Search “dental lab technician” at [ADA.org/CODA](https://ADA.org/CODA) for more information.