



# Zookeeper

## Looking after animals in zoos, safari parks and aquariums



<p><b>Entry requirements:</b></p> <p>Zoos vary in what qualifications they ask for and it can depend on what their zookeepers are going to do.</p> <p>You will usually need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), including English, maths and science</li></ul> <p><b>Apprenticeship</b></p> <p>You could start by doing an intermediate or advanced apprenticeship in animal care, or an animal care and welfare assistant intermediate apprenticeship. This may help you to get a job as a trainee with a zoo. Your employer would then put you through more courses on the job.</p> <p><b>Trainee Zookeeper</b></p> <p>If you wanted to be a trainee zookeeper you could apply to do the following courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Level 3 Extended Diploma in Animal Management</li><li>Level 3 Diploma in Animal Care or Animal Science</li><li>Biology A level</li></ul> <p><b>Higher National Diploma/Foundation Degree/Degree</b></p> <p>You can do any of these in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>animal or zoo management</li><li>animal behaviour and welfare</li><li>zoology or marine zoology</li><li>animal conservation and biodiversity</li><li>veterinary science</li><li>biology</li></ul> <p>To do a degree you usually need 2 or 3 A levels, including a science</p> <p>To do a national diploma/foundation degree you usually need 1 or 2 A levels</p>	<p><b>What you will do:</b></p> <p>In this role you could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>preparing food and feeding animals</li><li>cleaning out pens and cages and changing bedding</li><li>making sure animals live in as close to natural conditions as possible</li><li>checking for signs of distress or disease and caring for sick animals</li><li>checking enclosures and cages for signs of wear or damage</li><li>monitoring conditions like temperature and humidity</li><li>keeping daily healthcare records on paper and computer</li><li>giving educational talks to children and adults</li></ul> <p><b>What you will earn:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Starter: £12,000</li><li>Experienced: £25,000</li></ul> <p><i>These figures are a guide</i></p> <p><b>Working hours and environment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You could work at a zoo.</li><li>Your working environment may be outdoors in all weathers and physically demanding.</li><li>You may need to wear a uniform and protective clothing.</li><li>37 to 40 hours, evenings, weekends and bank holidays</li></ul>
<p><b>Skills required:</b></p> <p>You will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the ability to work well with others</li><li>to be thorough and pay attention to detail</li><li>excellent verbal communication skills</li><li>the ability to use your initiative</li><li>the ability to work well with your hands</li><li>to be flexible and open to change</li><li>patience and the ability to remain calm in stressful situations</li><li>customer service skills</li><li>to be able to carry out basic tasks on a computer or hand-held device</li><li>pass enhanced background checks, as you may be working with children and vulnerable adults</li></ul>	<p><b>Career path and progression:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In larger zoos, you could progress from keeper to team leader or head keeper. With experience and a degree, you could become a curator.</li><li>You could also move into education or conservation research.</li></ul>