

When most people think of a pharmacy they often envision a person in a white lab coat weighing out different medicines. As a tool of the trade, scales have always been closely associated with pharmacies. For example, in *It's A Wonderful Life*, Mr. Gower's pharmacy has a scale, as do most movie depictions of pharmacies.

While many movie depictions of doctors and other professionals are fanciful or exaggerated, in this case they are accurate. For [prescription weighing](#) in the United States all pharmacies are required by law to have a Class A prescription balance.

To many people the word balance brings to the mind the balance used in their high school chemistry classes – a long bar with a pan on one end and sliding weights on the bar, or, perhaps, a long bar with a pan on each end and a set of weights. While the basic idea is the same, a Class A prescription balance is a much more precise and accurate tool.

The Class A Prescription balance consists of two pans and uses both internal and external weights. The internal weights are for those items weighing less than 1 gram while the external weights are for items heavier than 1 gram. They are required to have a sensitivity of 6 milligrams, or 0.1 gram. In other words it will accurately measure changes in weight as small as 0.1 gram.

These are minimum requirements for such a scale, one that our DRX-3 mechanical balance not only fully meets but exceeds by providing such features as magnetic dampening to allow for quicker weighing, a sealed case that provides protection against dust and chemicals as well as having a Plexiglas lid tall enough to weigh while being closed, and torsion beams made of an alloy that allows accurate weighing across a variety of different temperatures and resists corrosion.

Of course today's modern digital scales provide even more precise measurements than the Class A balance and can be paired with pill counting and compounding equipment to provide accurate and cross contaminant free weighing. [Contact us](#) for more information on the variety of Torbal scales and systems available and how they can fit your needs.

## Balances and Prescription Weighing

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