

CPR & First Aid

Frequently Asked Questions (General)

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1. [Frequently Used Acronyms](#)

2. **Choosing a Course**

- a. [What is the minimum age to learn CPR?](#)
- b. [Why is AED training included in all your CPR courses?](#)
- c. [I need a general CPR course to prepare me to save the life of a loved one. Which course is best for me?](#)
- d. [I am not a healthcare professional and I need a CPR and AED course for work purposes. Which course should I take?](#)
- e. [Are your courses OSHA compliant?](#)
- f. [Which CPR course should a "first responder" or "professional rescuer" take?](#)
- g. [Which course should a daycare provider take?](#)
- h. [Do you have a list of all your CPR and first aid courses?](#)
- i. [Can I take an AHA CPR course online?](#)
- j. [Do AHA's BLS courses include first aid?](#)
- k. [Is BLS included in the ACLS course?](#)
- l. [Is BLS a prerequisite for ACLS?](#)
- m. [For the purposes of CPR and first aid training, what ages does the AHA consider an infant, child and adult?](#)

3. **Finding / Selecting a Training Center**

- a. [Can an AHA Instructor come to my office or home to teach a course?](#)
- b. [What do Training Centers charge for CPR classes?](#)
- c. [Do you offer courses in other languages?](#)

4. **Preparing For Your Course**

- a. [How do I sign up for a class?](#)
- b. [What should I wear to class?](#)
- c. [How do I get the student materials I need \(in the US\)?](#)
- d. [How do I get the student materials I need \(outside of the US\)?](#)

- e. [May I use a copied manual/workbook?](#)
- f. [May I translate your materials?](#)
- g. [I am visually impaired. Am I able to obtain course materials in Braille?](#)

5. Course Completion Cards

- a. [When can I expect to receive my course completion card from the AHA?](#)
- b. [Can I laminate my course completion card?](#)
- c. [How can I tell if my card is a valid AHA course completion card?](#)
- d. [When do I need to renew my course completion card?](#)
- e. [My card is about to expire. How do I get a new one?](#)
- f. [I lost my course completion card. How do I get a replacement?](#)
- g. [Is my course completion card accepted in all US states?](#)
- h. [If I am an Instructor, do I need to keep my provider card current?](#)
- i. [Does the AHA recognize Military Training Network cards?](#)
- j. [Can I use my Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada course completion card for employment in the US?](#)

6. Instructor Courses

- a. [How do I become an AHA Instructor?](#)
- b. [What is the minimum age to teach a CPR, first aid or advanced cardiovascular care course?](#)
- c. [Can BLS Instructors teach first aid?](#)

7. Training Center Questions

- a. [How do we become a Training Center in the US?](#)
- b. [How do we become a Training Center outside the US?](#)

8. Miscellaneous Questions

- a. [I heard you can do CPR without giving breaths now. Is that correct?](#)
- b. [I heard that you can cough repeatedly and vigorously to perform CPR on yourself. Is this true?](#)
- c. [Does my AHA course completion card certify me to do CPR?](#)

1. Frequently Used Acronyms

ACLS	Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support
AED	Automated External Defibrillator
AHA	American Heart Association
BLS	Basic Life Support
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
ECC	Emergency Cardiovascular Care
HSFC	Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada
MTN	Military Training Network
PALS	Pediatric Advanced Life Support
PEARS®	Pediatric Emergency Assessment, Recognition and Stabilization

2. Choosing a Course

a. What is the minimum age to learn CPR?

The AHA does not mandate a minimum age requirement for learning CPR. The ability to perform CPR is based more on body strength than age. Studies have shown that children as young as nine years old can learn and retain CPR skills. Please speak with an AHA Instructor or Training Center if you have any concerns. [Find an AHA Training Center near you.](#)

b. Why is AED training included in all your CPR courses?

The science in the official [2015 AHA Guidelines for CPR and ECC](#) shows that victims have a greater chance of survival from cardiac arrest when high-quality CPR includes use of an AED.

c. I need a general CPR course to prepare me to save the life of a loved one. Which course is best for me?

