

The 8-period hybrid schedule used by our high schools is a combination of alternating day (A / B) courses and semester (4 x 4) courses.

- During the 2009-10 school year, 52% of Virginia's high schools reported using an 8-period schedule.
- Thirty-seven percent of all high schools in Virginia reported using a 4x4 or semester schedule, while 15.6% of all Virginia High Schools reported using an alternating day (A / B) schedule.

Data source: Educational Directory Virginia Public Schools

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/directories/index.shtml>

NOTE: Data provided includes traditional high school programs **only** (grades 8-12, 9-12, or 10-12). Alternative schools, career and technical schools, etc. were not included in the total.

- The primary advantage for an 8-period schedule, whether 4x4 or alternating day, is greater student opportunities and choices for courses during their high school experience.

The following course format descriptions and schedule features are provided to help distinguish between the 8-Period Alternating Day A/B Format and the Semester Format (4.x4).

Course Format Descriptions

8-Period Alternating (A/B) Format: Students can take eight (8) courses, and teachers teach six (6) courses for the duration of the year. Courses alternate so that one set of four (4) courses meets one day and the other the next day.

	A Day	B Day
Period 1	Course 1	Course 2
Period 2	Course 3	Course 4
Period 3	Course 5	Course 6
Period 4	Course 7	Course 8

Semester (4x4) Format: Students can take four (4) courses, and teachers teach three (3) courses for the duration of each semester for a total of eight (8) for students and six (6) for teachers. One set of four (4) courses meets one semester and the other the next semester.

	Semester 1	Semester 2
Period 1	Course 1	Course 5
Period 2	Course 2	Course 6
Period 3	Course 3	Course 7
Period 4	Course 4	Course 8

Comparison Based on Common Features:

The following table provides a basic comparison of the two types of course format.

Feature	Alternating Day (A/B) Format	Semester (4x4) Format
Period Length	88 to 90 minutes (this may be affected by an addition of an intervention period)	88 to 90 minutes (this may be affected by an addition of an intervention period)

Choices Available to Students for Courses	Eight (8)	Eight (8)
Student Load	Four (4) courses per day / Eight (8) courses per year	Four (4) courses per day / Four (4) courses per semester
Teacher Load	Three (3) courses per day / One (1) planning period per day / Six (6) courses per year	Three (3) courses per day / One (1) planning period per day / Three (3) courses per semester
Course Meeting Schedule	Two sets of four (4) courses meet <u>on alternating days</u> for the duration of the year.	One set of four (4) courses meets <u>daily</u> for the fall semester. Another set of four (4) meets daily for the spring.
Duration of Courses	One school year	One semester (1/2 the school year)