

Complete Courses and Requirements for Students in the Classes of 2020 and beyond

Ohio law outlines the course requirements all students must complete to earn a diploma. Ohio students must earn a minimum of 20 course units in specified subject areas. **Districts and schools may have requirements that exceed the state minimums outlined below.**

Complete Courses

Take and earn a state minimum of 20 credits in specific subjects.

Courses	State Minimum
English language arts	4 credits
Health	½ credit
Mathematics	4 credits ¹
Physical education	½ credit ²
Science	3 credits ³
Social studies	3 credits ⁴
Electives (Topics/Ohio-Graduation-Requirements/Graduation-Requirements-2014-2017/Electives-Requirement-for-Graduation)	5 credits ⁵

Other Requirements

Students must receive instruction in economics⁶ and financial literacy⁶ (in high school) and complete at least two semesters of fine arts⁵ (during grades 7-12).

1 Mathematics – Students must earn 4 mathematics units, which must include one unit of algebra II or the equivalent of algebra II. Exceptions: Algebra II or advanced computer science is not a requirement for students following a career-technical pathway (<https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-Learning-Standards/Mathematics/Math-Graduation-Requirements/Career-Technical-Pathway-Algebra-II-Replacement-Guidelines.pdf.aspx>). However, students still must have four units in mathematics. A student may choose to apply one unit of advanced computer science to satisfy one unit of algebra II/math III or equivalent. Districts also may use credit in a computer science course approved by the Department to satisfy a student's mathematics credit. Here is a link to the [Computer Science Guidance Document](http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Computer-Science/Resources-for-Computer-Science/Computer-Science-Guidelines.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US) (<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Computer-Science/Resources-for-Computer-Science/Computer-Science-Guidelines.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>).

Notes: Curriculum Choice (<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Ohio-Learning-Standards/Ohio-Curriculum-Choices>) expired with the class of 2019 and is no longer an available option for students. Postsecondary institutions may require algebra II, or its equivalent, for college admission.

2 Physical education – School districts may adopt policies that would exempt students who participate in interscholastic athletics, marching band or cheerleading for two full seasons or an approved Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program for two years from the physical education requirement. Starting with the 2019-2020 school year, districts may include show choir as a permissible activity as part of the PE Waiver policy. Students satisfying the physical education waiver must take another course of study of at least 60 hours of instruction (1/2 unit).

3 Science – Science units must include one unit of physical sciences, one unit of life sciences and one unit of advanced study in one or more of the following sciences: chemistry, physics or other physical science; advanced biology or other life science; astronomy, physical geology or other earth or space science. A student can choose to apply one credit in advanced computer science to satisfy one unit of advanced science (excluding biology or life sciences). Here is a link to the [Computer Science Guidance Document](http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Computer-Science/Resources-for-Computer-Science/Computer-Science-Guidelines.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US) (<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Computer-Science/Resources-for-Computer-Science/Computer-Science-Guidelines.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>).

4 Social studies – Students must include ½ unit of American history, ½ unit of American government, and ½ unit in world history and civilizations (for students in the classes of 2021 and beyond) in the three required social studies units.

5 Elective credits – Elective units must include one or any combination of world language, fine arts, business, career-technical education, family and consumer sciences, technology, agricultural education or English language arts, mathematics, science or social studies courses not otherwise required.

Note: While not a state requirement for graduation, many four-year colleges and universities require a minimum of two years of sequential world language study at the secondary level as a college admissions requirement. This is the case for many in-state and out-of-state colleges and universities.

6 Financial Literacy – Ohio law requires students to receive instruction in financial literacy as part of the high school graduation requirements. However, it is up to local districts to determine how to best meet the needs of their students. For example, the financial literacy content may be incorporated into another course, or some districts may require students to take a standalone financial literacy course for a half credit that can meet either a graduation requirement for social studies or an elective.