



ACT vs. SAT:

WHICH TEST SHOULD YOU TAKE?

Instead of spending several hours randomly studying for either the ACT or the SAT and hoping for the best, try a more calculated way to maximize your scores and possible scholarship earnings.

ACT TEST DATES:

act.org

- April 2, 2022
- June 11, 2022
- July 16, 2022
- September 10, 2022
- October 22, 2022
- December 10, 2022
- February 11, 2023
- April 1, 2023
- June 10, 2023
- July 15, 2023

SAT TEST DATES:

collegeboard.org

- March 12, 2022
- May 7, 2022
- June 4, 2022
- August 27, 2022*
- October 1, 2022*
- November 5, 2022*
- December 3, 2022*
- March 11, 2023*
- May 6, 2023*
- June 3, 2023*

* Anticipated test dates



We've highlighted the key differences between the ACT and SAT below:

	STRUCTURE	MATH	CONTENT VOCAB/READING	SCIENCE
ACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple choice The difficulty level remains the same throughout the entire test 	Math (Geometry and some basic Trigonometry)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English and Reading Emphasis on language skills 	Science (Physical Science, Chemistry, Biology, Earth Science, and Physics)
SAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple choice and some written answers Difficulty level gradually increases throughout the test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math (Algebra, Statistics, Geometry, Trigonometry) Focuses on problem solving & data analysis, the heart of Algebra, and passport to advanced math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence-based reading and writing Emphasis on vocabulary based on an extended context 	No science

BONUS Way to Boost Your Score

Certain colleges offer Residual ACT testing on their campus that is in addition to the National test dates that offers an opportunity to increase your score for admissions and more importantly, for college merit scholarships!

The Residual and National ACT tests on the same subjects, so if you've already studied for the ACT, you have nothing to worry about. The material is exactly the same, and Residual ACTs are not harder or easier. It allows a student to take an officially scored ACT—however, the score is only valid for admission to the testing university.

An on-campus or "Residual" testing program is available at participating colleges (ones we know offer it: Troy University, AUM, JSU, Auburn University, University of Alabama, and Faulkner University).

+1pt = \$20,000

When the difference of one point on your ACT can equate to \$20,000 in additional freshmen scholarship awards, having the opportunity to take it at least "one more time" is invaluable!

Here's the fine print:

- ACT residual testing is strictly limited to students who have enrolled, have been admitted, or have officially applied to a participating institution.
- The residual testing year runs November 1 through September 30.
- Residual testing may be conducted on any dates EXCEPT the seven regularly scheduled National ACT Test Dates.
- A minimum of 60 days must elapse before another residual ACT may be taken. Scores achieved before the minimum elapsed time will be cancelled without refund.
- ACT restricts the number of times a student may take the ACT (this does not include the National test) to 12 times total. Residual testing does count toward that maximum. Scores that exceed the maximum will be cancelled without refund.
- NCAA prohibits athletes from using the residual ACT for admission and scholarship.
- Alabama community colleges have agreed to accept the residual score from other Alabama community colleges.



Contact the College Admissions office of schools that you are interested in attending to see if they offer the residual ACT. Practice and get prepared; this is an important way to earn tax-free scholarship money towards your education. ✎

LENGTH & TIME

215 questions,
2 hrs. 55 mins.

WRITING & ESSAY

Optional. 30 mins.
Emphasis on punctuation and rhetorical strategies. Students will be prompted to take a stand on a potentially controversial topic.

GUESSING

There is no penalty for guessing. Students are encouraged to mark an answer for every question.

DESIGNED TO

Test achievement and measure student knowledge

SCORING

Each section is scored out of 36 points.

154 questions,
3 hrs.

Optional 50 mins.
Scored separately on a 2-8 scale.

There is no penalty for wrong answers.

Tip: Pick one letter for guessing and stick with it.

Test aptitude and reasoning skills to predict college learning capability

Each section is scored on a 200-800 point range and is weighted.
Total score
400-1600



READING & ENGLISH TIPS

Use these time-tested tips to help bump up your scores on these sections of the ACT.

READING

The reading section is designed to test reading comprehension skills and show your understanding of statements with direct and implied meanings.

DURATION:

40 questions, 35 minutes

STRATEGY #1:

Find the answers to the questions that are paragraph or line-specific first.

STRATEGY #2:

Quickly skim through the entire passage. Use the margins of the booklet to take notes as you read along. Jot down words that will help you remember the story or what you think may be important.

STRATEGY #3:

The prose passages in the reading section cover topics in social studies, natural sciences, short stories, and humanities. Convince yourself that you're interested in the passages to help you retain the material. This will also add to your understanding of it.

STRATEGY #4:

Cover the answers and answer the question before looking at the choices.

STRATEGY #5:

Pay close attention to what each question is asking. Be careful not to fall for a common ACT trap of choosing a “factually true” statement—one that is a true statement but doesn't actually answer the question asked.

ENGLISH

The English section tests grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure as well as rhetorical skills as they relate to organization and style.

DURATION:

75 questions, 45 minutes

STRATEGY #1:

Skim through the questions before reading the passage.

STRATEGY #2:

Think simple. Well-written passages typically use concise words to convey ideas.

STRATEGY #3:

Mark all the grammar questions and answer them as you read the passage.

STRATEGY #4:

Immerse yourself in the topic as you read along. Ask yourself questions; it'll help you remember the material better.

STRATEGY #5:

Keep your first answer unless you know it's wrong. There are several answer choices that seem right, but be sure to pick the ones that actually answer the question.

A FEW TIPS:

Write in your test booklet to help analyze passages.

Remember: There's no penalty for guessing.

