

About the AP Physics 1 Course

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AP Physics 1 is an algebra-based, introductory college-level physics course. Students cultivate their understanding of Physics through inquiry-based investigations as they explore these topics: kinematics; dynamics; circular motion and gravitation; energy; momentum; simple harmonic motion; torque and rotational motion; electric charge and electric force; DC circuits; and mechanical waves and sound.

College Course Equivalent

AP Physics 1 is a full-year course that is the equivalent of a first-semester introductory college course in algebra-based physics.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisite courses. Students should have completed geometry and be concurrently taking Algebra II or an equivalent course. Although the Physics 1 course includes basic use of trigonometric functions, this understanding can be gained either in the concurrent math course or in the AP Physics 1 course itself.

The Laboratory Requirement

This course requires that 25 percent of the instructional time be spent in hands-on laboratory work, with an emphasis on inquiry-based investigations that provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the foundational physics principles and apply all seven science practices defined in the course framework.

Colleges may require students to present their laboratory materials from AP science courses before granting college credit for laboratory work, so students should be encouraged to retain their laboratory notebooks, reports, and other materials.

Participating in the AP Course Audit

Schools wishing to offer AP courses must participate in the AP Course Audit. Participation in the AP Course Audit requires the online submission of two documents: the AP Course Audit form and the teacher's syllabus. The AP Course Audit form is submitted by the AP teacher and the school principal (or designated administrator) to confirm awareness and understanding of the curricular and resource requirements. The syllabus, detailing how course requirements are met, is submitted by the AP teacher for review by college faculty.