

**Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support for Experienced Providers (ACLS EP)  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)  
As of August 31, 2016**

**Course Information**

**Q: What is ACLS EP?**

A: The AHA's ACLS EP Course has been updated to reflect science in the following:

- 2010 AHA Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care
- 2013 American College of Cardiology Foundation (ACCF)/AHA Guidelines for the Management of ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction
- 2012 ACCF/AHA Focused Update of the Guideline for the Management of Patients With Unstable Angina/Non-ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction

The goal of the ACLS EP Course is to improve outcomes in complex cardiovascular, respiratory and other (eg, metabolic, toxicologic) emergencies by expanding on core ACLS guidelines and encouraging critical thinking and decision-making strategies. Through instruction and active participation in case-based scenarios, learners enhance their skills in the differential diagnosis and treatment of prearrest, arrest and postarrest patients.

**Q: Who is the target audience for ACLS EP?**

A: The ACLS EP Course is for seasoned healthcare providers who are proficient in performing BLS and ACLS skills, reading and interpreting ECGs, and understanding ACLS pharmacology and who regularly lead or participate in emergency assessment and treatment of prearrest, arrest or postarrest patients. This audience includes physicians, paramedics and emergency department or critical care nurses. Also, the Course Director may allow other professionals who are deeply involved in the field of resuscitation, including scientists, educators and researchers, to take the ACLS EP Course.

**Q: Specifically, what content is taught in ACLS EP?**

A: ACLS EP teaches the following:

- Applying the expanded systematic approach (ACLS EP Survey) to patient assessment, evaluation and management
- Cardiovascular Emergencies
- Cerebrovascular Emergencies
- Respiratory and Metabolic Emergencies
- Post—Cardiac Arrest Care
- Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology Emergencies
- High Quality CPR
- Effective communication within a resuscitation team and recognition of the impact of team dynamics on overall team performance

**Q: What is the format of the ACLS EP Course?**

A: ACLS EP is a classroom-based, Instructor-led course, featuring case-based scenarios. In learning stations, interactive case-based discussions are facilitated by the ACLS EP instructor. The cases are designed to promote critical thinking and decision-making.

The recommended group size for ACLS EP is 6-10 learners, per one ACLS EP Instructor. Ratios for testing stations are explained in depth in the Instructor manual, which is contained within the ACLS EP DVD Set.

**Q: Which skills are practiced during ACLS EP?**

A: There are no skills practiced in ACLS EP. All learners should come to class with a solid foundation in ACLS and ready to be tested in ACLS skills, including CPR AED, bag-mask ventilations and Megacode.

**Q: What are the four core learning stations in ACLS EP?**

A: The four core learning stations are:

1. Cardiovascular
2. Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology
3. Respiratory and Metabolic
4. Post—Cardiac Arrest Care

**Q: What are the course completion requirements for ACLS EP?**

A: For successful course completion, learners must actively participate in all case-based scenarios and must meet all current ACLS course completion requirements including:

- Pass the 1-rescuer CPR and AED skills test
- Pass the bag-mask ventilation skills test
- Pass the Megacode skills test
- Pass the ACLS Provider exam with a score of 84% or higher

**Q: Does successful completion of ACLS EP result in an AHA course completion card?**

A: Yes. Learners who successfully complete the requirements of the ACLS EP Course will receive an AHA ACLS EP course completion card, valid for two years. Please note, the ACLS EP card supersedes the ACLS provider card.

**Q: Are there prerequisites for taking the ACLS EP Course?**

A: Yes. Before entering an ACLS EP Course, learners are required to have mastered ACLS principles, including proficiency in performing BLS, understanding of the ACLS algorithms, rapid and accurate rhythm recognition and ACLS pharmacology. All learners must successfully pass the ACLS exam before entering an ACLS EP Course. Learners are required to show proof of passing the exam either by submitting their completed exam to the course coordinator prior to the course or bringing it with them to the class.

**Q: Are continuing education (CE/CME) credits offered for the ACLS EP Course?**

A: Yes, the following CE is offered for ACLS EP. It is recommended that learners apply for this CE within 30 days of completing the course.

**Continuing Education Accreditation—Emergency Medical Services**

This continuing education activity is approved by the American Heart Association, an organization accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE), for 7.25 Advanced CEHs, activity number 13-AMHA-F2-0175.

**Q: Approximately how long does the ACLS EP Course take to complete?**

A: Course completion time is approximately 8 hours (7 to 7.25 hours without breaks and 8 to 8.5 hours with breaks).

**Course Materials**

**Q: What new materials are available for the ACLS EP Course?**

A: Materials for the course include:

**Learner Materials:**

- *ACLS EP Manual and Resource Text* (90-1075)
- ACLS EP Online Exam Key (90-1083)

**Instructor Materials:**

- ACLS EP DVD Set (90-1076; includes ACLS EP Instructor DVD-ROM (includes ACLS EP Instructor Manual) and ACLS EP Course Video DVD)
- ACLS EP Instructor Package (90-1078; includes ACLS EP DVD Set and *ACLS EP Manual and Resource Text*)

**Cards:**

- ACLS EP Instructor Card (90-1811; 3-card sheet)
- ACLS EP Course Completion Card (90-1812; 3-card sheet)

Also, for the ACLS EP Instructor, the following tools can be accessed via the [AHA Instructor Network](#) (go to Courses>ACLS EP>Course Resources):

- ACLS EP Course Evaluation
- ACLS EP Course Roster
- ACLS EP Sample Course Agenda A
- ACLS EP Sample Course Agenda B
- ACLS EP Sample Course Outline
- ACLS EP Equipment List
- ACLS EP Testing Checklists
- ACLS EP Sample Participant Letter

**Q: What materials must a learner have to take the ACLS EP Course?**

A: To take the ACLS EP Course, each learner must have access to his/her own *ACLS EP Manual and Resource Text* before, during and after class.