[Family & Friends® CPR](#) provides basic CPR training in a dynamic group environment using the research-proven practice-while-watching method. [Find an AHA Training Center near you.](#) You may also be interested in learning basic CPR skills using the AHA's [CPR Anytime](#) kit, which you can share with family, friends and loved ones.

d. I am not a healthcare professional and I need a CPR and AED course for work purposes. Which course should I take?

Heartsaver® CPR AED is probably best for you. The AHA offers this course in both [eLearning](#) and [classroom-based](#) formats. Find an [AHA Training Center](#) near you offering Heartsaver classes and eLearning skills sessions.

e. Are your courses OSHA compliant?

Our [Heartsaver Courses](#) are for anyone with limited or no medical training who needs a course completion card for job, regulatory or other requirements. While these courses are designed to meet OSHA requirements, OSHA does not review or approve any courses for compliance.

Through the AHA/OSHA Alliance, we work with OSHA to raise awareness about workplace safety and health to prevent injuries, illnesses, and fatalities in the workplace. [Read about the OSHA/AHA Alliance.](#)

f. Which CPR course should a "first responder" or "professional rescuer" take?

First responders or professional rescuers generally include fire, police and emergency medical personnel. These types of prehospital professionals usually need to complete a Basic Life Support (BLS) course. Check with your employer or licensing authority and learn more about [eLearning](#) and [classroom-based](#) BLS courses.

g. Which course should a daycare provider take?

The AHA's Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid CPR AED Course is designed to meet regulatory requirements for child care workers in all 50 United States. The AHA offers this course in both [eLearning](#) and [classroom-based](#) formats. Find an [AHA Training Center](#) near you offering Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid CPR AED classes and eLearning skills sessions.

h. Do you have a list of all your CPR and first aid courses?

Yes. You may view a full list of provider courses at www.heart.org/ecccoursematrix.

i. Can I take an AHA CPR course online?

The AHA offers a variety of Blended Learning and eLearning courses through [OnlineAHA.org](#), [eLearning.heart.org](#), and our Distributors. For Blended Learning courses, a student completes part of the course in a self-directed manner online, followed by a Hands-On Skills Session in person with an AHA Instructor or using a Voice Assisted Manikin (VAM)

where available. The cost for hands-on sessions is determined by the AHA Training Center offering the session. Training Centers will be able to answer your questions about availability and fees. [Find an AHA Training Center near you](#). AHA eLearning courses are fully self-directed, and do not require a separate Hands-On Skills Session.

j. Do the AHA's BLS courses include first aid?

No, first aid is not included in the AHA's BLS courses. The AHA offers a variety of courses that will prepare you to respond to a first aid emergency, including

- [Heartsaver First Aid Online](#) – to be followed by a skills session with an AHA Instructor
- [Heartsaver First Aid](#) – classroom-based
- [Heartsaver First Aid CPR AED Online](#) – to be followed by a skills session with an AHA Instructor
- [Heartsaver First Aid CPR AED](#) – classroom-based
- [Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid CPR AED Online](#) – to be followed by a skills session with an AHA Instructor
- [Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid CPR AED](#) – classroom-based

[Find an AHA Training Center near you](#) offering first aid courses and eLearning skills sessions.

k. Is BLS training included in the ACLS Course?

No, BLS is not included in AHA's [ACLS courses](#). However, it is expected that healthcare providers taking an ACLS course come to class already proficient in BLS skills. View our list of courses and their content at www.heart.org/ecccoursematrix or [Find an AHA Training Center near you](#).

l. Is BLS a prerequisite for ACLS?

Students in [ACLS courses](#) are not required by the AHA to have a current BLS for Healthcare Providers card, but they are expected to be proficient in BLS skills. Training Centers may require students to have current BLS for Healthcare Providers card. [Find an AHA Training Center near you](#).

For the purposes of AHA's CPR and first aid training, what age constitutes an infant, child and adult?

In CPR and first aid training,

- An infant is younger than one year
- A child is older than one year and has not reached puberty
- An adult is anyone who has gone through or is going through puberty

3. Finding / Selecting a Training Center

a. Can an AHA Instructor come to my office or home to teach a course?

AHA Training Centers are independent businesses that have entered into an agreement with the AHA to provide CPR, first aid and advanced cardiovascular care training, using [our current curricula and products](#). Training Centers will be able to tell you if they can send an Instructor to you for on-site training. [Find an AHA Training Center near you](#).

b. What do AHA Training Centers charge for CPR classes?

