

Why AP?

Opens doors

Having AP courses on your high school transcript can help impress an admission officer, particularly at the more elite schools -- i.e. UGA and GA Tech expect a certain amount of AP classes. Doing well in these courses demonstrates several things, not the least of which is your dedication to hard work and your ability to complete college-level work, which is exactly what colleges want to see!



Saves time and money

AP classes obviously require you to spend more time studying, and you'll need to pay a fee for every test that you take; however, in the long run, the effort may pay off. You most likely can earn college credits for these courses, which may shave some time off the number of years it takes to earn your degree. It could also save you some bucks on your overall tuition, since it's a good bet that most college courses cost more than the fee for an AP exam.



Jump ahead

AP exams are scored on a 1 to 5 scale, and a 3 or above will get you a passing grade. With a high enough score, many schools will award you college credit; qualifying scores generally range from 3 to 5, depending on the school. One of the great things about starting college with some credits in your back pocket is that it may allow you to register for higher-level courses right off the bat. You might be able to bypass some required core courses early on and jump ahead in your education. In addition, some schools organize course registration by the number of credits you have, so you could get first dibs when it's time to register. Perhaps you'll even be able to graduate a bit early or begin work on a graduate degree! Some students have been able to stretch HOPE benefits to include graduate work.



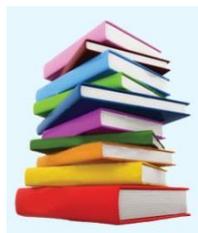
Other benefits

College is an entirely different world from high school, particularly if you're living away from home for the first time. You'll have to figure out how to study effectively and balance your courses with the active social life that many colleges offer. You'll probably be on your own and will need to make responsible decisions about your activities and how you'll schedule (and finish) your studying and class assignments. By taking AP courses in high school, you can get an early start on mastering the skills of time management. You'll also learn a bit about the types of effective study habits that are crucial to college success. Plus, you can hone your writing and problem-solving skills early on!



No need to overdo it

AP courses have become so popular that some students feel pressure from everyone around them to take as many as they can fit into their class schedule. If you're a distant relative of Einstein, maybe that's the type of course load you need, but for most students, a full load of AP classes isn't necessary.



You need to make time for other activities, such as sports and clubs -- and a life. Remember that colleges like to see well-rounded students, and that means a variety of experiences. It may be that you and the adults in your life are expecting you to act like an adult, but you still have a little time left to enjoy being a "kid." Try to keep some spare time for yourself, your friends, and your family. You'll be healthier and happier if you do!