Calculating a Student's GPA

Original version by Lisa B. Potter [2006] – *reprinted with permission*

The GPA (Grade Point Average) is usually included on a high school transcript. Most colleges want to know an applicant's GPA. Some colleges use the high school GPA to determine eligibility for an "academic scholarship discount" from tuition.

The GPA is normally calculated on a 1-4 scale. This is what the numbers mean:

> Grade Value of 4.0 = A- to A+
>
> 3.0 = B- to B+
>
> 2.0 = C- to C+
>
> 1.0 = D- to D+
>
> 0.0 = Failing

Some high schools weight the GPA, if the student took Honors or AP courses, adding anywhere from 1.0-1.7 points to grades earned in those courses. For homeschoolers, most colleges will not recognize these unless the Honors or AP course was taken from an outside source (verifiable as AP, etc.) or the AP or SAT 2 (tests) taken afterward demonstrated a sufficiently high score. So, for the most part, consider not using a weighted GPA and identify the GPA as "not weighted" on the college applications.

A normal one year course = 120-150 hours of academic instruction.

This would be equivalent to 1.0 unit or 1.0 credit in high school.

- 0.75 credit or unit may be given to a student when they worked on a subject for 90+ hours (because 0.75 x 120 hrs = 90 hrs).
- 0.5 credit or unit may be given to a student when they worked on a subject for 60+ hours (because 0.5 x 120 hrs = 60 hrs).
- 0.25 credit or unit may be given to a student when they worked on a subject for 30+ hours (because 0.75 x 120 hrs = 30 hrs).

Each course listed on the Transcript should list the Course Name, the grade earned and the number of credits earned (order is not important). Example:

> Astronomy   grade: B-   0.5 credits

Then, use this information to calculate the GPA.

Multiply the grade point value from the chart above by the credits earned for each course. Add all of these products together.

Separately, add together the total number of credits earned.

Divide the first total by the total credits earned to find the Total GPA.

List the Total GPA somewhere on the Transcript.

Next, let's look at a sample calculation and a worksheet.

Sample Worksheet for Calculating a Student's GPA

4.0 = A- to A+   3.0 = B- to B+   2.0 = C- to C+   1.0 = D- to D+   0.0 = Failing

Sample Transcript Data:	Grade Values:	Calculations:
English Composition	C - 1.0 credit - C = 2.0	2.0 x 1.0 cr. = 2.0
World History-Ancient	B - 0.5 credit - B- = 3.0	3.0 x 0.5 cr. = 1.5
World History-Modern	C+ - 0.5 credit - C+ = 2.0	2.0 x 0.5 cr. = 1.0
Algebra 1	B+ 1.0 credit - B+ = 3.0	3.0 x 1.0 cr. = 3.0
Physical Science	A - .0 credit A- = 4.0	4.0 x 1.0 cr. = 4.0
Astronomy	A - 0.5 credit - A = 4.0	4.0 x 0.5 cr. = 2.0
Spanish 1	C - 0.75 credit - C = 2.0	2.0 x 0.75 cr. = 1.5
P.E./Soccer	A+ - 0.25 credit - A+=4.0	4.0 x 0.25 cr. = 1.0

Total of Credits Earned = 5.50 credits   Sum Units = 16.0

Total GPA Calculated = Sum Units ÷ Total Credits (usually rounded to 3 digits).

Total GPA Calculated in Sample: 16.0 ÷ 5.50 = **2.91**

Worksheet for Calculating a Student's GPA

Courses Taken:	Grades:	Grade Values	x	Credits Earned	=	Units
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____
_____	_____	_____	x	_____	=	_____

Total of Credits Earned = _____   _____ = Sum Units

_____

Sum Units ÷ Credits Earned = Total GPA (usually rounded to 3 digits).

_____ ÷ _____ = _____