Training Centers set their own fees and schedules. You will need to contact Training Centers directly to inquire about their cost for training. [Find an AHA Training Center near you](#).

c. Do you offer courses in other languages?

Please contact a local AHA Training Center to inquire about courses in other languages. [Find an AHA Training Center near you](#).

4. Preparing For Your Course

a. How do I sign up for a class?

You can search for a class or local Training Center [here](#). If the Training Center has listed its classes in our system, you will be able to register for that class online. You may also have to call the Training Center or visit the Training Center's website to inquire about costs and availability, and to register and pay for the class. This is because AHA Training Centers are independent businesses that have entered into an agreement with the AHA to provide CPR and first aid Training using [our current curricula and products](#).

b. What should I wear to class?

Our CPR and first aid courses involve hands-on practice sessions, so wear something comfortable that you can move around in. If you have long hair, it is best to wear it back.

c. How do I get the student materials I need (in the US)?

First, ask your Training Center. The Training Center may offer the course materials to you as part of the overall course. The Training Center may also direct you to purchase training materials through the [AHA's Distributors](#).

d. How do I get the student materials I need (outside of the US)?

The AHA publishes CPR, first aid and advanced cardiovascular care training materials in several different languages. Find an authorized international distributor [here](#).

e. May I use a copied manual/workbook?

No. Each student must have his or her own current and appropriate manual or workbook readily available for use before, during and after the course.

The AHA owns the copyrights to AHA textbooks, manuals and other CPR & First Aid training materials. These materials may not be copied, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the AHA. To request permission to reprint, copy or use portions of CPR & First Aid materials, submit a written request to the AHA at copyright.heart.org.

f. May I translate your materials?

You can find information about the AHA's guidelines for translating materials at the AHA's [copyright permission site](#).

g. I am visually impaired. Am I able to obtain course materials in Braille?

The AHA does not produce materials in Braille. However, through the proper channels we can provide you a student manual/workbook in digital format for your use. Please contact a local [AHA Training Center near you](#) or an [authorized Distributor](#) so they can assist you.

5. Course Completion Cards

a. When can I expect to receive my course completion card from the AHA?

Training Centers must issue course completion cards within 20 business days of successful course completion. Please contact your AHA Instructor or Training Center Coordinator if you have any questions about your card.

b. Can I laminate my AHA course completion card?

Yes.

c. How can I tell if my card is a valid AHA course completion card?

To check the validity of an AHA course completion card, contact the Training Center that issued the card. The Training Center's information can be found on the back of the card. You can also check our [Course Card Reference Guide](#).

d. When do I need to renew my course completion card?

Course completion cards are valid for two years through the end of the month during which the course completion card was issued. For more information, please refer to the [Course Card Information Page](#).

e. My card is about to expire. How do I get a new one?

Contact an AHA Training Center near you to inquire about your options for renewing your course completion card. The Training Center will also be able to answer questions about class availability and cost. [Find an AHA Training Center near you](#) or contact the Training Center that issued your previous card using the contact information on the back of the card.

f. I lost my course completion card. How do I get a replacement?

See information on how to find my lost card [here](#).

g. Is my AHA course completion card accepted in all US states?

Yes, AHA course completion cards are accepted in all US states.

h. If I am an AHA Instructor, do I need to keep my provider card current?

Instructors are required to maintain current provider status as evidenced by a current provider card or demonstration of acceptable provider skills and successful completion of the provider written examination.

If the Instructor chooses the demonstration option, successful completion must be documented on the Instructor/Training Center Faculty Renewal Checklist. A new provider card may be issued at the discretion of the Training Center or by request of the renewing Instructor, but this is not required by the AHA.

To verify an Instructor's status, please contact the Training Center with which the Instructor is aligned. Details can be found on the back of the Instructor's Instructor card.

i. Does the AHA recognize Military Training Network cards?

Yes. Since 1984, the AHA has recognized the Military Training Network (MTN) for Resuscitative Medicine Programs as equivalent to an AHA Training Center.

The MTN uses the AHA's curricula. MTN provider cards for AHA courses are the equivalent of the corresponding AHA provider card.