**Q: Is there a learner website for this course?**

A: Yes, there is a learner website. Information on finding and accessing the website is found in front of ACLS EP Instructor Manual, included in the ACLS EP DVD Set and the *ACLS EP Manual and Resource Text*.

**Q: Does the AHA require the ACLS EP Exam Key to be purchased/used?**

A: Prior to creating the new version of ACLS EP, the AHA conducted detailed market research with end-users (learners) about their preferences for the course. The AHA built the course and its delivery based on these preferences. One of the strongest responses was that AHA make the time commitment limited and make it convenient. ACLS EP was intentionally built as a blended learning course to help address this request.

The expectation for the ACLS EP Course is that learners enter the course with solid knowledge of ACLS and the ACLS treatment algorithms and are able to complete skills testing without practice. Learners participate in the course to build on their current knowledge and share and learn from peers. Passing the exam online prior to entering the course ensures that learners have the level of knowledge required to actively participate in the course.

The ACLS exam was made available online to save time, allow learners to complete it at their convenience, ensure consistency, make sure learners have the appropriate knowledge level and reduce the burden of facilitating the course on training staff. If Instructors choose to conduct the exam in person, using the paper version or conducting a supervised session in a computer lab, the process will be more time-consuming. Staff and learners will be required to coordinate times that work for both parties.

If Instructors choose not to take advantage of the convenience of the online exam, the exam should still be administered well in advance of the actual course. The ACLS EP agenda is designed to facilitate discussion and all time is accounted for during the course.

We recommend using the sample Precourse letter to help facilitate the online exam process, provide the online exam key and offer other important course information to learners.

**Teaching ACLS**

**Q: Who can teach ACLS EP?**

A: AHA ACLS EP Instructors may teach this course.

**Q: What materials are necessary to teach ACLS EP?**

A: To teach the ACLS EP Course, ACLS EP Instructors, at a minimum, must have the ACLS EP DVD Set, which includes the ACLS EP Instructor DVD-ROM and ACLS EP Course Video DVD. However, for added convenience and cost savings, it is recommended that Instructors have the full ACLS EP Instructor Package, which contains both the ACLS EP DVD Set and the *ACLS EP Manual and Resource Text*.

Also, 2013 ACLS EP course completion cards must be issued. AHA course completion cards are issued through the Training Center with which the Instructor is aligned.

**Q: How will ACLS EP Instructors be updated on the new curriculum and materials for the ACLS EP courses?**

A: The 2013 version of the ACLS EP Course has numerous changes compared to previous versions – to content, tools and philosophy. Due to these changes and because of the varied level of use of current materials, all ACLS EP Instructors are required to complete an update by attending an ACLS EP Instructor Course.

**Purchasing Materials/Finding Classes:**

**Q: Where/how can I purchase new ACLS EP Course materials?**

A: AHA training products can be purchased from any of AHA's three [Distributors](#) (Channing Bete, Laerdal, WorldPoint).

**Q: How do I find an ACLS EP Course in my local area?**

A: To find a class near you, please use the Find A Course tool at [www.heart.org/cpr](http://www.heart.org/cpr).

**Technical Issues**

**Q: Who should I contact if I have problems with ACLS EP materials?**

A: For problems with this product, customers should contact the AHA [Distributor](#) from whom they purchased the product. (Channing Bete, Laerdal, WorldPoint).

**Q: What are the technical requirements for viewing the PPT cases included on the ACLS EP Instructor DVD-ROM (included in the ACLS EP DVD Set)?**

A: Some cases contain enhanced video or audio clips embedded into the slides. To run these multimedia features, Instructors will need to use Microsoft PowerPoint 2010 for PC or Microsoft PowerPoint 2011 for Mac. If the Instructor has PPT 2007 or 1997-2003 for PCs, he or she will need to download "Viewer 2010." Microsoft no longer supports the 1997-2003 version of PowerPoint. The Instructor DVD should be opened via "My Computer" if it does not automatically launch. It will not launch in a media player.

Below are the step by step directions for a user to download free "PowerPoint Viewer" software for those that have versions of PPT older than 2007:

1. Go to <http://download.microsoft.com>
2. In the search box, type "PowerPoint Viewer 2010" and hit enter
3. Choose "PowerPoint Viewer" (PowerPoint 97 and later versions)
4. Click the download button
5. The free download is about 60 MB

**Translations**

**Q: Will ACLS EP be translated? Into what languages will it be translated? When will translated editions be available?**

A: Currently, the ACLS EP Course materials are not scheduled to be translated. For information on international distribution please visit the AHA international web page at [www.heart.org/eccinternational](http://www.heart.org/eccinternational).