

# Why Take AP Courses/Exams

## Stand Out in College Admissions

Deciding to take an AP course lets colleges/universities know that you have what it takes to succeed in an undergraduate environment. When admissions officers see “AP” on your transcript, they know that what you experienced in class has **prepared** you well for the challenges of college. Taking AP is a sign that you’re up for the most rigorous classes your high school has to offer.

## Earn College Credits

By taking an AP course and scoring successfully on the related AP Exam, you can **save on college expenses**: most colleges and universities nationwide offer college credit, advanced placement, or both, for qualifying AP Exam scores. These credits can allow students to save college tuition, study abroad, or secure a second major. AP can transform what once seemed unattainable into something within reach. Check out specific colleges’ guidelines on accepting AP scores for credit and placement by searching the [AP Credit Policy database](#).

## Skip Introductory Classes

If you already know your preferred college major, taking a related AP course and earning a qualifying score on the AP Exam can help you advance and avoid required introductory courses – so you can move directly into upper-level classes and focus on the work that interests you most. **Even taking an AP Exam unrelated to your major** – whether or not you know what you want to major in – **can place you beyond your college’s general education requirements**. This opens up additional time on your schedule, enabling you to do a second major or minor, take exciting electives, or pursue additional interests.

## Build College Skills

Taking an AP course builds the skills, like time management and study skills, you’ll need throughout your college years. You also get better at handling challenging issues and problems, with the support of your AP teachers. AP courses let you know what to expect during the next phase of your educational journey, and help you build the confidence to succeed.

## What Is an AP Score and What Does It Mean?

Your AP score shows how well you did on the AP Exam. It’s also a measure of your achievement in your college-level AP course. This score will be used by colleges and universities to determine if they will grant you credit for what you’ve already learned, or allow you to skip the equivalent course once you get to college (this is known as advanced placement). Your score is a weighted combination of your scores on the multiple-choice section and on the free-response section. The final score is reported on a 5-point scale as follows:

*5 = extremely well qualified, 4 = well qualified, 3 = qualified, 2 = possibly qualified, 1 = no rec.*

"Qualified" means that you have proven yourself capable of doing the work of an introductory-level course in a particular subject at college. Many colleges and universities grant credit and placement for scores of 3, 4 or 5; however, each college decides which scores it will accept. To see college policies for AP scores, visit our [AP Credit Policy Search](#). In order to be considered for credit or placement, you must [send your official AP score report](#) to the college you’re planning to attend.