

ACT/SAT with Brian Stewart FAQ

GENERAL QUESTIONS

How long is the SAT? How long do the parts of the SAT test take?

The new digital version can be completed in about 2.5 hours.

SAT Module	Format
<i>Reading & Writing One</i>	32 Minutes, 27 Questions, Standard Difficulty
<i>Reading & Writing Two</i>	32 Minutes, 27 Questions, Adaptive Difficulty (easier or harder questions depending on how you did on the first Reading and Writing section)
Break—10 Minutes	
<i>Math One</i>	35 Minutes, 22 Questions, Standard Difficulty
<i>Math Two</i>	35 Minutes, 22 Questions, Adaptive Difficulty (easier or harder questions depending on how you did on the first Math section)

When is the SAT/ACT going to take place?

Here are the dates for the 2023-2024 school year:

ACT	SAT
December 9, 2023 (registration deadline Nov. 3; late registration Nov. 17)	December 2, 2023 (registration deadline Nov. 2, late registration Nov. 21)
February 10, 2024 (registration deadline Jan. 5; late registration Jan. 19)	March 9, 2024 – digital test (registration deadline Feb. 23, late registration date coming soon)
April 13, 2024 (registration deadline Mar. 8; late registration Mar. 22)	May 4, 2024 – digital test (registration deadline Apr. 19, late registration date coming soon)
June 8, 2024 (registration deadline May 3; late registration May 17)	June 8, 2024 (registration deadline May 3, late registration May 17)
July 13, 2024 (registration deadline June 7; late registration June 21)	

Does it matter when I take the ACT or SAT?

It's ideal to take either or both tests anytime during your junior year. Before you choose a specific date, consider any time commitments you have, application deadlines to colleges and for scholarships, time for retakes and giving yourself adequate time to study and prepare. Doing it earlier may give you peace of mind and you'll have that information when visiting colleges.

If you take the test too early, your score may be affected because you haven't had the chance to learn more advanced concepts that could appear on the test.

The very latest you should have taken your tests is by October of your senior year if you are applying early decision. If you are applying regular decision, you could take the tests as late as December of your senior year.

Are there languages other than English on the ACT or SAT?

Unfortunately, the ACT and SAT are only given in English at this time. However, the new digital version of the SAT may offer English Language Learners accommodations, such as extra time, a bilingual dictionary, and translated test directions.

Are there any accommodations for ADHD on either of the tests?

The most common accommodation is you can get 50% extra time. If you have an IEP or 504 Plan at your school, then time can be adjusted when you take the test. You may be able to have the test read to you via recording or get larger sheets of paper if you take the paper-based version.

The new Digital SAT offers some accommodations automatically. There is a calculator built into the test, options to zoom in or out for reading and more. The process for getting test accommodations is now much faster and more streamlined, too.

Are you able to take the ACT/SAT more than once?

Yes! You can take the ACT up to 12 times and the SAT as many times as you want. Keep in mind you will have to pay the test fee each time you take the test.

Is there a waiting period before you can take the test again?

No!

Is there a set age where I can't take the ACT or SAT?

No! You can take either test at any age.

COST

How many times can you take the ACT/SAT before paying a fee?

It costs \$55 for each time you take the SAT test. The ACT costs \$60 every time you take it. However, both tests offer fee waiver programs for qualifying students. Please speak to your guidance counselor about your options.

STUDYING

How far ahead should I plan/prepare?

[According to U.S. News & World Report](#), it's a good idea to start preparing eight weeks before you take the test. Before you choose a specific date to take your test, consider any time commitments you have, application deadlines to colleges and for scholarships, time for retakes and giving yourself adequate time to study and prepare. Doing it earlier may give you peace of mind and you'll have that information when visiting colleges.

Aim to have all your testing by October of your senior year if possible.

How do I prepare? How do I know what to study?

The ACT and SAT testing practice booklets and books serve as guides on what will appear on the tests—[check some out for free at the library](#). You can also access free online test prep materials using HelpNow

from the library's [research tools collection](#). Taking the PSAT will give you an idea of what types of questions will be asked and what areas you want to improve upon.

See the questions and answers below for more study tips and ideas!

What is a good habit to get into that many students tend to struggle with?

