



**Table 1-12. Median years to research doctorate, by trend broad field of doctorate: Selected years, 1974–2024**

(Median years)

Field and time to degree	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019	2024
Since earning bachelor's	6.6	6.5	6.7	7.0	7.6	7.1	7.1	7.0	6.8	6.6	6.7
Since starting graduate school	5.9	5.7	5.9	6.1	6.7	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.1	6.0	6.0
Since starting doctoral program <sup>a</sup>	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	5.7	5.7	5.7
Psychology											
Since earning bachelor's	6.9	7.8	9.3	10.2	9.6	9.0	9.0	8.4	8.3	8.5	8.7
Since starting graduate school	5.9	6.7	7.9	8.2	7.9	7.2	7.1	6.9	7.0	7.0	6.9
Since starting doctoral program <sup>a</sup>	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	6.0	5.9	5.8
Social sciences											
Since earning bachelor's	8.6	9.5	10.3	10.9	11.3	10.8	10.8	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3
Since starting graduate school	7.5	8.1	8.7	8.9	9.2	8.7	8.7	8.3	8.7	8.8	8.8
Since starting doctoral program <sup>a</sup>	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	6.2	6.0	6.0
Non-science and engineering											
Since earning bachelor's	10.9	11.7	13.6	15.3	16.0	15.0	13.7	13.5	12.2	12.2	12.6
Since starting graduate school	9.1	9.7	11.2	12.7	12.7	11.6	10.7	10.7	9.9	10.0	10.1
Since starting doctoral program <sup>a</sup>	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	6.3	6.0	5.9
Business											
Since earning bachelor's	9.0	10.1	11.2	12.0	12.2	12.9	12.1	11.9	10.9	11.0	10.2
Since starting graduate school	7.7	8.2	9.2	9.2	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.1	8.7	8.9	8.7
Since starting doctoral program <sup>a</sup>	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	5.0	5.0	5.0
Education											
Since earning bachelor's	12.5	12.9	14.8	17.3	19.7	19.8	17.7	16.3	14.8	14.8	15.6
Since starting graduate school	9.9	10.5	12.2	14.2	15.9	14.7	12.7	12.4	11.7	11.9	12.3
Since starting doctoral program <sup>a</sup>	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	5.9	5.7	5.5
Humanities and arts											
Since earning bachelor's	9.5	10.5	11.7	12.9	12.2	11.8	11.8	11.4	11.0	11.0	11.3
Since starting graduate school	8.6	9.5	10.2	10.9	10.2	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.3	9.5	9.7
Since starting doctoral program <sup>a</sup>	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	7.0	6.8	6.8
Other non-science and engineering											
Since earning bachelor's	10.7	11.0	13.5	14.7	15.3	14.7	13.5	12.9	11.8	12.2	12.0
Since starting graduate school	8.9	8.9	11.0	12.5	11.9	11.6	10.2	10.0	9.7	9.9	9.8
Since starting doctoral program <sup>a</sup>	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	5.7	5.6	5.7

- = not calculable. na = not applicable; data were not collected prior to 2014.

<sup>a</sup> Time to doctorate from doctoral program start is based on master's degree entry if the master's degree was at the doctoral institution in the same field of study or was a prerequisite to the doctorate; otherwise, it is based on doctoral program entry.

**Note(s):**

Beginning in 2021, a modified version of the 2020 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes was used in the survey data collection; the trend fields were constructed using the SED-CIP code crosswalk in table A-6. Therefore, the field of doctorate data prior to 2021 may not be comparable to subsequent years. For more information about the field taxonomy changes, see the "Technical Notes."

**Source(s):**

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Earned Doctorates.