

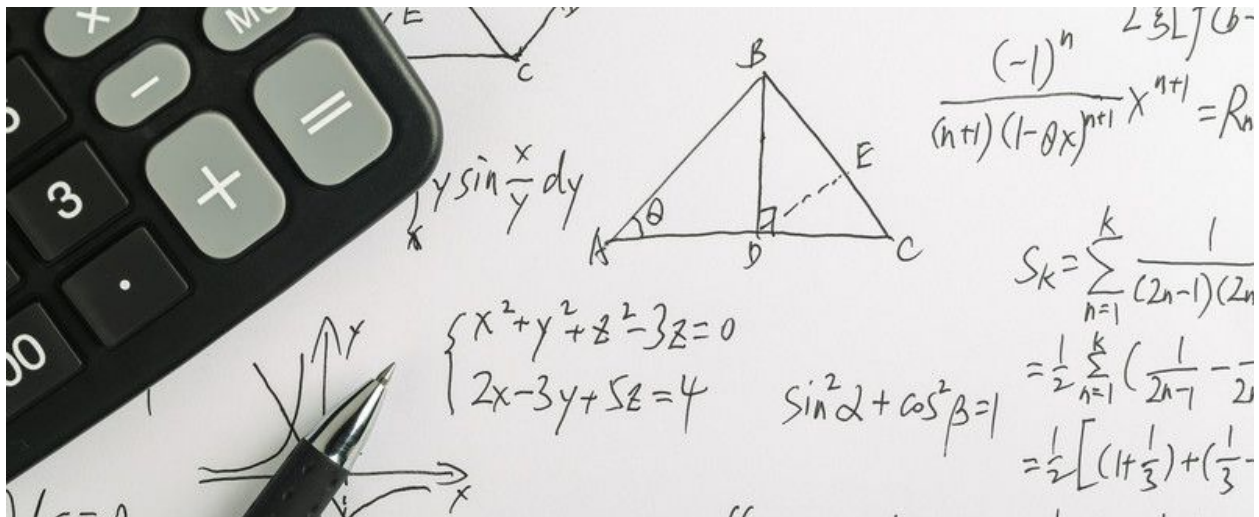


# Should You Take AP Calculus AB or AP Calculus BC?

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Calculus AB and BC's significant distinction lies in the range of what you'll learn, not the difficulty level. Although both AP Calculus classes are intended to be university-level courses, Calculus [AB](#) utilizes one year to cover the equivalent of one semester of Calculus in a college semester. Calculus [BC](#) covers a total of two semesters. Both courses follow curriculum created by The College Board and requires students to take the AP exam in May. A student cannot take both AP Calculus AB and BC in the same year.



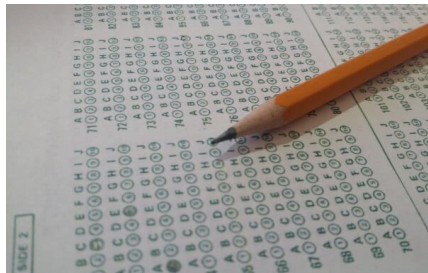
AP Calculus AB teaches students Precalculus (A) and the beginning part of Calculus I (B). AP Calculus BC will also cover Calculus I (B) and part of Calculus II (C).

Some of the topics covered in Calculus AB include functions, graphs, derivatives and applications, integrals and its application. On the contrary, Calculus BC will cover all of the above topics, along with polynomial approximations, Taylor series, and series of constants.

## AP Calculus BC

Taking Precalculus and Calculus BC can prove to be a hard challenge. If a student is doing well in Precalculus and wants to pursue a degree in any math dominant career such as Engineering,

they may want to consider taking Calculus BC. They will need to continue into more advanced math courses and Precalculus is a great prerequisite. They may want to consider taking AP Statistics, if their schedule allows. Taking AP Calculus BC will give students the opportunity to challenge their math skills.

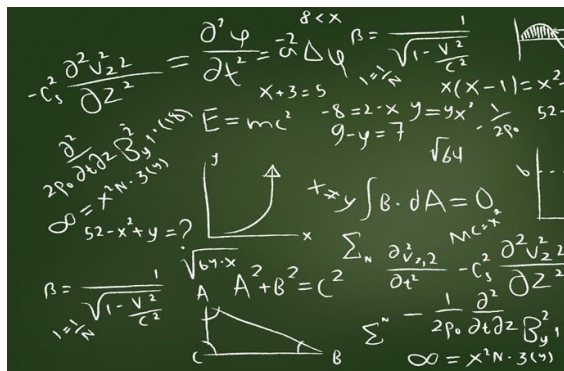


Provided a student passes the Calculus BC exam, they can transfer more credits to their future college than if they took Calculus AB. For example, at the University of Michigan, their engineering department Calculus BC course transfers in at 8 credits while AB only transfers in at 4 credits.

## AP Calculus AB

Calculus AB will still prepare students for future math classes, and give them the fundamentals they'll need to be successful. Taking this course may allow more time in a student's schedule for other courses. Additionally, students can end up with the same amount of credits and class placement as someone who took Calculus BC based on their exam score.

## So What Should You Take?



Success Pathway suggests taking Calculus AB for one year and then BC the following year. Most people don't feel prepared enough taking Calculus BC right away. Student's should remember that the topics covered in each class overlap. Students will spend a portion of their second year relearning what they learned in the previous year. Overall, it is more favorable to take Calculus AB and another math course, such as Statistics, rather than both AB

and BC together.

*When making your decision, consider a few thoughts.*

Do you feel prepared? Make sure you have already taken Algebra II and Pre-Calculus.

Ensure that you are comfortable with the topics taught in Pre-Calculus, as a lot of them will reappear in Calculus AB or BC.

*Suggestions from Success Pathway about choosing the right course for you!*

- If you can't make a judgement for yourself, most schools offer placement exams. This will give you a strong visual for whether or not you are prepared for Calculus AB or BC.
- Remember that taking Calculus BC will take up more of your time inside and outside of school. You should be prepared to commit yourself to the class.
- If you want to pursue a math major, it's more ideal to take Calculus BC. But if you are planning to go into a business field or another non math dominated field, Calculus AB will easily meet the college or universities math requirement.
- Ask students that are currently in the class to find out about it's difficulty level and how the teacher teaches the material.

Do you feel confident in your mathematical abilities and want a challenge? How did you feel when taking Pre-Calculus? Are you ready for the time commitment? If so, you should push yourself and choose AP Calculus BC. Do you want more time flexibility? Are you pursuing a non math major? Then, AP Calculus AB may be the right choice for you!