

RBT Career Roadmap: Your First 90 Days

What This Roadmap Covers

This roadmap breaks your first 90 days as a Registered Behavior Technician into three phases. Each phase builds on the last, moving you from study and certification through job preparation and into long-term advancement planning.

Week 1: Understand the RBT Role

- Learn what an RBT does: direct implementation of behavior-analytic services under supervision
- Review the BACB RBT Task List (2nd edition)
- Familiarize yourself with key terms: reinforcement, prompting, shaping, chaining, extinction
- Set up a study schedule of 1 to 2 hours per day

Week 2: Complete the 40-Hour Training

1. Enroll in a BACB-approved 40-hour RBT training program
2. Work through modules in manageable daily blocks
3. Take notes on each section of the RBT Task List
4. Track your completion percentage daily

Week 3: Prepare for the Competency Assessment

- Review your notes from the 40-hour training
- Practice skill demonstrations: discrete trial teaching, naturalistic teaching, data collection
- Connect with a BCBA or BCaBA who can administer the competency assessment
- Schedule your competency assessment before the end of the week

Week 4: Pass the Competency Assessment and Apply for the Exam

1. Complete the RBT Competency Assessment with your supervising BCBA
2. Submit your RBT application through the BACB portal
3. Pay the application fee and wait for authorization to test
4. Begin light exam review using practice questions

Week 5: Take the RBT Exam

- Schedule your exam through Pearson VUE as soon as you receive authorization
- Continue daily practice questions (20 to 30 per day)
- Focus on areas where you feel least confident
- Take the exam and celebrate passing

Week 6: Build Your Job Search Materials

- Write a resume highlighting your 40-hour training, competency assessment, and RBT credential
- Prepare a brief cover letter explaining your interest in applied behavior analysis
- Gather two professional or academic references
- Create a list of 10 to 15 target employers: clinics, school districts, in-home ABA providers

Week 7: Apply and Interview

1. Submit applications to your target employer list
2. Prepare answers to common RBT interview questions
3. Practice describing how you would handle challenging behaviors
4. Ask interviewers about supervision structure, caseload, and training opportunities

Week 8: Accept a Position and Onboard

- Compare offers based on pay, supervision quality, schedule, and growth potential
- Accept the position that offers the strongest BCBA supervision
- Complete onboarding: background checks, CPR certification, company-specific training
- Begin building rapport with your supervising BCBA and clients

Week 9: Establish Your Supervision Routine

- Confirm your supervision schedule with your BCBA (minimum 5% of hours worked)

- Set monthly supervision goals
- Begin tracking your direct service hours
- Ask for feedback after every supervision session

Week 10: Strengthen Clinical Skills

- Practice precise data collection across sessions
- Learn to implement behavior intervention plans with fidelity
- Study skill acquisition plans for your current clients
- Request to shadow experienced RBTs or BCBAs when possible

Week 11: Explore Advancement Pathways

- ****Lead RBT:**** Take on mentorship, training, or scheduling responsibilities within your organization
- ****BCaBA:**** Requires a bachelor's degree, 315 hours of coursework, and 1,000 hours of supervised fieldwork
- ****BCBA:**** Requires a master's degree, verified coursework sequence, and 2,000 hours of supervised fieldwork
- Talk to your BCBA about which path fits your goals and timeline

Week 12: Build a Long-Term Development Plan

1. Choose your target advancement pathway
2. Identify degree programs or coursework sequences if pursuing BCaBA or BCBA
3. Set a timeline for coursework, fieldwork, and supervision hours
4. Create a monthly check-in with your supervisor to review progress
5. Document your accomplishments and areas for growth

Key Reminders for Your First 90 Days

- Your RBT credential must be renewed annually
- Supervision is not optional, it is required and valuable
- Data collection is the backbone of everything you do
- Every BCBA started where you are now
- Ask questions early and often

Next Steps After Day 90

- Continue accumulating supervised experience hours
- Begin coursework if pursuing BCaBA or BCBA
- Seek opportunities to present cases or lead team meetings
- Build a professional network through local ABA chapters and conferences
- Revisit and update your development plan every 90 days