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Get an MIT or Yale Education Free

By *Kim Clark*

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You can finally get that MIT, Yale, or University of Tokyo education you've always wanted without spending a cent. All it takes is an Internet-connected computer and a little familiarity with skills like downloading programs and unzipping files.



Students get a tour of MIT's campus.
(Jeffrey MacMillan for USN&WR)

A growing number of universities are posting entire courses—often including audio or video lectures, notes, reading lists, homework assignments, and exams—on the Web. Professors won't grade the digital students' work, so the schools won't give credit. But you still get access to an elite education, and you don't even have to apply for admission. Now anyone can watch an MIT professor shoot a bullet in a Physics 1 course to demonstrate velocity or listen to a short Stanford course on the Future of the Internet. For the hundreds of online courses that just consist of notes and reading lists, your local public library can lend the books and articles you're "studying." While most of the courses are in English, there are a growing number of translation sites offering the materials in Chinese, Thai, Spanish, Portuguese, and other languages.



MIT has the most impressive catalog of online offerings, with several dozen complete college courses that can be found [here](#). MIT has also posted reading lists and syllabuses for nearly every course it has offered in the past five years—about 1,800 classes. To get students ready for college, MIT this year even launched a sub-site aimed at high schoolers. It offers fun how-to courses on building stereo speakers and guitars as well as help for students taking AP science and math courses.

Yale earlier this month launched complete videotaped versions of seven of its most popular courses, including astronomy, poetry, philosophy, and psychology. The university plans to add at least 30 more of its courses to its [new website](#).

The [Open Coursework Consortium](#) serves as a clearinghouse for dozens of free courses from the University of Notre Dame, Johns Hopkins, and many overseas schools. And those who speak languages other than English can visit the site to find out how to audit remotely college classes given in China, France, South Korea, Mexico, Japan, and other countries.

And, of course, there's iTunes University. Berkeley, Duke, Stanford, and several other schools have posted free audio or video lectures for download [here](#).

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