



HOW TO

Calculate GPA.★

What is GPA?



To answer the question of how to achieve a high GPA, we need to understand how GPA is derived.

First, for each course you have finished, multiply the numeric grade value by the number of credits the course is worth. Typically, each two-semester course has a total of 10 credits. For regular course, the numeric grade values are A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1. The total grade points of a 10-credit course with a B grade is calculated as $10 \times 3 = 30$. The table below shows the grade points total of each grade for a 10-credit course.



Two-semester Course Credits	Letter Grade	Numeric Grade Value	Grade Points Total
10	A	4	40
10	B	3	30
10	C	2	20
10	D	1	10
10	F	0	0

GPA is calculated by adding all the grade points total of all the courses you have completed and then divide the grand total by the total number of credits those courses are worth. Below is an example of a student's GPA after he has finished 4 two-semester course and 1 one-semester course.

Course Title/ Course Credits	Letter Grade Earned	Numeric Grade Value	Grade Points Total
Algebra I / 10	A	4	40
English 9 / 10	B	3	30
Biology / 10	A	4	40
US History / 10	C	2	20
Ceramics / 5	A	4	20

**Total Credits:
45**

**Total Grade Points
Total: 150**

Total Grade Points Total / GPA Total Credits
GPA = $150/45 = 3.33$

GPA with honors and AP Courses

If we read through the above tables, it seems that a student will never be able to achieve any GPA beyond 4.0. You may be correct if no further information is provided here. Let's now look at a different table for honors and AP course and their grade point totals.



Two-semester Honors and AP Course Credit	Letter Grade	Numeric Grade Value	Grade Points Total
10	A	5	50
10	B	4	40
10	C	3	30
10	D	2	20
10	F	0	0

With these different numeric grade values for Honors and AP courses in mind, let's look at a different coursework of another student.

Course Title/ Course Credits	Letter Grade Earned	Numeric Grade Value	Grade Points Total
AP Human Geography / 10	A	5	50
English 10 / 10	A	4	40
AP Biology / 10	A	5	50
Pre-Calculus Honors / 10	A	5	50
Trigonometry / 5	A	4	20

**Total Credits:
45**

**Total Grade Points
Total: 210**

Total Grade Points Total / GPA Total Credits

$$\text{GPA} = 210/45 = 4.67$$

Awesome! The student has a 4.67 GPA by adding Honors and AP courses to his course of study.

Course Selection Matters for your GPA!



Consider how impressive a 4.5 GPA sounds. It’s likely a benchmark many of us would like to attain, but it can sound hard to reach. Now that we know how to calculate our GPA, let’s take a look at a scenario where a straight-A student can attain such a result.

Course Title/ Course Credits	Letter Grade Earned	Numeric Grade Value	Grade Points Total
AP Human Geography / 10	A	5	50
AP Biology / 10	A	5	50
Pre-Calculus Honors / 10	A	5	50
English 10 / 10	A	4	40
US History / 10	A	4	40
Choir / 10	A	4	40

**Total Credits:
60**

**Total Grade Points
Total: 270**

Total Grade Points Total / GPA Total Credits

GPA = 270/60 = 4.50



Why is this significant? It creates a reference point to *balance out an effective Course of Study without going overboard on AP’s and Honors coursework*. Assuming straight A’s, a 4.5 GPA is attainable with a mix of classes where half are AP’s and Honors, and half are regular courses.

Smart, personalized plans for your Course of Study make for stronger results! Reach out to our Academic Dean, Joshua Chan, at joshchan@legendcp.com to set an appointment if you want a consultation! Plans can be made at any point of the school year, and different options exist to help you pivot as needed.

Myths About Course Selection



Now that we have an understanding of GPA's and how the selection of coursework makes an impact on your grades, we want to address the false beliefs that hold students back from attaining the amazing results they could otherwise have.

★ “I’m not old enough for an AP course.”

The idea that students aren’t old enough or mature enough for AP coursework, particularly as a 9th or 10th grader, is heavily perpetuated. Individual differences exist, but our experience at Legend College Prep tells us that grade level is not the right correlation to pay attention to.

The consequences of buying into this myth creates more stress in students who have both the desire and capacity to excel. In the best-case public school scenario, students have a severely limited selection of AP’s as 10th graders. This means the 11th grade is the only window for tackling AP’s. Imagine how much stress this packs into one single year!

On the other hand, starting early and spreading out the challenging courses eases this burden. Clever LCP students leverage their time with us to open the right doors without overstressing themselves. Again, this indicates the critical need for smart planning for families during their 4-year high school journey!



★ “I’m not allowed to take a more advanced math course.”

This is similar to the previous myth, but focused on math. Middle schoolers are especially vulnerable to being put on a track that is too slow for them. Once they are set on this path, it becomes difficult to break out. Ironically, this leads many students to lose motivation and focus, leading to worse results. We’ve worked with too many students who have internalized the idea that they cannot learn math well, simply because they were lead down the wrong path at an early stage.

Legend College Prep is currently introducing a 4-year track from Algebra to AP Calculus BC. If you are interested in breaking the mold, away from your public school system, contact our office and we can get you started!

Myths About Course Selection (continued)

- ★ “UC’s only look at a number of my AP’s, so I need fewer advanced courses.”

Partial myth, but it’s something perpetuated more recently. Although there may be a limitation on GPA calculation, **the fact of your accomplishment is not diminished in any way.** Admissions officers will take note! Lastly, remember that you’re out to prove yourself to be a strong candidate to other schools as well. Results matter, and you will want to aim as high as possible to stand out from the crowd!

- ★ “I can’t cover this much material in a short amount of time.”

Hundreds of students that have come before you have done it! Yes, it takes work and a good study system. We help students work smarter, not just harder. They have neither compromised quality or depth while doing so. Perhaps one of the most rewarding experiences of being at Legend College Preparatory is being surprised at how far you can go!

