**Setting up Gradebook**

To set up your gradebook, click on "Grades" in the left navigation menu, and select "Gradebook Setup" from the dropdown menu of gradebook views.

You can also get to Gradebook Setup by clicking the gear icon to the right of the course title, selecting "More", and then choosing Gradebook Setup from the Course Administration menu.

**Create and Arrange Grade Items and Categories**

When you add activities such as Assignments or Quizzes to a Moodle course, corresponding grade items (columns) are added to the course gradebook. Moodle also lets you manually add grade items to your gradebook to record grades you may not have collected in Moodle, such as the grades for a midterm or for a project that was submitted offline. It allows you to define categories, for assignments that are similar in nature such as quizzes or homeworks.

It's fine to build your gradebook as you go, but you should set up categories for items that will be treated similarly, such as homeworks and quizzes, as early as possible, so that you can easily make certain that they contribute to the final grade in the way that you want. For example, say a professor is going to base their final grade on these types of work:

Pre-class quizzes: 15%

Homeworks: 15%

Midterm: 20%

Research paper: 30%

Final exam: 20%

This professor will want to define a category for pre-class quizzes and a category for homework, while the midterm, research paper, and final exam are single items.

You may already list what each type of work will contribute to the final grade, in your syllabus, and you can use this as a guide when setting up grade categories. **​**

**Gradebook weights & aggregation**

Moodle gradebooks start out by summing the number of points earned for each assignment or graded item.  At its most basic, a simple sum of those points divided by the total number of possible points equates to the final grade.

Instructors who calculate grades with this simple summing often allot more potential points for items that are meant to count more towards the final grade (e.g. a final exam vs. a pop quiz) as a way to weight them, but it can become complicated.  Moodle can make this easier by doing all the calculating for you.

With the “Natural” aggregation method, an instructor can average grades and define what percentage a category or item should contribute to the total grade, rather than giving out varying number of points per item.  This can be done for a category of items (if items are grouped into categories) or across an entire gradebook. Gradebook will add up points until you check the box next to a weight and set it to the correct percentage of the total grade. An item can also be flagged as extra credit, after you have created the item.

There is a "weights" column in the gradebook setup view that shows the current weights: just check the box next to a weight to adjust it.  You will want to create categories as needed and then go back and make sure the weights match the breakdown of a total grade that you want to use in your course.

(If you have previously used one of the "mean of grades" or "weighted mean" types of aggregation, or "sum of grades," "Natural" brings all of these into one method that is easier to use.)

**Add a Category**

Grade categories are for grouping similar assignments together, for giving credit as a percentage of a total grade, and for dropping lowest grades if desired.

In the gradebook setup page, scroll to the bottom of the page and click Add category. The New category page will open.  
Enter a Category name and select category options. (Click headings to open collapsed settings areas, and click Show more... to view and adjust additional settings under a heading.)  
**Aggregation:** You can choose Natural or Highest, and Natural is the right choice in most cases.  
**Exclude empty grades:** (Selected by default) If checked, empty grades are not aggregated into grade calculations (i.e., Moodle assumes that the assignment has not yet been graded or assigned and therefore should not yet count against students). If unchecked, empty grades are calculated as "0" which may alarm your students early in the semester.  
**Drop the lowest**: Exclude one or more grade items with the lowest value from being calculated in the category total.

Scroll to the bottom of the page and click Save changes.  The Categories and items page will open, displaying the new category.

**Add a grade item manually**

In the Gradebook Setup page, scroll to the bottom of the page and click Add grade item. The New grade item page will open.  
In the Item name field, enter a name for the item, without special characters, commas, ampersands, or quotes.  
In the Grade type field, you will want to use Value in almost all cases.

In the Maximum grade field, set the maximum point value for the grade item.  
(Optional) If you are using gradebook categories, you can select the category from the Parent Category dropdown menu.

When finished, click Save changes.

Is this item extra credit? You can't specify this until after the grade item is created. Once you've hit Save changes, you can find the grade item in the Gradebook Setup view and Edit it to check the Extra Credit box.

When creating a number of items that will be in a category that will contribute a certain amount to a grade, you will then have to go back and adjust weights if need be, because natural weighting starts off by weighting based on the max points possible for each grade item.

