



Free or paid CPR courses: Which is right for you?



This article discusses in-person CPR training programs that follow American Heart Association (AHA) guidelines led by certified instructors.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is a critical emergency procedure used when an individual's heart stops beating, and immediate intervention can significantly improve survival rates following cardiac arrest. Sudden cardiac arrest is often fatal without prompt, high-quality CPR and rapid defibrillation. Statistics show that most out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in private residences. Timely CPR can double or triple the likelihood of survival in these situations.

According to the AHA, out of approximately 350,000 annual community-based cardiac arrests, only about 35,000 individuals survive, primarily due to delays in receiving effective CPR and defibrillation.

In response, many communities have launched initiatives, like the “Heartsafe Community” initiative by the Citizen CPR Foundation, to expand access to CPR training and Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), aiming to equip more people with lifesaving skills. If you search your community, you will likely find both free and paid CPR courses. So, which course should you take?

Free courses typically teach “hands-only” CPR, focusing on proper chest compression techniques. This method can help to sustain a teen or adult victim until professional medical help arrives. Some free programs may also cover additional skills, such as providing rescue ventilations or using an AED, which further enhances survival chances. These courses are often offered by local fire departments, government agencies, schools, or healthcare organizations.

Paid CPR courses generally provide more comprehensive instruction, including the integration of compressions with rescue ventilations, child and infant CPR, the use of barrier devices, AED operation, choking response, and naloxone administration for opioid overdoses. These courses typically include certification, which may be required by employers, educational institutions, or other organizations. Certification also ensures that participants are trained in the latest techniques, as guidelines are regularly updated based on international research. Certifications are valid for two years, serving as a reminder to refresh skills to remain current with best practices.

In summary, both free and paid CPR courses teach essential, lifesaving skills. Paid courses may include training involving skills that can further improve survival outcomes, but both forms of CPR education are valuable and can potentially increase the likelihood of saving a life.



Written by, Meg Jones
CPR Instructor and owner of Safety Team Solutions.
Meg has 16 years of experience teaching American Heart Association CPR and believes everyone deserves to know CPR skills, so they know how to help others in the case of an emergency.

Contact Meg at Safety Team Solutions, to schedule CPR training today!

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References

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