

## SAT vs. ACT

What is the difference between the SAT and ACT? They're both standardized tests and they both factor into the college admissions process. And guess what—that's where the similarities end. To help you decide which test is right for you, take a side-by-side glance at these important exams.

	SAT	ACT
Preferred by?	<b>Currently, both are widely accepted.</b> Historically, private colleges and colleges on the east and west coasts.	<b>Currently, both are widely accepted.</b> Historically, public colleges and the colleges in the middle of the country.
When is it administered?	<b>Seven</b> times per year	<b>Six</b> times per year
What is the structure?	<b>10 sections:</b> 3 critical reading, 3 math, 3 writing incl. the essay, 1 experimental (un-scored)	<b>4 sections:</b> English, math, reading, science: <b>5</b> with optional writing
What is the test content?	<b>Math:</b> up to 9th grade basic geometry No science section. <b>Reading:</b> one or two passages/section, with roughly one minute to answer each question. <b>Stresses vocabulary</b> A test of strategy and "testmanship".	<b>Math:</b> up to trigonometry <b>Science</b> section included <b>Reading:</b> Four passages with less than one minute to answer each question. <b>Stresses grammar.</b> A test of time management and studiousness.
Length of test	3 hours, 45 minutes	3 hours, 25minutes; including optional 30 minute writing
Reading	Reading comprehension passages and questions, and sentence completion questions	4 Reading comprehension passages; 1-questions/passage
Science	Science not included	Analysis interpretation, evaluation, basic content, problem solving
Math	Math accounts for 1/3 of overall score. Covers arithmetic, algebra, geometry and algebra II	Math accounts for 1/4 of overall score. Covers arithmetic, geometry, algebra and trigonometry
Essay	First test (25 minutes). Factored into overall score: more abstract topic (vs. the ACT); pick a side and stick to it	Last test (30 minutes). Not included in composite score, topic of importance to high school students; address counterarguments
Scoring	Total score out of 2400. Three scores of 200-800 for each section; score of 0-12 for the essay	Total composite score of 1-36 (based on average of 4 tests). Four scores of 1-36 for each test; score of 0-12 for optional essay
Wrong answer penalty?	<b>1/4 point subtracted per wrong answer</b> (except for math grid-in questions)	<b>No wrong answer penalty</b>
Are all scores sent to schools?	<b>YES.</b> If a student requests a score report be sent to specific colleges, the report will include the scores the student received on every SAT taken.	<b>No.</b> There is a "Score Choice" option. Students can choose which schools will receive their scores AND which scores the schools will see.
Best time to register?	<b>At least six weeks before the test date.</b>	<b>At least Four weeks before the test date.</b>