**Move Grade Items & Categories**

Make sure you are in the gradebook setup page.

At the left of the Grade item or Category you want to move, click Move. The word (Move) will appear next to the item to be moved, and dashed rectangles will appear in the possible locations where the item can be moved.  
Click any of the dashed rectangles to move the item to that location. The page will refresh showing the item in the new location.

You can cancel your action at any time by clicking Cancel at the bottom of the page.  
If you move a category that contains items and/or sub-categories, all of its contents will also be moved to the new location.

**Getting Around in Gradebook**

At the top of gradebook pages is a list of views or reports. Here are the ones you might need most often:

* Grader report: default view for instructors. Click “Turn editing on” to start entering grades. This is used for grading, not for setting up categories and weights.
* User report: default view for a student to see their own grades, but an instructor can load one for any user.
* Single view: information about either a single user, or about grades on a single item.
* Gradebook Setup: for setting up things like categories, weighting, etc.
* Course Grade Settings:  where an instructor can modify how the course total and different gradebook reports display.

There are many other options in this list of choices. For more information about different choices, open an option and then click on the Moodle Docs link at the bottom of the page.

It's fine to build your gradebook as you go, but you should set up categories for items that will be treated similarly, such as homeworks and quizzes, as early as possible, so that you can easily make certain that they contribute to the final grade in the way that you want. [See more about setting up a gradebook](https://guides.mtholyoke.edu/c.php?g=636625&p=5572259).

**Moodle Gradebook Terminology**

**Aggregation:** How grades are calculated. you can choose Natural or Highest, and Natural is the right choice in most cases.

**Natural weighting**: the default way to aggregate grades. It sums up points (and will show you weights that tell you what percentage of the course total those points represent), unless you customize the weights.   
**Exclude empty grades:** (Selected by default) If checked, empty grades are excluded from calculations and don't count against students. If this is unchecked, empty grades are calculated as "0" and your students may be alarmed by low course totals early in the semester.  
**Drop the lowest**: Exclude one or more grade items with the lowest value from being calculated in the category total. NOTE: you can drop lowest grade(s) ONLY if all of the items in the Grade Category have the same maximum points.

**Value (grade type) :**the grade type for a numeric grade.

**Text (grade type) :**the grade type for textual feedback.

**Scale (grade type):**the grade type for descriptive scaling like good-fair-poor or whatever scale you define.

**None (grade type) :**an assignment that cannot have a grade assigned.

## Gradebook vs spreadsheets

You have grades to manage. Two popular options are the Moodle gradebook or a spreadsheet. Which one is better for your course? Keep in mind that Moodle cannot automatically submit your grades to my.mtholyoke.

If you would like to do some combination of these things...

* Have students complete and submit to Moodle work that is easy for a machine to grade (e.g., quiz tool assignments using multiple choice, True/False questions, or matching questions).
* Grade using mostly points and percentages, particularly if you only assign a letter grade for your final grade, or at midterm and final
* Have students submit work via the assignment tool, with automated creation in a gradebook for those items
* Set up Moodle to award participation credit for forum posts
* Use rubrics within Moodle to make manual grading easier
* Grade large classes with relatively few items to be graded, most of which can easily be graded by a machine.
* Keep using the Moodle gradebook when you've been generally happy with it

consider using the Moodle gradebook for at least some of your grading.

If you would like to...

* Grade many brief assignments: spreadsheets are easier to sort and scroll through than a Moodle gradebook, and can be resized more easily to deal with large numbers of assignments and individual assignment grades
* Use letter grades for all assignments: Moodle can handle letter grades, but they must correspond to points and will require more setup than a mostly or completely point-based gradebook
* Continue using a spreadsheet that is already working for you
* Adjust your overall scheme for awarding a final grade during the semester, or leave much about grading undefined until you've gotten the feel of the course

consider using a spreadsheet.

