

## What's in a G.P.A.?

The main difference between weighted and unweighted GPA is that **weighted** GPAs take into account the difficulty of your coursework and **unweighted** GPAs don't. Most **unweighted** GPAs are recorded on a scale of 0 to 4.0, and most **weighted** GPAs are recorded on a scale of 0 to 5.0.

Which is preferred? Neither. For example, the unweighted GPA is the easier to work with because its letter grade to number conversions are very straightforward. It's also the scale used during college, so **your unweighted GPA might give college admissions officers a better idea of how you'll do at their school.** However, the weighted GPA indicates that you took challenging classes all throughout high school, in a way making you even more prepared for college. Because of this, **your GPA isn't considered by itself, but rather it is looked at side by side with your transcript.** Your transcript is the list of all the classes you took in high school, and how you did in them.

**Admissions officers also consider the differences between separate high school's and their standards.** Most admissions committees will really take the time to look through your academic records, course by course, to make sure you are a good fit for their school. **Colleges want to see that you have pushed yourself to take on academic challenges and managed to grow over time.**

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Unweighted points	Honors	A.P. and Dual Enrollment
<b>A</b>	90-100%	4.0	4.5	5.0
<b>B</b>	80-89%	3.0	3.5	4.0
<b>C</b>	70-79%	2.0	2.5	3.0
<b>D</b>	60-69%	1.0	1.5	2.0
<b>F</b>	0-59%	0.0	0	0

## How to Calculate GPA?

Let's get into the nitty gritty and show you how to calculate your child's unweighted GPA. Here's a hypothetical course history with equal credits associated with each class:

### Student 1

AP Biology: A  
AP English: B  
AP US History: A  
AP Calculus: A

### Student 2

Earth Sciences: A  
American Literature: B  
World History: A  
Algebra: A

Now, let's crunch the numbers: **Calculating UNWEIGHTED GPA**

Student 1 gets a 4.0, 3.0, 4.0, and 4.0 – those numbers summed and divided by 4 (the number of courses) gives Student 1 an **unweighted GPA of 3.75.**

In an unweighted system, an A is an A and a B is a B (regardless of course difficulty,) so student 2 would end up with the same GPA of 3.75. Both appear equal in this system, but they're not. The college admissions officer will take note of Student 1's rigorous course load and weight it accordingly when making a decision.

Next, let's **Calculate WEIGHTED GPA.** A typical weighted GPA works on a 5.0 scale, so:

Student 1 gets a 5.0, 4.0, 5.0, and 5.0 – those summed and divided by 4 (number of courses) gives student 1 an **weighted GPA of 4.75.**

Student 2, due to taking easier courses, gets a 4.0, 3.0, 4.0, and 4.0 – 3.75 GPA.

However, let's hypothesize that student 1 did less well in her coursework than student 2 because the courses she took were tougher, the weighted system plays in the favor of those students who challenged themselves with their coursework and rewards them with higher numerical contributions per letter to their overall GPA.