

Summary information for the PSAT, SAT, ACT & AP Program

Information about the PSAT

You can take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT test) in the 10 and 11th grade. The scores you get on this test won't count toward college admissions but they can give you an idea of how well you'll do on the SAT, and that test will be an important part of your college application and help determine if you're accepted into your top colleges and universities.

The PSAT tests critical reading skills, math skills and writing skills and provides you with practice for the SAT, letting you know how well you would do on your SAT test when you take it. You have developed these skills over many years, both in and out of school. This test doesn't require you to recall specific facts from your classes. If you're in the 11th grade and an American citizen, taking the PSAT also makes you eligible to compete for scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC).

Information about the SAT

The SAT Reasoning Test is the nation's most widely used admissions test among colleges and universities. High school juniors and seniors typically take the SAT. It tells students how well they use the skills and knowledge they have attained in and outside of the classroom - including how they think, solve problems, and communicate. It is an aptitude test while the ACT is an achievement test.

Each section of the SAT is scored on a scale of 200-800, with two writing sub scores for multiple-choice questions and the essay. It is administered seven times a year in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and U.S. Territories, and six times a year overseas.

Information about the ACT

Like the SAT, the ACT is a nationally administered, standardized paper-and-pencil test that helps colleges evaluate candidates. Colleges now accept your ACT or SAT scores interchangeably. This means that you have the opportunity to decide on which test you'll perform better. And in many cases, students prepare for and take both exams.

Generally, you'll take the ACT for the first time in the spring of your junior year. This allows you to reserve the summer months for college applications or enough time to re-take the test during the fall of your senior year if you're not satisfied with your score.

Information about the AP (Advanced Placement) Program

The Advanced Placement Program is a cooperative educational endeavor between secondary schools and colleges and universities. Since its inception in 1955, the Program has provided motivated high school students with the opportunity to take college-level courses in a high school setting. Students who participate in the Program not only gain college-level skills, but in many cases they also earn college credit while they are still in high school. Dedicated and enthusiastic high school teachers who follow course guidelines developed and published by the College Board teach AP courses.

The Program's success is rooted in the collaborative efforts of motivated students, dedicated teachers, and committed schools. By participating in the Program, secondary schools make

the commitment to organize and support at least one class that is equivalent to a first-year college course.

The AP Program offers 35 courses in 20 subject areas.

- Nearly 60 percent of U.S. high schools participate in the AP Program.
- In 2005, 2.1 million AP Exams were administered worldwide.
- More than 60,000 teachers worldwide attended AP workshops and institutes for professional development last year.
- Over 90 percent of the nation's colleges and universities have an AP policy granting incoming students credit, placement, or both, for qualifying AP Exam grades.

ACT vs SAT: Key differences between the ACT and SAT

ACT vs SAT: which test is a better fit for your student? Students may take whichever test they prefer (assuming there are available testing locations for both tests). If you're not sure which test your child would prefer, consider the key differences between the ACT and SAT. Some students find that the ACT caters to their strengths more so than the SAT, and vice versa.

Need a quick side-by-side comparison of the tests? Check out our ACT vs SAT Comparison Chart. Please note that the information below refers to the current version of the SAT which will be administered through January of 2016. For a comparison of the ACT to the new version of the SAT that will be offered in March 2016, review [this](#) infographic.

SAT	vs.	ACT
reasoning test	Type of Test	content-based test
Critical Reading: 2, 25-min sections and 1, 20-min section; Math: 2, 25-min sections and 1, 20-min section; Writing: 1, 25-min essay, 1, 25-min section, and 1, 10-min section	Test Format	English: 1, 45-min section; Math: 1, 60-min section; Reading: 1, 35-min section; Science: 1, 35-min section; Writing: 1, 40-min essay (optional)
reading, vocabulary, grammar & usage, writing, and math	Content Covered	grammar & usage, math, reading, science reasoning, and writing (optional)
tricky, questions can be phrased in ways that make them difficult to decipher	Test Style	straightforward, questions may be long but are usually less difficult to decipher
Math, Critical Reading, and Writing scores will each range between a 200-800; total SAT score ranges between 600-2400	Scoring	English, Math, Reading, and Science scores will each range between 1-36. Composite ACT score is the average of your scores on the four sections; ranges between 1-36
yes – you lose ¼ of a point for incorrect answers (except on the grid-in math questions)	Penalty for Wrong Answers?	no – you do not lose points for incorrect answers
yes – you can choose which set(s) of SAT scores to submit to colleges	Score Choice?	yes – you can choose which set(s) of ACT scores to submit to colleges
questions increase in difficulty level as you move through that question type in a section (except reading passage questions, which progress chronologically through the passage)	Difficulty Levels	difficulty level of the questions is random
arithmetic, data analysis, algebra I and II, functions, geometry; formulas are provided in the test booklet	Math Levels	arithmetic, algebra I and II, functions, geometry, trigonometry; no formulas are provided
with private schools and schools on the east and west coasts; however, every four-year college in the US accepts SAT scores	Tends to be more popular?	with public schools and schools in the Midwest and south; however, every four-year college in the US accepts ACT scores
seven times per year: January, March or April, May, June, October, November, December	Offered when?	six times per year: February, April, June, September, October, December (note that some states offer the ACT as part of their state testing requirements; these tests are not administered on the national test dates)
typically about four weeks before the test date	Registration deadline?	typically about five to six weeks before the test date
www.collegeboard.com	More Information	www.act.org

*** The above is from the following website: <http://www.studypoint.com/ed/act-vs-sat/>