If your current method of grading is working well for you, consider sticking with it! If you'd like to start doing some of the things that the gradebook is good at, but still do the final calculations in a spreadsheet, you can do so! You can grade some things in the Moodle gradebook but not share them with students, and then do final calculations in a spreadsheet. See the other articles in our [Grading](http://guides.mtholyoke.edu/c.php?g=636625&p=4782715) section for more help. There are many ways to grade, email [the Moodle Help Team](mailto:moodlehelp-g@mtholyoke.edu?subject=Making%20A%20Grading%20Plan) for help making a plan that's right for you

**Importing grades from CSV File (Excel Spreadsheet)**

1. Create new grade items and categories for the grade information you will be importing, within Moodle, before adding grades. See [Setting up a gradebook](http://guides.mtholyoke.edu/c.php?g=636625&p=5572259) for more information on doing that.
2. Follow the instructions in [Downloading rosters or grades (exporting in Excel or other formats)](http://guides.mtholyoke.edu/c.php?g=636625&p=4782745) to get a file with your current gradebook setup and spaces to add grades.
3. Open the file you have exported, and add grade information to the appropriate categories. Do not add columns or change headings in Excel, as these will not be understood by Moodle.
4. Use the Save As menu in Excel to save your grade sheet as a .csv file. Excel may warn you that formatting will be lost by saving as .csv, but save in this format anyway.
5. Go back to your course, go to the Grades menu, and look for Import > CSV File
6. Browse to the grade .csv file on your computer, and click Upload grades to complete the upload.

For more information, see the Moodle help file on [Grade Import](https://docs.moodle.org/36/en/Grade_import).

**Downloading rosters or grades (exporting in Excel or other formats)**

1. In your Moodle course, find the Navigation menu on the left, and click on Grades.
2. There will be a dropdown menu at the top of the page where you can select all sorts of reports, and in the export section, one of the choices is an export to Excel. Select this option or whatever kind of export you would prefer, and you will get a screen where you can select which items you want to appear in your spreadsheet.
3. If the course uses groups, select whether to export grades for all participants or for a particular group.
4. Once you have made your selections, Click the "Export" button at the bottom of the page to download the spreadsheet.

By default, this spreadsheet export will contain all grades that have been collected at the time of download. You can review and prepare this export for submission to the Registrar at the end of the semester when it is time to submit grades. Please consult with the Registrar's office regarding the formatting they require.   
  
If you would like a roster without grade information, uncheck all grades before pressing "Export."

**Hiding the course total and other grade items**

Note: we strongly recommend you begin the semester with the Course total hidden from students, to prevent worry over a low-seeming grade that results from very little coursework having been completed early in the semester. Remember, this hides ALL of the grades, not just a single item, and will have to be undone before you can hide some grade items but reveal others.

To hide any single grade item, including Course total:

1. Go to your course site and, in the Administration menu on the left, select Grades.
2. In in the grade report page that appears, use the drop-down menu to select Gradebook Setup.
3. Find the line for the grade item you would like to hide, and click the Edit button for that line.
4. A pop-up menu should provide the option to Hide the grade: click Hide.
5. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click on Save Changes.

The line for the grade item you edited should now be grayed out, which is your indicator that it has been hidden and that students will not be able to see it. You can check this by switching to the User view in the drop-down menu in the top of the gradebook, and then in the menus on the right choose a student's report to view and choose to view as "User" instead of the default "Myself," and the hidden item or items should not show. Go back to viewing as "User" to get out of this mode and see the items yourself (but grayed out) again.

## Using Moodle rubrics to grade assignments

Moodle gives you the ability to build rubrics, in the Assignment tool, that instructors can use to provide standardized grading. These may be useful to provide consistency in your own grading, to communicate your expectations to your students, or to provide consistency in grading among multiple graders.   
  
When setting up a new Assignment or editing Assignment Settings, under Grading, choose "Rubric" as your grading method.

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When setting up a new Assignment or editing Assignment Settings, under Grading, choose "Rubric" as your grading method.

When writing a new grading form, first give it a title that will indicate to you, later, which assignment or sort of assignment it is for. (Consider whether you may want to reuse the same grading form for multiple similar assignments.)

In the table below the title and description, you will see places to click and edit Criteria and places to edit Levels. You may want to define all the criteria on which you'd like to grade the assignment first, and then go back and specify what qualities of the work will merit each level of points

Don't forget to click "Save rubric and make it ready" when you're finished setting up. You can also save it as a draft, but you will have to make it ready to grade, later, before you can grade with it.