For more information, visit usuhs.mil/mtn. Find more information and pictures of the Military Training Network cards in the [visit the Course Card Information page](#).

j. Can I use my Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada course completion card for employment in the US?

The [Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada \(HSFC\)](#) works closely with the AHA. The HSFC provider card is recognized by the AHA and can be used for admission to an AHA provider course (renewal or update) or Instructor course in the same discipline. The HSFC Instructor card is recognized by AHA Training Centers the same way as an Instructor card issued by an AHA Training Center.

We suggest that you show your employer the [AHA Course Card Reference Guide](#) to see pictures of HSFC cards and read about our relationship.

6. Instructor Courses

a. How do I become an AHA Instructor?

Visit the [AHA Instructors page](#) to learn more about becoming an Instructor and for Instructor resources.

b. What is the minimum age to teach a CPR, first aid or advanced cardiovascular care course?

The AHA requires that instructors be at least 16 years of age to teach Heartsaver and BLS courses. ACLS, PALS and PEARS Instructors must be at least 18 years of age and licensed or certified in a healthcare occupation where the skills are within the provider's scope of practice.

c. Can BLS Instructors teach first aid?

Yes, BLS Instructors are authorized to teach all Heartsaver-level courses, including Heartsaver First Aid, Heartsaver First Aid CPR AED and Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid CPR AED. Instructors must have a copy of the appropriate Instructor manual for the course that they are teaching. It is also highly recommended that BLS Instructors review a copy of the student workbook for each course prior to teaching the course.

7. Training Center Questions

a. How do we become a Training Center in the US?

Following are the basic criteria for becoming an AHA domestic Training Center.

- Upon launch of the AHA's My Cards system, applicants will issue eCards (electronic course completion cards), even when adding a discipline or geography.
- Applicants will have \$1 million in general liability insurance, indemnify AHA on their insurance policy and, if insurance is cancelled, they will inform the AHA immediately within same business day.
- Each applicant will be registered as a business in the state in which it is headquartered.
- Applicants will agree to the Terms and Conditions of the TC Agreement and will use the My TC Agreement tool to apply online.
- If the applicant is a Training Site, the applicant will have a recommendation from the TC. They must be a Training Site in good standing. The applicant will have its TC Coordinator attend an AHA orientation prior to receipt of the new TC's security code.
- Applicants will have a Business Plan that includes their goals, market analysis and financials.
- Applicants will have the support of the C-suite/principal or hospital corporate officer as evidenced by a letter of support.
- Applicants will already be consistently holding AHA classes in each discipline for which they have applied as a Training Center.

If you feel that you meet the criteria and are in an area of geographic need please contact your AHA Account Manager or call 1-888-277-54631-888-277-5463.

b. How do we become a Training Center outside the US?

If you wish to establish an International Training Center in your country, please take a few minutes to complete the [International Training Centers form](#) to begin this process.

8. Miscellaneous Questions

a. I heard you can do CPR without giving breaths now. Is that correct?

Hands-Only™ CPR is CPR without mouth-to-mouth breaths. It is recommended for use by bystanders who see a teen or adult suddenly collapse in an “out-of-hospital” setting (such as at home, at work or in a park). It consists of two easy steps:

1. Call 9-1-1 (or send someone to do that).
2. Push hard and fast in the center of the chest.

The AHA still recommends that healthcare providers use conventional CPR with a combination of breaths and compressions. Conventional CPR should also be used for

- All infants (up to age 1)
- Children (up to puberty)
- Anyone found already unconscious and not breathing normally
- Any victims of drowning, drug overdose, collapse due to breathing problems, or prolonged cardiac arrest

[Learn more about Hands-Only CPR.](#)

b. I heard that you can cough repeatedly and vigorously to perform CPR on yourself. Is this true?

The AHA does not endorse "cough CPR," a coughing procedure widely publicized on the Internet. As noted in the *2015 AHA Guidelines for CPR and ECC*, “cough CPR” is not useful for unresponsive victims and should not be taught to lay rescuers. Please visit our website [here](#) for more information.

c. Does my AHA course completion card certify me to do CPR?

No. The AHA does not certify people in CPR, first aid or advanced cardiovascular life support skills; the AHA verifies that, at the time a person successfully completed training, he or she was able to perform skills satisfactorily.