

MOLECULAR BIOLOGIST



Dabbling in DNA.

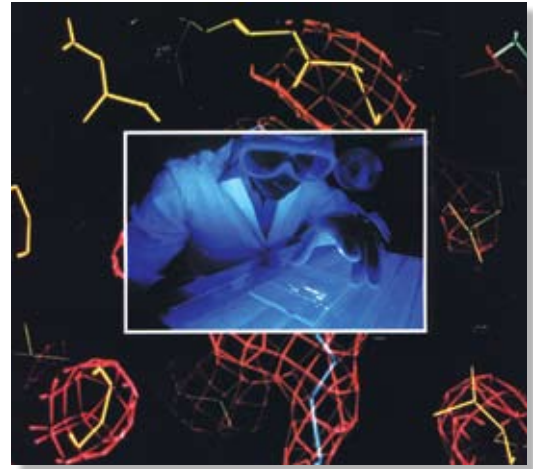
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Molecular biologists study the molecular basis of the phenomena of living things. They ask how genetic information can be encoded in molecules called DNA, and how this information can be used to direct the synthesis of all of the other kinds of molecules that make up living things. Molecular biologists often ask how the genetic information in DNA can be changed and how changes can cause disease.

Molecular biologists can be researchers, technicians, or teachers. Universities, companies, and government agencies hire them. They can develop new methods to diagnose and treat disease, new agricultural crops, or new ways to detect and remove pollutants from the environment. They can also serve as scientific advisors to business people, lawyers, or government officials.

To be a molecular biologist, you need a bachelor's degree in a life science discipline like biochemistry, genetics, or microbiology, with an emphasis on molecular biology. You should take courses in chemistry, biochemistry, mathematics, and computer science. It is also important to get research or analytical experience.

In high school, take college preparatory courses in [biology](#), [chemistry](#), [physics](#), and [mathematics](#). Participate in science clubs and fairs. Work in a laboratory during the summer.



Photos: Dave Umberger, Purdue Agricultural Communication