

The Ultimate Guide for Homeschoolers Taking AP® Exams



AP® exams are a great way for homeschool students to show colleges that they are ready to succeed in college. High AP® scores can help homeschoolers satisfy freshman requirements, earn college credits, and even graduate early.

Here's the great news: you do NOT need to take an AP® class in order to take an AP® exam. All you need to do is register at a testing site before the final deadline of March 12, 2020 and pay the exam fees. There are no other requirements to take an AP® exam. Take a look at our recommended steps for homeschool students who want to take AP® exams.

1. Figure out which AP® exams to take.

The first step in this process is to figure out which, if any, AP® exams you will take. It's not as easy as it seems. **There are 38 AP® exams** in a wide variety of subjects.

Some AP® exams are better suited for homeschool students than others. For example, there are no required texts for AP® English Language and AP® English Literature. Students who are really talented readers and writers can do well on these exams even if they are not enrolled in any AP® class.

Other AP® exams test content covered in typical high school classes, especially AP® U.S. History, AP® Biology, and AP® Spanish.

AP® EXAMS

Art History	French Language and Culture	Physics 1: Algebra-Based
Biology	German Language and Culture	Physics 2: Algebra-Based
Calculus AB	Government and Politics (comparative)	Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism
Calculus BC	Government and Politics (U.S.)	Physics C: Mechanics
Chemistry	Human Geography	Psychology
Chinese Language and Culture	Italian Language and Culture	Research Seminar
Computer Science A	Japanese Language and Culture	Spanish Language and Culture
Computer Science Principles	Latin	Spanish Literature and Culture
English Language and Composition	Macroeconomic	Statistics
English Literature and Composition	Microeconomics	Studio Art Drawing
Environmental Science	Music Theory	Studio Art 2-D Design
European History		Studio Art 3-D Design
		U.S. History
		World History

But, be careful! Some exams require you to know specific content and have narrow requirements that make it difficult for homeschoolers to just walk into the exam with little preparation.

2. Learn about the exam format.

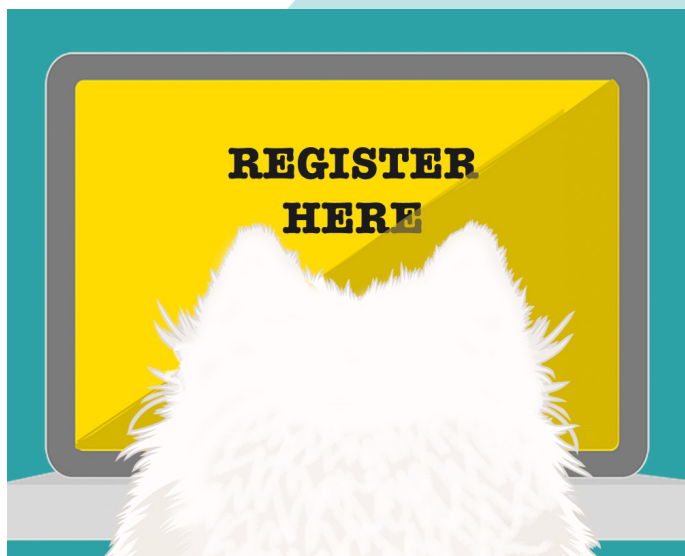
AP® exams have undergone a series of dramatic changes and redesigns in recent years. This means you can't necessarily trust every article online or even a test prep book from two years ago.

The history exams, including AP® U.S. History, AP® European History, and AP® World History, are good examples of how test format matters. These exams have become less focused on mastering tons of historical facts, dates, and names and are much more focused on reading primary sources provided to you on the exam. The AP® history exams are basically open-book tests. These changes have opened the door for homeschool students to take AP® exams with less intense preparation in conjunction with the non-AP® classes they are doing at home.

At Marco Learning, we have a number of great **articles** that break down the format of several exams.



3. Register for the exams.



First, check out the dates for the **2020 AP® exams**, which run during the first two weeks of May. Make sure that you know exactly when your AP® exams are offered and that none of the exams you plan to take overlap with another one. Then, you need to contact the AP® coordinator at an AP® testing site near you. (Usually, your local public high school is your best bet).

For more information, check out the **College Board's website** directly and be sure to contact them with any questions.

4

Organize all your resources.

This is an important step in the process that most students skip. You should take an inventory of all the resources you have.

Make a list. Maybe you have a copy of a textbook, a test prep book, or a box of flashcards. Add to that any study notes from your homeschool classes, a copy of a source reader if you have one, and any handouts or outlines or timelines you have, or little color-coded study notes you made in study groups. Add them all to the pile and to your list. Now add all the online resources you have found helpful. Maybe there is a really good YouTube channel or some old history documentaries that have helped you. Add them too.

1. Textbook
2. Test prep book
3. Flashcards
4. Study notes
5. YouTube-Tom Richey
6. Source reader
7. Handouts
8. Outlines
9. Timelines
10. YouTube Math Person

Marco Learning also has some **free practice tests** and **study guides** on our website and many videos on our **YouTube channel** to add to your list.

Resource Inventory	
1. Textbook	
2. Test prep book	
3. Flashcards	
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5. YouTube-Tom Richey	
6. Source reader	
7. Handouts	
8. Outlines	
9. Timelines	
10. YouTube-Math Person	

Now take a look at your list. Be honest with yourself. Which of these resources just aren't useful to you? Class notes no good? Cross them off the list. Maybe that YouTube channel is entertaining, but you don't really learn much from the videos. Cross that off your list. Now look at what's left and ask yourself which ones will help you review content the most? Then focus on the best three (or so) resources you have. Maybe it's flashcards, class notes, or a series of documentaries.



