



What Is Shadowing?

Shadowing at a prosthetics and orthotics clinic provides prospective students with an opportunity to experience the profession up close and observe a day in the life of a practitioner before committing to the profession.

Why Is Shadowing Important?

Most prosthetics and orthotics master's programs require or strongly encourage shadowing hours as part of the application process.

Step 1: Find a clinic in your area.

Shadowing opportunities can vary greatly—your experience may differ depending on the clinic you choose. Not all clinics accept students for shadowing.

To find an accredited clinic in your area, visit the American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics & Pedorthics' [directory](#).

Step 2: Reach out about opportunities.

Once you've identified a potential clinic, reach out and ask if they have shadowing opportunities.

You can reach out through the clinic's main email or phone number. From there, the clinic staff should be able to direct you to the correct contact. Below is an example email/phone script that you can customize and use during your outreach:

Hi [INSERT NAME] -

My name is [INSERT NAME] and I'm currently looking for opportunities to shadow at a prosthetics and orthotics clinic. I'm a/an [INSERT STUDENT STATUS; e.g., junior in college] interested in learning more about the prosthetics and orthotics profession. Does your clinic offer opportunities for shadowing? If you aren't the right person to contact about this, could you please direct me to the right person at your facility? I greatly appreciate your help and I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
[INSERT NAME + CONTACT INFO]

If a clinic does confirm they accept students for shadowing, here are a few important questions to ask:

- What does shadowing at your clinic consist of?
- What are your shadowing hours?
- How should I track my hours?
- Who will be my main point of contact during the shadowing term?
- Is there anything I need to do to prepare?
- What should I wear?

Step 3: Make the most of your shadowing.

Below are some helpful tips to make the most out of your shadowing opportunity:

- Follow clinic instructions closely
- Wear clinic's recommended clothing
- Bring a notebook and take notes
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Make sure hours are recorded properly
- Note any areas or topics that are particularly interesting to you

I'm done shadowing—now what?

If you enjoyed your shadowing experience and have decided to pursue a career in POP, you can research the master's programs listed on [WhatIsPOP.org](#) to find the right fit for you based on location, course offerings and interests.