

What is the ACT Assessment?

The ACT Assessment or “ACT test” as it’s commonly called, is a standardized exam taken by millions of high school students each year. It measures knowledge and skills in English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The ACT Assessment also collects a variety of other information including educational background, plans, and needs.

What can you learn from taking the ACT Assessment?

- A measure of your educational development (abilities)
- Identification of academic strengths and weaknesses
- Information about potential college choices
- Suggestions for exploring career options and determining how your interests relate to work tasks and careers
- General information about financial aid

How colleges use the ACT Assessment?

Many colleges use results from the ACT Assessment, along with high school grades, class rank, and extracurricular accomplishments in making decisions about admission. The colleges may also use what they learn about you from the ACT for course placement, academic advising, and career counseling.

How can you prepare for the ACT?

You have been preparing for the ACT since you started school. The ACT Assessment is designed to measure general academic development. Your best preparation is a solid high school curriculum. Make sure that you are familiar with the test content and format and are aware of basic test taking strategies. Also, you may use the ACT practice booklets available in the Counseling office.

When Should You Take The ACT?

Most students take the ACT in the spring of junior year or in the fall of senior year. A good case can be made for taking it at the earlier date. For one thing, you'll have a better idea of where you stand. If your score

satisfies you, you can spend the summer visiting the colleges in which you're interested, or getting started on your applications. If your score is lower than you want, you can use the summer to prepare to take the test again in the fall. When you decide which colleges or universities you are going to apply to, find out if they required the ACT. Then you need to know when they need your ACT scores. It normally takes four weeks after your test date for your scores to be reported, so be sure to allow enough time. The ACT is offered nationally several times a year, between September and June. However, it's not offered at every test center on each test date. The Saturday dates are more frequent and are held at more test centers. The first thing you should find out is where and when the ACT is being offered in your area. Your high school Counseling counselor should be able to give you this information. It's also printed in the booklet *Registering for the ACT Assessment*, which is available in the Counseling Office.

Top Ten Test-Taking Tips

1. Get plenty of sleep the night before the test.
2. If you feel nervous before beginning, try to relax by taking a few deep breaths.
3. Maintain confidence in your abilities and plan to do your best. Your attitude can affect your performance.
4. Listen carefully to all instructions and ask questions if you hear something you don't understand.
5. Focus your attention entirely on your work.
6. Position your answer sheet next to your test booklet so you can mark answers quickly and accurately.
7. Before answering each question, read it completely, as well as all the possible responses.
8. When you are unaware of an answer, choose the one you think is best and go on to the next question. Be sure to answer every question.
9. Pace yourself throughout the test by occasionally checking the time.
10. If you complete the test before your time is up, re-read the questions and check your answers.