5. Develop a study plan.

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Week 1

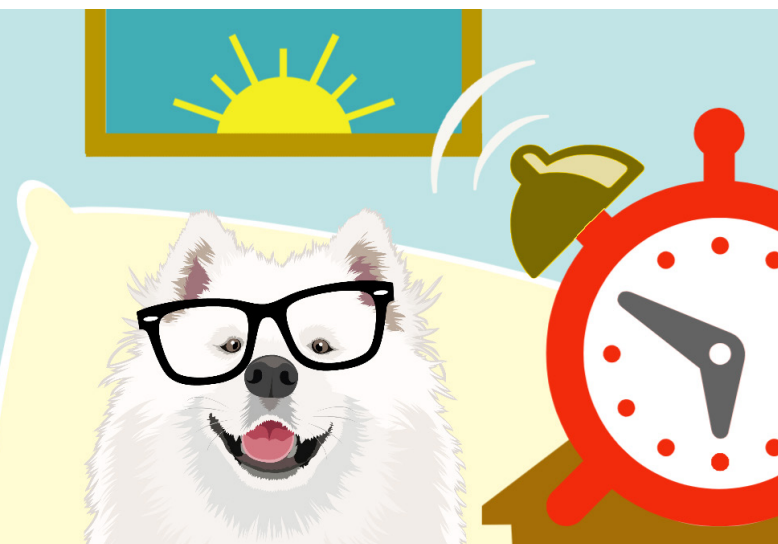
- ☐ Complete all sections of the course *Introduction*: **20 minutes**
- ☐ Complete the multiple-choice questions of Practice Test 1 in one full sitting: **1 hour**
- ☐ Read explanations for multiple-choice questions: **45 minutes**
- ☐ If possible, ask your teacher to grade your essay and review: **30 minutes**
- ☐ Complete all chapters and sections of *Skills in Interpretation*, including drills: **2 hours**

Week 2

- ☐ Complete all available sections of *The Multiple Choice Section* and *The Free Response Section* of the course: **90 minutes**
- ☐ Complete free-response questions of Practice Test 1: **2 hours**

6. Start early!

We have worked with thousands of students, and if there is one thing we know about all of you, it's that you procrastinate until the very last second.



AP® exams are different though. They are supposed to reflect an entire semester or year of college-level work, so you need to start earlier than a few days before the exam!

This is especially important for homeschool students because you probably don't have access to the **College Board's new AP® Classroom platform** and you may not have had a teacher assigning free-response questions and grading them.

7. Take full-length practice tests.

One of the most common mistakes students make in test preparation is the failure to practice well. You may know all the presidents and all the facts and all the words, but if you don't perform well on test day, all your hard work will be in vain. You have to be prepared to bring together your knowledge and skills on test day. The best way to do this is to take **full-length practice tests**.

For more on how to incorporate practice tests into your study plan, check out this [article](#) on how to take practice tests effectively.



Practice ^{with feedback} makes perfect.

8. Get your essays graded.

For the majority of AP[®] exams, the most important section is the free-response section, which can consist of short-answer questions and longer essays.

While it can be useful to look over scoring guidelines, nothing can replace scoring and written feedback from an expert grader. That's why Marco Learning has partnered with expert graders at **The Graide Network** to offer the first ever grading program for AP[®] students, where you can get your AP[®] essays graded and returned with comprehensive feedback within a week.



For more about this resource, click [here](#).

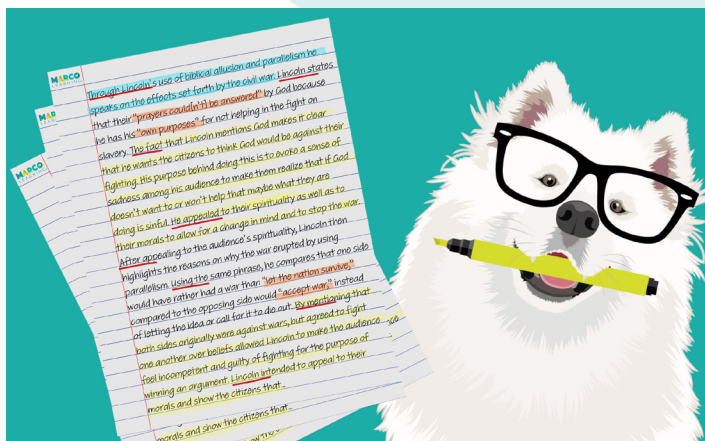
9. Don't go it alone.

Studying for one or more AP® exams by yourself for weeks can be daunting. Homeschooling parents can be overwhelmed by all the nuances of the format and scoring of AP® exams (never mind the challenging nature of the content). This is why a homeschooling consortium or live online study sessions can be so valuable for homeschoolers.

At Marco Learning, we have **free live online events** just for homeschool students so that you can get your questions answered by expert tutors and hear how others in the homeschool community are working their way through this process.



10. Prepare for test day.



Checklist

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☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____

Notes:

There are specific requirements about what you are allowed to bring to a testing site. See our **Test Day Checklist article** and **articles** about what you can bring to various AP® exams.

At Marco Learning, we help homeschool students prepare for AP® exams. Learn more about how our **video-based courses and essay-grading services** can help you get ready for test day.

Save 10% off your exam prep with promo code **SELFSTUDY**

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