One big thing is getting enough sleep. You can study all you want but if you go into the test exhausted, it's not going to go very well. So, one of the best habits you can do leading up to the test is to make sure you get enough rest which will help with your thinking ability, reading comprehension and problem solving.

Teenagers should get around nine hours of sleep every night. If it's possible to use the weekend or days before the test to catch up on your sleep, you'll be amazed at how much better you'll do.

Another good habit is to make sure your test practice replicates what you'll be doing on the actual test. Practice with a timer, using the same format, and not just rushing through questions. Also, don't feel you have to study everything -- a little bit can go a long way. Familiarizing yourself with the Bluebook Digital Testing App and having your math formulas memorized will make a huge difference.

What do you suggest for improving vocabulary?

Try to read for pleasure to increase your working vocabulary, looking up words you don't know. Both the ACT and SAT primarily test your ability to determine the meaning of words in context, so read the context clues carefully to determine what definitions are logical.

Can you suggest free sites, books and classes where I can practice for the test?

There's more free test prep stuff than ever available to you! Khan Academy.org and freetestprep.com both have a bunch of free resources and practice tests. The Barron's website (barronseduc.com) has a free eBook and full practice test.

Take advantage of the free resources at the library and in the School Help Centers and Teen Learning Labs at Columbus Metropolitan Libraries. You can check out regular books or digital books on your eReaders. Even just reading for fun will be helpful!

Any tips for anxiety during the test?

Absolutely! [I have a whole test anxiety guide here.](#)

COMPARING TESTS & BENEFITS

What is the difference between the SAT and ACT?

Both tests are meant to gauge college readiness. The SAT has traditionally focused more on aptitude and does not include a science section. The ACT tests students on understanding of what you learned in high school, including in the sciences.

What's more important: ACT or SAT?

One test is not more important to schools than the other. Schools that require standardized testing will accept both.

Does the test still benefit you if the school doesn't require the score?

Yes! If you do well, it can only help.

Why is taking the PSAT/PreACT necessary?

While they are not required, taking the PSAT or PreACT give you a “dress rehearsal” for test day and can give you results that guide how you study. Plus, your PSAT score could qualify you for a National Merit Scholarship. Please talk to your guidance counselor for advice and to learn more.

OPTIONAL

Do all colleges need your SAT scores?

No! Do research to find out which schools require test scores. Even if a school doesn't require scores, it can usually help to submit your scores if they are at the 25th percentile or above for the scores of admitted students. You can always call a college directly to ask what they recommend for your personal situation.

Would not submitting your score to college affect your chances of getting in?

Some colleges, like MIT, Purdue, Georgetown and the University of Florida require tests, so you should be sure to submit scores in those cases. Check on the individual college websites and call the admissions offices to see what they would recommend for your personal situation.

Why do some colleges take the SAT score but some don't?

About 97% of colleges in the U.S. will accept your scores if submitted. After the pandemic, many colleges wanted to make admissions more flexible for students and give them the option of submitting scores if they think it would help their application.

Should I do the optional essay on the SAT?

No need! The essay portion is no longer on the test!

SCORE

What's a good ACT/SAT score? What score do you have to get to get into certain colleges?

There is no passing score on these tests—it depends on individual situations. For a point of reference, the typical test scores for the main campus of Ohio State are in the range of between 1270-1430 on the SAT and between 27-32 on the ACT. Take a look on the college website to see what their average test scores are for admitted students are so you know where you stand.

What is the highest score in the ACT/SAT?

The highest score possible on the ACT is 36 (determined by averaging your score on each section: Language Arts, Math, Reading, Science). The highest score possible on the SAT is 1600 (800 for Writing and Reading, 800 for Math).

Can the SAT outweigh your transcript?

College counselors say the number one thing they look at is your high school performance, so make sure you're doing your very best work in your high school coursework. Along with your grades, the ACT/SAT tests can go a long way in predicting how you'll do in college. If someone has an amazing GPA and other parts of their application look fantastic, the test isn't quite as important. If someone has had a bad semester or year and grades aren't showing what you can do, these tests will give you an opportunity to show what you can do.

What is the percentage of people who did well on the SAT because of studying an SAT book?

