Decision Making Tree for Physics & Astronomy Courses

Possible science major? → Maybe not

Yes/Maybe

(Courses are split into 5 weeks)

Yes

Phys 131
Newtonian Mechanics (Fall, Winter, Spring)

Phys 132
Gravity and the Earth (Spring)

Phys 141
Gravity and the Cosmos (Winter)

Phys 142
Matter and Interactions (Fall)

No

Phys 151
Relativity and Particles (Fall, Winter)

Phys 161
E&M and Circuits (Winter)

Phys 152
Environmental Physics (Spring)

Phys 153
Fluids and Waves (Spring)

1st 5 weeks

(While at Carleton, you may take only one of 131/132/141/142 for credit.)

Strong HS math/physics background?

No

Phys 131
Newtonian Mechanics (Fall, Winter, Spring)

Phys 132
Gravity and the Earth (Spring)

Phys 141
Gravity and the Cosmos (Winter)

Phys 142
Matter and Interactions (Fall)

Yes

Phys 161
E&M and Circuits (Winter)

Phys 152
Environmental Physics (Spring)

Phys 153
Fluids and Waves (Spring)

2nd 5 weeks

(While at Carleton, you may choose to take several of these courses for credit.)

Thinking of a physics major?

Yes/ Maybe

Chemistry

Phys 151
Relativity and Particles (Fall, Winter)

Phys 161
E&M and Circuits (Winter)

Phys 152
Environmental Physics (Spring)

Phys 153
Fluids and Waves (Spring)

No/ Maybe not

Pre-med

Geology/ ENTS

Still thinking about a physics major?

Still thinking about being pre-med?

If you are a first-year student, the next course in the sequence for the physics major is Phys 228 in the fall of sophomore year. Talk to a physics faculty member for more information.

You need an additional 10 weeks of physics. Suggested courses:
Phys 162 Light and Optics (1st 5 weeks)
Physics 161 E&M and Circuits (2nd 5 weeks) (Only offered winter term.)

Change your mind, and want to major in physics?

You will need to take Phys 151. You can still be a physics major even if you don’t take Phys 151 until your sophomore year. Talk to a physics faculty member for more information.