

What You Need To Know About The ACT & SAT

ACT

Register at: <http://actstudent.org/>

The test starts at 8:00am and should be done by 12:15pm (or 1:15 if doing the optional writing section)

No electronic devices allowed in test room (includes fitness band; smartwatch; music player)

One break of 10 minutes after Math section

Photo ID that matches photo on admission ticket required

MATH

60 multiple choice questions in 60 minutes. Note that on this section you will have five choices per question, not four.

Knowledge of basic formulae is assumed

Number systems, algebra, functions, geometry, statistics & probability and modeling skills are all tested in this section

ENGLISH

75 multiple choice questions based on five passages in 45 minutes

Passages are all text—no graphs or charts

Sentence structure, punctuation, usage, organization and general rhetorical skills are tested in this section

READING

40 multiple choice questions based on four passages in 35 minutes

Passages come from prose fiction, social science, humanities and natural science

Ability to find supporting evidence within the text is the focus of this section

SCIENCE

40 multiple choice questions based on seven passages in 35 minutes

Questions are arranged in ascending order of difficulty

Passages will refer to specific experiments in chemistry, biology, physics and Earth science

SAT

Register at: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat>

The test starts between 8:30 and 9:00am and should be done by 12:15pm (or 1:00 if doing the optional writing section)

No electronic devices allowed in test room (includes fitness band; smartwatch; music player)

One break of 10 minutes after Writing and Language section

Valid School ID and recent photo required

MATH

20 No Calculator questions in 25 minutes, followed by 38 questions on which you can use a calculator in 55 minutes

5 no calculator and 8 calculator questions are “Grid-In” which are NOT multiple choice

Linear equations and systems, quantitative literacy and manipulation of complex equations are tested in this section

READING

52 multiple choice questions based on lengthy reading passages in 65 minutes

Passages from a work of literature, social science, science, and a U.S. founding document or “the great global conversation”

Understanding words in context and analysis of ideas are tested in this section

WRITING & LANGUAGE

44 multiple choice questions based on lengthy reading passage that are similar to the reading section in 25 minutes

Standard English conventions and expression of ideas are tested in this section.

Think of yourself as an editor tasked with improving someone else’s writing

No explicit science section

The Reading section incorporates tables, graphs and charts, but no specific scientific knowledge is required

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ACT

Test Information Release (TIR) available for December, April and June test dates. This will give you the chance to see your actual test with correct answers and is a vital tool to effectively prepare for your next test.

4 free score reports. Other score reports are \$12 each
Scores are available 2-8 weeks after the test date

ESSAY

Optional
40 minutes

The essay asks you to develop a perspective on an issue and analyze the relationship between your perspective and one or more alternatives

Essay section scores range between 0-12

SCORING

Students only receive points for correct answers, so there is no "guessing penalty"

Each section receives a score between 1-36. The four scores are averaged to produce a composite score which is rounded up if necessary.

SUPERSCORE?

"Superscore" refers to when admissions offices will take the best scores on different sections across multiple test dates to give the student their highest possible score.
This rarely happens with the ACT, but colleges and universities will notice if you improve from test to test.

COST

\$42.50 without writing; \$58.50 with writing
TIR costs \$20
Fee Waivers available based on economic need—must apply through high school counselor

SAT

Question and Answer Service (QAS) available for October, March and May test dates. This will give you the chance to see your actual test with correct answers and is a vital tool to effectively prepare for your next test.

4 free score reports (8 if fee waiver). Other score reports are \$12 each

Scores are available 4-5 weeks after the test date

ESSAY

Optional
50 minutes

The essay asks you to read a lengthy passage and use evidence from the passage to explain how the author built an argument to persuade an audience. You do not need to make your own persuasive argument.

Essay section scores range between 6-24

SCORING

Students only receive points for correct answers, so there is no "guessing penalty"

Each section receives a score between 10-40. Evidence-Based Reading & Writing section scores are added and multiplied by 10; Math section score is multiplied by 20; both sections added for total score between 400-1600.

SUPERSCORE?

"Superscore" refers to when admissions offices will take the best scores on different sections across multiple test dates to give the student their highest possible score.
Most colleges and universities will superscore your SAT so it is to your benefit to improve from test to test.

COST

\$45 without writing; \$57 with writing
QAS costs \$18
Fee Waivers available based on economic need. Students apply directly to College Board.
Fee waiver also gives four free college application fee waivers, which could save a lot of money.