**How to get an MBA degree**

**What Is an MBA Program**

An MBA (Masters in Business Administration) is the most sought-after graduate degree in the United States. The degree is versatile and used all over the world, and can offer a major boost to anyone’s career.

**Why Get an MBA Degree in Business School?**

Despite its mainstream popularity, many still aren’t sure what is involved in obtaining an MBA. Some common questions include: What is required to gain admission? What kind of curriculum do these programs offer? What are some of the pros and cons of getting this degree? Are there different types of an MBAs available? Who would this degree suit best?

In order to make an informed decision, you must be able to answer these questions to your own satisfaction. Higher education can be highly beneficial, but it also takes a lot of hard work and commitment. The last thing you want is to do is blindly enroll in a program just because you think you should.

Below, each of these points are addressed in an effort to truly educate anyone who might be considering going to business school to earn an MBA degree.

**How to Get an MBA – Requirements**

First and foremost, you need to know how to get started. In order to pursue an MBA, you’ll need to do the following:

1. **Earn Your BA.** You must first complete an undergraduate program at an accredited university, though you do not have to study business as an undergraduate. Any major is accepted. Case in point, I received my MBA immediately after finishing my bachelors degree in mechanical engineering.
2. **Take the GMAT**. The admissions committee will be most interested in your academic track record, your [scores on your GMAT exam](http://www.moneycrashers.com/kaplan-gmat-prep-course-review/) (essentially the SATs for business school) and your work history.
3. **Get Real World Experience.** Most programs expect you to have a couple of years of professional work experience before pursuing an MBA, although it is possible to be admitted immediately after you finish your bachelors degree program. With that said, it is becoming rarer for students to be accepted directly out of college, regardless of their academic achievement. MBA graduate program want to have worldly students with real-world working experience from which they can contribute valuable knowledge to their peers.
4. **Research Programs.** Most major universities offer some form of MBA program. However, you should carefully research the programs you intend to join before you commit to one. Each school is unique in terms of its coursework, faculty, and philosophies. If you pursue an MBA, you want to make sure that you are joining one that is going to offer what you are looking for in your future career.
5. **Know the Requirements.**You also want to know what the requirements are for these programs, and whether or not you are eligible to join. Many have GPA and GMAT cutoffs that you are going to want to be aware of before you apply.

It is important to note that the prestige of the university you choose can play a large role in how prospective employers will value your MBA degree. Thus, you should consider the ranking of the MBA program you choose to join when making your decision.

Time is also something you should take into consideration. An MBA will typically take two years to complete if you pursue it full time. However, some programs will waive certain classes or offer accelerated programs that you can complete in a little over a year. And there are a number of options available for those with already hectic schedules.

**Types of MBA Programs**

There are a variety of ways that students can pursue MBA degrees if they have a full-time job or a busy schedule, need flexibility, or would like to graduate early:

1. **Two Year Full-time program.**This is the standard program. It requires a typical workload and is geared towards students who can take a couple years off from work. When I attended my MBA program, I knew a number of students who went to school full-time while holding a full-time job as well. That is a very intensive option, though, that is not for everyone.
2. **Part-Time MBA.**This program is structured for students who have jobs or otherwise cannot attend school full-time. Part-time programs will often take 3-4 years to complete. While they offer a similar curriculum, one will lose out on developing relationships with fellow students and teachers, which is one of the major attractions of an MBA program.
3. **One-Year Full Time MBA.**This program is particularly intensive. Because of the time constraints, students are expected to take more classes than they would in most other full-time programs.
4. **Executive MBAs.**An executive MBA is designed to reach students who are busy working professionals looking to advance their careers. Given the fact that they already have extensive business knowledge, they can usually complete the program part-time through weekend classes, in two years.
5. **Specialty MBAs.**These MBA degrees are intended for students who would like to expand their knowledge in a given area. They are about as specialized as an MBA can be, and may be necessary for fields that require a specialized education. An example of a specialized MBA would be in computational finance.
6. **Dual Degree.**Some students choose to study another field at the same time they pursue a degree in business. Many law students have pursued MBAs in conjunction with their legal studies at universities that offer this option.
7. **Online MBAs.**[Enrolling in an online MBA degree program](http://www.moneycrashers.com/enroll-online-masters-degree-program-save-time-money/) is a great option for students who would like to save on time and commuting. It is also easier to fit into your schedule. However, some employers question the credibility of an online degree. This debate is still being resolved.

Students clearly have a number of options available. While pursuing an MBA, you need to decide which makes the most sense for you. With that said, keep in mind that employers will generally value the full-time MBA more than the other alternatives.

After deciding the best course of action, the next step is figuring out what to focus on.