

PROFESSION BRIEF - PODIATRY



. What this job actually is

- A podiatrist is an allied health professional who assesses, diagnoses and treats conditions affecting the feet, ankles and lower limbs.
- Day-to-day work includes patient consultations, physical assessments, minor procedures (for example nail surgery), prescribing orthotics, managing wounds, and writing clinical notes.
- Much of the job is routine clinical care, patient education, and ongoing management of chronic conditions such as diabetes-related foot disease.

2. Where this role typically works

- Private podiatry clinics (most common)
- Multidisciplinary health clinics (with physiotherapists, GPs, exercise physiologists)
- Public hospitals and community health services
- Aged care facilities and home visit services
- Sports medicine settings
- High-risk foot clinics (often hospital-based)
- Defence or rural outreach services

3. How people usually get into this role

- Complete an approved Bachelor of Podiatry or Bachelor of Podiatric Medicine.
- Register with the Podiatry Board of Australia via AHPRA.
- Graduate roles are typically in private practice or community health.
- Early career work often involves high patient volumes and general foot care before developing special interests.

Entry into podiatry requires formal qualification and registration, as clinical responsibility and patient safety standards mandate accredited training and supervised experience.

4. Alternate or less-traditional pathways

- Mature-age entry into undergraduate podiatry programs.
- Transition from related health fields such as nursing, sports science or exercise physiology (requires formal retraining).
- Moving into sales or clinical support roles for orthotics or medical device companies.
- Further study leading to endorsement for scheduled medicines or specialisation in areas such as biomechanics or high-risk foot care.

5. Qualifications and training

- **Required:**
 - Accredited podiatry degree
 - Registration with AHPRA (Podiatry Board of Australia)
- **Ongoing:**
 - Continuing Professional Development (CPD) annually
- **Optional but valuable:**
 - Endorsement for scheduled medicines
 - Postgraduate study in wound care, sports biomechanics or diabetes management
- Experience does not substitute for formal qualifications in Australia.

6. Skills that matter in practice

Technical skills

- Clinical assessment and diagnostic reasoning
- Nail surgery and wound management
- Biomechanical assessment and orthotic prescription

Transferable skills

- Clear communication with patients across age groups
- Time management in back-to-back appointments
- Record keeping and report writing

Often underestimated

- Managing anxious or needle-phobic patients
- Business skills if working in private practice
- Physical stamina for long periods on your feet

7. Interests and traits that fit well

- Comfortable with close physical work and minor surgical procedures
- Patient, methodical and detail-focused
- Able to handle repetitive tasks without disengaging
- Practical and hands-on
- May struggle if highly squeamish or seeking constant variety and rapid career progression

8. “This job is for you if...”

- You prefer structured clinical work with measurable outcomes.
- You are comfortable working with feet, wounds and infections.
- You are prepared for a high volume of routine care, especially early on.
- You are interested in health but do not want hospital shift work.
- You are realistic about income in the first few years of practice.

This role may NOT suit you if:

- You are uncomfortable with close physical contact, including wounds or infections
- You prefer highly varied or fast-changing work
- You are not suited to repetitive clinical tasks
- You want rapid salary growth early in your career

9. Things people are often surprised by

- A large portion of work involves routine nail and skin care.
- Private practice income can vary and is linked to patient volume.
- Many podiatrists run or eventually manage small businesses.
- The role involves more chronic disease management than sport.

10. Labour market reality

- Demand for podiatrists is generally stable, with consistent need across private practice, aged care, and community health
- Most opportunities are in private clinics, with fewer roles in hospital settings
- Regional and rural areas often have higher demand and less competition
- Entry into the profession is less competitive than some allied health fields, but income and job conditions vary depending on patient volume and business model
- Many podiatrists work in or transition to self-employment or small business ownership

11. Useful next steps for exploration

- Arrange an informational interview with a local podiatrist in private practice and one in public health.
- Ask to observe a clinic session to understand the pace and case mix.

- Review AHPRA registration requirements and accredited university programs.
- Speak with current students about workload and clinical placement expectations.
- Research areas of interest such as sports podiatry versus high-risk foot care to compare day-to-day differences.

This brief is based on:

- practitioner insights from podiatry professionals
- general labour market trends in allied health in Australia
- publicly available information on podiatry training and registration requirements

Information is current as of April 2026 and reflects industry insights and available data at that time.

This brief is designed to support career exploration. Experiences in podiatry vary depending on clinical setting, patient population, and whether the role is within private practice or the public health system.

More career exploration resources at [curatedcareers.com.au](https://www.curatedcareers.com.au)