While I don't have an exact percentage, doing some independent study on your own makes a huge difference. I tried to write the *Barron's Study Guides* books to make you feel as if you have a tutor by your side. You can pick out the material that's most helpful for you to review and focus on what you need. Don't feel like you must read the whole thing — you can pick out what parts are most helpful to you and focus on that.

Do I need a good SAT score for art school and why?

For art school applicants, the art portfolio typically carries more weight in the application than test scores.

If you don't do well on the ACT/SAT or you don't take them, will that affect you getting into college?

If you aren't happy with your score, you don't have to submit it. You can look at your College Board account and see if there are things you can review to fine-tune your performance. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose by taking the tests and doing your very best work on them.

Will you ever need your test score for a job?

Not that I know of.

What should I do if I got a 14 on my ACT but really struggled with the test?

You can take the ACT up to 12 times. By already taking it once, you know what types of questions are asked and the process. Think about why you feel you struggled. Did you feel unprepared? Did the timer make you feel rushed? Did you get plenty of sleep and good nutrition before you took the test? Make a plan for the next test to fine-tune the areas you need the most help with and consider any areas you may need to get accommodations for, such as more time to take the test.

MISC. QUESTIONS

What made you so interested in the SAT?

While a high school student, I performed quite well on the SAT, which helped me get into college. When I became a teacher, I thought I could be helpful to students who wanted to improve their test scores to have the best possible chance to earn college admissions and scholarships.

Why was the SAT created?

The SAT was first used in 1926 as a way for colleges to test a student's readiness for college. Believe it or not, the model for the first SAT was an IQ test for Army recruits!

Who created the ACT and SAT? How many countries do ACT and SAT? Do other countries do the tests different than the U.S.?

The ACT was developed by an education professor in 1958 as a competitor to the SAT. The ACT was designed to focus more on high school-level curriculums and standards. Both tests are offered in more than 120 countries around the world! The tests are similar around the world but may have different questions based on each country's standards.

Who had the highest SAT score?

The highest score you can get is 1600, and less than 1% of test-takers get a perfect score every year. The average score in the U.S. is 1050.

Why is the SAT more popular compared to the ACT?

The popularity of each test appears to vary by region. The ACT is more popular in the Midwest because many states have required students to take it as part of state assessments. The SAT is more popular on the East and West Coasts because it's the standard for those areas. In reality, any college that accepts or requires standardized testing will accept both the ACT and the SAT.

Is a minute per question really enough time?

Nearly all students who have taken the Digital SAT have found that they can comfortably finish the test within the time constraints. How you manage your time on the test is up to you. You can always skip questions and come back to them later if you think you'll need more time. Also, if you have an IEP or 504 Plan at your school, then time can be adjusted when you take the test. Speak to your guidance counselor about your options.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR AWESOME QUESTIONS!

Akili

Ava A.

Jalissa

Precious

Columbus Downtown

Hosaena Araia

Gia Chiem

Godwin Frimpong

Skylar Kayavong

Nia Nalley

Laiyla Pannell

Karma Wangchule

Levi Williams

Cristo Rey

Ashley Angeles

Kaden Dupler

Angel Giaden

Anisha Gurung

Salina Gurung

Cambell Harper

Cynthia Juarez-Rivas

Joselyn Marcia

Veronica Lastre Martin

Roman Maru

Angela Mensah

Trevell Milsell-Price

Jesus Mora

Donna Mukuria

Isabela Pichardo

Chris Racheco

Ronald Reynolds

Troy A. Ross

Diego Sandoval

Samuel Soiro

Sophia Suerdieck

Jeff Zeopuegar

B.N.

Essie

Ezra
Imelda A.
Javier H.
Randy S.
Samaria
Shy
Tyler S.

Fort Hayes

Cristianna Campbell
Jamyah Duke
Kaylee Khemmonivong
Soledad Reyes
Trinity Robinson
Mikala Romero
Erykah
Matilda
Nevaeh F.
Rae

Franklinton

Victoria Gutierrez
Jordan Johnson
Ezra
Quinn

South

Maysun Anderson
Jaidyn Brok
Dejanae Beason
Kate Champavannarath
Sarah Cordes
Jae'Da Harris
Ziayra Kelley
Makya Mcmutary
Amiya Price
Shelly Reynolds
Elise Robinson
Me'Liyah White
Zamariana Williams
Kyree Miller
Nickalus Sturtz
Troy