

SAT vs. ACT: DIFFERENCES AT A GLANCE

	SAT	ACT
Type of Assessment	Aptitude Test: reflects content used in all strong college preparatory courses	Achievement Test: curriculum-based tests that measure achievement in core content areas
Acceptance	The SAT is accepted nationwide	The ACT is accepted nationwide
What is the structure and timing of the test?	<p>The SAT is made up of 10 sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 25 minute essay • Six 25 minute sections (Critical Reading, Math, and Writing) • Two 20 minute sections (Critical Reading, Math, and Writing) • A 10 minute multiple choice writing section <p>Total test time: 3 hrs. 45 min.</p>	<p>The ACT is made up of 5 sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English: 75 questions, 45 minutes • Mathematics: 60 questions, 60 minutes • Reading: 40 questions, 35 minutes • Science: 40 questions, 35 minutes • Writing (Optional, but required for many colleges): 1 prompt, 30 minutes <p>Total test time w/o Writing: 2 hrs. 55 min.</p> <p>Total test time w/ Writing: 3 hrs. 25 min.</p>
What is the test content?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Reading: Sentence completion, passage-based reading, identifying main and supporting ideas, determining the meaning of words in context, understanding authors' purposes, understanding the structure and function of sentences • Math: Problem solving using numbers and operations; Algebra and functions; Geometry and measurement; and Data analysis, statistics and probability. Students are advised to bring a calculator. • Writing: Recognize sentence errors, choose the best version of a piece of writing, improve paragraphs, grammar, usage, word choice, and an essay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English: Punctuation, grammar and usage, sentence structure, rhetorical skills • Math: Pre, elementary and intermediate algebra; coordinate and plane geometry; trigonometry • Reading: Determine main ideas, locate and interpret significant details, understand sequences of events, make comparisons, comprehend cause/effect relationships, determine the meaning of context-dependent words, draw generalizations, analyze the author's voice • Science: Data representation, research summaries, conflicting viewpoints • Writing (Optional): Essay that measures writing skills
Is there a penalty for wrong answers?	<p>YES</p> <p>$\frac{1}{4}$ is subtracted point for incorrect multiple-choice answers. No points are subtracted for incorrect student produced responses (math section) or for omitted questions.</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>Points are not deducted for incorrect or omitted answers.</p>
How is the test scored?	You can earn a total of 200 to 800 in Critical Reading, Math and Writing, added together for a combined score of 600 to 2400.	You can earn a score of 1 to 36 in English, Math, Reading, and Science. Averaged together, you get a total composite score from 1 to 36. If taken, the Writing test is scored from 2 to 12 and it counts as $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total English score.
Are all scores sent to schools?	<p>NO</p> <p>There is a score choice option. Students can choose which schools will receive their scores AND which scores the school will see.</p>	<p>NO</p> <p>There is a score choice option. Students can choose which schools will receive their scores AND which scores the school will see.</p>
Test Accommodations?	YES – Forms/Documentation needed prior to registration	YES – Forms/Documentation needed at time of registration
Contact Information	www.collegeboard.org	www.actstudent.org